ABSTRACT

In this chapter the authors discuss two central themes: the changing nature of literate activity brought about by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and suggestions for how educators could respond to this guided by principles of authentic learning. The access many young people have to ICT has resulted in new forms of literacy as they manipulate technology, using this new knowledge to assist the process of meaning making. Each new technology brings with it navigational concepts, space to negotiate, new genres and a range of modalities, all of which need to be interpreted. ICTs have the potential to reshape literate practices in classrooms as students create, collect, store and use knowledge as they connect and collaborate with people and resources across the world. What is crucial though, is that the nexus between technology and literacy within classrooms is conceptualised through meaningful, relevant and authentic connections with curricula.
THE CHANGING NATURE OF LITERATE ACTIVITY BROUGHT ABOUT BY NEW LITERACIES

The modern workplace demands effective interpersonal skills for collaboration, critical evaluation and identification of problems with creative approaches to designing socially responsible solutions (Oblinger, 2005; Leu, 2001). Leisure activities, too, have changed; Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) afford swift, cheap and convenient connection with a vast range of people from various cultures and with various interests. Combes argues that successful interaction and participation within this environment depends on being able to ‘navigate in a global knowledge economy’ (2007, p. 17). Essential to this process is engaging with New Literacies and adopting the literate practices afforded by ICT, challenging educators to rethink and reconceptualise their pedagogical practices for providing learning experiences that empower learners through literacy. While there is no unanimously agreed definition for “New Literacies”, they have been described as new social practices which contribute to online reading comprehension, learning and communication and the presentation of new discourses as users work across a range of semiotic contexts (Leu, Zawilinski, Castek, Banerjee, Housand, Liu & O’Neil, 2007). There is an undisputed relationship between New Literacies and ICT as the role of non-verbal modes and multimodal interaction in literacy practices are challenged through the flexible, collaborative and participatory nature of these practices (Coiro & Dobler, 2007; Sutherland-Smith, 2002; Labbo, 2006).

The literature often describes children and young people in ways that imply competence with ICT, for example, ‘digital natives’ (Prensky, 2001), ‘clickerati kids’ (Hill, 2004) and the ‘Net Generation’ (Oblinger, 2005). This group is reported to access in excess of eight hours of ‘media messages’ each day; much of the time participating in multiple simultaneous activities such as Internet surfing, listening to music and participating in online chat (Roberts, Foehr & Ride-Out, 2005, in Oblinger, 2005, p. 69). Technology is described as integral to their social, economic and educational environment (Combes, 2007), while their education in these New Literacies created by ICT is evidently self-taught (Sefton-Green & Nixon, 2003). The literature advocates that literacy in multiple medias, the ability to multitask, a preference for visual over print-based materials and a collaborative culture are characteristics of the contemporary learner (e.g., Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Prensky, 2005).

It would be inappropriate, however, to assume that children and young people already possess the skills and strategies required for successful engagement with new and emerging literacies. Walsh, Asha and Spranger (2007) observe that learners will not necessarily transfer their skills and knowledge from one setting to another, while Comber and Reid (2006) argue that teaching about literate practices throughout upper primary and secondary school requires the same close attention as is given to early literacy development. If this is the case, then, in an already overcrowded curriculum, educators need to make discerning choices with clear articulation of a rationale and strong connection to theoretical underpinnings.

The traditional learning environment of educational institutions is consistently identified in the literature as insufficient in meeting the needs of the modern student (Jonassen, 2003; Oblinger, 2005; Anstey & Bull, 2006; Herrington & Herrington, 2006; Leu, Mallette, Karcher, & Kara-Sotiriou, 2005; Harste, 2003). If learners are to develop lifelong learning competencies, they must be freed of restrictive environments where teachers prescribe activities in isolation from other subject areas and the community, allowing little collaboration with peers and experts and culminating in teacher directed summative assessment (Voogt &
Using Technology in Pedagogically Responsive Ways to Support Literacy Learners

Pelgrum, 2005). Instead, classroom experiences must allow students to adopt an active role in determining their learning needs and the ways to achieve new learning as ‘literacy events’ (Heath, 1983) and ‘literacy practices’ (Street, 1995) are carefully considered.

Literacy practices have undergone rapid changes with the influence of ICT, as connections to the ‘real world’, the rationale for text construction, text genres and the nature of audience and author are altered (Warschauer, 2007). Digital and multimodal texts place a range of demands on the reader (Walsh, 2006) and, as new kinds of texts emerge they are accompanied by learning opportunities that could be introduced into the classroom (Jewitt, 2003). Herrington and Kervin (2007) assert that it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to ensure their programmed learning experiences provide children time to examine, create and evaluate new ICT genres within carefully framed authentic tasks. Teachers need to work within children’s experiences to provide opportunities for engagement with these new texts that ‘…integrate visual and auditory modalities’ (Hill & Broadhurst, 2002, p. 269). It is timely that we consider the nature of classroom literacy experiences where students negotiate virtual spaces, new genres and multiple modalities in the meaning making process.

Computers and other digital technologies are available for use in most classrooms to varying extents, with room to capitalise on ICT potential in most curricula. This is a positive position to be in. However, it appears that there is often considerable gap between rhetoric and reality; the perceptions held by policy makers are often different from the conceptualisation by teachers and schools (Voogt & Pelgrum, 2005). We need to carefully examine how teachers can adapt to the literacy paradigm that recognises and integrates ICT within classroom literacy experiences.

THE CHALLENGE TO USE TECHNOLOGY IN AUTHENTIC WAYS

For too long, educational technologies have been seen as merely add-ons to classroom practice rather than important tools for learning. Technologies are often seen as merely ‘promising’ rather than critical, and ‘integrated’ rather than fundamental. As long as educational technologies are seen as disconnected elements in need of special efforts to integrate them, their use as powerful cognitive tools will be denied to learners in K-12 classrooms. When computers and other educational technologies are used in schools, too often they are seen as disseminators of knowledge, that is where students learn from the technologies rather than with them (Jonassen & Reeves, 1996; Lajoie, 1993). Learning with technologies as intellectual partners is hard work according to Jonassen (1993), who stated that: ‘Students cannot use these tools without thinking deeply about the content that they are learning, and second, if they choose to use these tools to help them learn, the tools will facilitate the learning process’ (para 7). Powerful learning opportunities can be created by students using programs such as spreadsheets, presentation software, movie editing software, word processing, and webpage creation software to solve realistic and complex problems. However, all too often, as pointed out by Kim and Reeves (2007), the focus is placed on teachers helping students to learn about the tools themselves, such as learning to use a specific software application, rather than using these tools creatively and dynamically to build knowledge. There is considerable evidence to suggest that the use of cognitive tools in school should resemble the use of such tools in real world activities (cf. Kim & Reeves, 2007). Arguably, there is no field where this is more readily achievable than in literacy learning. Literacy is complex, changing and a sometimes elusive phenomenon. As noted by Cassell (2004):
‘Literacy, after all, is about participating in a community of meaning-makers’ (p. 102).

Technology has advanced the practice of most fields of endeavour, (such as medicine, travel, architecture, information dissemination) and the tools that enable such developments are, in the main, widely recognisable and available. Most K–12 students would have awareness of the uses of technology in the real world, such as computers, mobile phones, digital cameras, portable audio players, video cameras, and they would be at least partially aware of how these technologies are used to construct artefacts. It is insufficient to teach students how to use these tools, even if examples of use are also given. It is essential that the technologies are in the hands of students, and that they use them to address complex problems and issues. One way to achieve this is through authentic learning environments and tasks.

Design elements of authentic learning have been developed based on characteristics derived from situated learning that can be used to guide the development of authentic learning environments (cf. Herrington & Oliver, 2000; Herrington & Herrington, 2006; Herrington & Kervin, 2007). Of these critical elements, arguably it is the task that students complete that is the most important. Based on an in-depth literature review of situated and authentic learning, ten design principles for developing and evaluating authentic learning tasks or activities have been proposed (see Herrington, Oliver & Reeves, 2003; Herrington, Reeves, Oliver & Woo, 2004 for full description and references).

Authentic tasks:

- Have real-world relevance
- Are ill-defined, requiring students to define the tasks and sub-tasks needed to complete the activity
- Comprise complex activities to be investigated by students over a sustained period of time
- Provide the opportunity for students to examine the task from different perspectives, using a variety of resources
- Provide the opportunity to collaborate
- Provide the opportunity to reflect
- Can be integrated and applied across different subject areas and lead beyond domain-specific outcomes
- Are seamlessly integrated with assessment
- Create polished products valuable in their own right rather than as preparation for something else
- Allow competing solutions and diversity of outcome.

Educational technologies are strong enablers of these elements, when placed in the hands of students, and many create powerful platforms for the production of authentic artefacts and products. Such activity confirms the role of technology as an intellectual partner for students rather than the means to convey information, technology that encourages ‘construction rather than consumption’ (Cassell, 2004, p. 75).

**LEARNING AND TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY**

In order to illustrate the use of authentic tasks in a range of contexts for literacy learning, we present four examples where technology may be employed as powerful cognitive tools that can be used by students to solve complex and authentic literacy problems. These have been devised as a series of classroom-based vignettes, each depicting a pedagogical challenge facing a teacher, together with the literacy learning context and the technologies available to the teacher in designing a solution. Each vignette was written to provide an opportunity for teachers to think about ways technology could support literacy learning in a range of learning environments. Rather than showcasing a particular teacher or event, the vignettes depict teachers working in regularly occurring teaching contexts and with the types
of technologies commonly available in schools, and in the process allow us to present examples that draw upon our own research findings. The activities within the vignettes are designed for teachers to consider within the frame of their own classroom context. In planning classroom tasks in different contexts, it is important to consider how the knowledge or skill would be used in a real-world context by professionals, and tailor the learning experience to enable students to function cognitively at that level. For each vignette, we examine:

- What can such experiences look like in the classroom?
- What makes each experience authentic?
- What New Literacies emerge from each experience?

**Vignette 1: Making Meaning from Multimodal Texts**

A teacher considers the critical reading skills students need to be able to make meaning from multimodal texts, specifically Web pages. Working with an upper primary grade, the teacher is keenly aware of the need for students to be able to locate information, but more importantly discriminate between sources as they interpret meaning from text, images and audio materials. Such skills are critical both within and outside the classroom context. In response to this, the teacher proposes a task requiring groups of students to research, design and create a website on ‘the state of the art’ or ‘trends and issues’ on a subject of their choice. The teacher plans learning experiences that will extend over several weeks, where students will engage in processes of research, analysis and synthesis. The students have access to a bank of laptops, with each one being able to connect to the Internet. Further, there is a number of digital still and video cameras within the school.

The teacher envisions opportunities for the students to conduct a themed search using a search engine, select a range of multimodal texts to critically engage with and use these understandings to facilitate the creation of a new multimodal text. In the creation of their text, students are encouraged to incorporate their own text, images (still and video footage) and voices. The teacher believes this type of activity provides an opportunity for students to engage with and make meaning from a range of multimodal web-based texts.

**Connections to Principles of Authentic Learning**

The task has strong connections to authentic learning, as it requires students to not only be consumers of knowledge, but to also be producers of knowledge through their analysis and synthesis of their research findings that culminate in the creation of a website. It is this genuine product that not only provides the context of their learning, but also illustrates their learning, and it does so in a way that matches real-world tasks rather than decontextualised or classroom-based tasks. The task is complex and open to multiple methods and interpretations rather than being easily solved by the application of existing algorithms or procedures. It requires an extended period of time to complete the task, thereby providing significant opportunities for collaboration and reflection, and intellectual effort. The use of a variety of resources and texts, rather than a limited number of pre-selected references, enables students to detect relevant from irrelevant information, and to examine the issue from a variety of perspectives.

**Discussion of New Literacies**

Web pages from the Internet present examples of ‘multimodal’ texts that many educators incorporate within learning experiences. Awareness of how and when to use these texts in the classroom, coupled with an awareness of the literacy skills needed for meaning to be made, result in
powerful use of multimodal resources. However, incorporating these texts with little guidance, focus and support often results in students feeling overwhelmed as they make hasty and random decisions with little comprehension or discernment. Using these texts within the context of a carefully framed task encourages skills of critical reading as the literacy user takes time to consider the text and make decisions about it in relation to the expectations of the learning experience.

These texts encapsulate unique semiotic systems. Multimodal texts generated through technology have the potential to challenge genre, increase the range of topics and information sources and encourage interaction between the physical and virtual environments. To read a webpage the reader needs to move beyond the traditional combination of print and two-dimensional graphics. They need to be able to listen, interpret images, download a range of items and move between navigational windows as they engage in critical examination of the text. For meaning to be made, the reader needs to be able to identify important detail, manipulate a range of tools, interpret visual and audio messages and make sense of the range of information available. These are complex literacy processes.

This example highlights the need to consider how and when to incorporate multimodal texts within classroom experiences, but also emphasises the need to support the literacy practices of students as they interact with the range of texts afforded by computer technologies.

**Vignette 2: Technology to Capture and Reflect upon Oral Language**

A teacher brainstorms ideas, strategies and techniques to engage students in oral language. Teaching in multi-cultural school, the teacher is keenly aware of the need for clear language goals and careful scaffolding to respond to the literacy needs of the students within this community. The teacher and students have access to 12 video iPods, 12 splitters (to enable multiple users), 24 sets of headphones and 8 microphones (that can be attached to the iPod). Further, the teacher can access a bank of 20 laptops and 2 digital cameras housed within the school.

The teacher envisions experiences that incorporate technology with authentic experiences and uses the technology resources to expose students to purposeful ‘talk’ and oral text structures, as well as social concepts. One experience, lasting five weeks, will involve the students collecting a series of photographs of their school and creating an accompanying oral recording (a podcast) to share with their parents at the upcoming parent/teacher evening. The teacher feels this type of activity provides opportunity for students to discuss their unique experiences within the school for a clear audience and purpose. The teacher believes the experience will lead to significant literacy learning as principles of context, purpose and use of oral language are examined and reflected upon.

**Connections to Principles of Authentic Learning**

The task of creating a podcast for parents has multiple connections to authentic learning, as it illustrates a genuine product that has many equivalents in the real world (such as audio tour guides, annotated walks and gallery guides) as well as the more personal sharing of students’ every day environment with their families. The task is open-ended and ‘ill-defined’ in the sense that students must make many decisions and articulate their ideas as they choose the photographs they will shoot, and prepare the oral commentary on the significance of each location in the school. A range of contributing activities culminates in the creation of a whole product, valuable in its own right, rather than an exercise or sub-step in preparation for something else. Such activities are inherently reflective, and require collaboration to achieve the end product.
Discussion of New Literacies

It is argued that the most powerful literacy activities are those that are embedded within the practices of everyday life (Warschauer, 2007). Identifying a literacy learning experience with close connections to the school community and the experiences of the students provides a meaningful and engaging task. The students have a clear audience for their text, which works to shape their literate response as they use language, assisted by the technology, to respond to the task.

Heath’s (1983) concept of a ‘literacy event’ is evident within the learning experience. The students construct text as they consider their interpretations, extensions and meanings attached to a familiar situation. The process of capturing key moments and personal experiences through both oral recording and digital images provides avenue for the students to document a sequence of events. The identification and selection of these, coupled with the personal nature of the audience, promotes ownership of the experience.

Street’s (1995) concept of ‘literacy practices’ is also evident. This example has potential for the students to build upon the ‘literacy event’ as they explicate the social and cultural conceptualisations that underpin the experience. The merge of image and oral text provides greater depth than either text alone would hold. Further, the process of editing the captured sound and image files requires the students to carefully consider their audience and intended meanings as they make selections about appropriate text to include.

Technology has the potential to bring together the ‘literacy event’ and ‘literacy practice’ into a whole cohesive work product. The depth within the experience comes from the focus on a significant topic with many layers of interaction as text is created. Further, the flexibility of the genre allows for increased engagement with the texts as the students make connections between and among them for the clear purpose of communicating to a defined and known audience.

Vignette 3: Authorship and Nonlinear Text Arrangement

An upper primary teacher aims to support students as developing authors in the class by asking them to respond to a sophisticated and multi layered picture book. Over a number of weeks the students plan and create non linear texts to demonstrate evidence of critical thinking to their teacher and peers. Clarifying the purpose of the planned text and identifying the intended audience provides the teacher and students with opportunities to explore appropriate structure and language choices in different settings. The teacher plans to spend time modelling, demonstrating and deconstructing a range of linear and non linear texts with the students. The teacher believes the time spent in deconstruction supports the developing author in understanding the purpose of different texts, the structure of non linear texts and the range of possibilities available to authors.

Alongside planning paper, reference materials and art supplies, a range of digital technologies is available to support the learning: a bank of 10 computers with presentation software, 2 digital cameras and a scanner. The students will take a simple approach with the technology, using action buttons, hyperlinks and sound recording applications within the presentation software to construct non linear text, allowing the learning focus to remain on the construction of the message. The teacher believes that providing opportunities for students to make informed authoring choices empowers them as both creators and consumers of text.

Connections to Principles of Authentic Learning

The students in this classroom have the opportunity to engage in an authentic task by creating a non-linear text for other students in the class. This requires extended thinking about the problem of constructing a response to the picture book as they
plan, review and created their texts to demonstrate critical engagement with the text. By allowing students to make choices about the nature of the text they create (and therefore their audience), the teacher empowers the students to reflect on the task, and to take on a range of perspectives rather than follow a single perspective that learners must imitate to be successful. The teacher is able to guide text structure, layout and conventions throughout class time, providing modelling of the ways that authors work and scaffolding for the students’ learning. Opportunities for independent writing following these explicit teaching times then allow the students to reflect on their own texts in light of their new understandings. Finally, the benefits of sharing the newly created texts with the intended audience are twofold: first, it enables the teacher to make informed decisions when assessing learning gains achieved, that is, the task and the assessment are integrated; and second, the richness and diversity of the texts enrich the collective knowledge of the group.

Discussion of New Literacies

Non-linear text design is complex. Creating a text where readers navigate their own paths through the provided text requires a sophisticated skill base as critical thinking becomes paramount. Students need to understand the various pathways that can be created, include appropriate navigational features to guide their readers, combine print and visual information, and ultimately pass meaning-making control to the reader. Issues of font size and colour, images and graphics, audio and video clips and slide sequencing are all critical in conveying meaning, explaining procedures and supporting the interactive engagement with the text.

This example highlights the importance of planning for interactivity from the early stages of text construction. Using a complex, two-dimensional text as a springboard, the experience provides the students with opportunity to construct a text that responds to key concepts within the original text, while at the same time providing them with occasion to guide their reader through a complex pathway where multiple options and modalities are available. The non-linear design affords the students opportunity to reconceptualise the notions of genre organisation and design as written text, images and voice are embedded within the work product for the reader to engage with.

The opportunity to revisit and revise these initial plans supports the creation and construction of the non-linear text. In this experience, students have the opportunity to share their own critical interpretation of the text. Storyboarding the content and layout of the non-linear text helps to identify the different navigational pathways through the text, opportunities for the inclusion of multiple modalities and the ‘best’ way to construct the message.

The focus of the experience is not on learning the technology. Rather, technology is the mechanism for the students to communicate their understandings through complex non-linear text design. Non-linear texts such as websites are complex and can be challenging to navigate. Using presentation software to mimic the way that such texts work through the use of action buttons, hyperlinks and sound recording applications is a simpler way for students to learn about and interact with this genre. The focus for the learning can remain on the creation of a message rather than on mastering the functions of more sophisticated website software.

Vignette 4: Critical Analysis of Media Texts

A teacher of Year 10 English is concerned that while students are able to critically analyse persuasive techniques effectively in written texts, their skills in this area are diminished when reviewing visual texts, particularly television advertisements. Aware that the student cohort is
Using Technology in Pedagogically Responsive Ways to Support Literacy Learners

the target group for much television advertising, the teacher plans a unit of work that will extend over several weeks, where students will analyse televised advertisements and create their own parodies of advertisements. The teacher and students have access to five digital video cameras with external microphones, together with a bank of computers including basic video editing software and DVD production software.

The teacher envisages that students will collect and categorise advertisements in video form, and then in groups, analyse the persuasive techniques used. Then students will create their own advertisements to explicitly parody a range of persuasive techniques. They will script and record the advertisements using the digital video cameras, import footage into the video editing software, and export to DVD production software to produce a joint class DVD. Parodies can be uploaded to YouTube for sharing beyond the school.

Connections to Principles of Authentic Learning

This task has connections to authentic practice by requiring students, not only to investigate persuasive techniques, but also to create an authentic product that can illustrate their understanding and be shared with others. Learners must identify their own unique tasks and sub-tasks in order to create the parody, using a variety of technology tools in each stage. The task is completed over days and weeks, requiring significant investment of time and intellectual resources, and it is completed both in school and out of school. Such separation of the skill from the physical location of the classroom means that students reflect critically on television advertising in the most typical setting in their own lives, that is, while watching television at home. Collaboration is necessary because of the complexity of the end product, and this affords students the opportunity to reflect socially as well as individually on their learning as the parody is created. Assessment of the activities is seamlessly integrated with the major task, rather than as separate artificial assessment, such as a multiple-choice test. The learning environment culminates in the creation of a polished and professional whole product that is appropriate to the interests and preferred media of the target students.

Discussion of New Literacies

The difference between what literacy practices are valued in school contexts and what students engage with out of school has been the focus of many researchers (e.g., Comber, 2002 & Nixon, 2001). This experience bridges the contexts as explicit connection to television advertisements, a popular out-of-school text, and uses these as stimulus for critical analysis and reflection in the classroom context.

Examining the persuasive techniques within the advertisements pays specific attention to visual elements (Anstey & Bull, 2006) as the semiotic systems within the genre are examined through explicit and focussed learning episodes. Such understandings of visual semiotics are critical in making meaning from and with the grammatical and contextual features of these texts. Understanding of the genre of television advertising leads to skills of discernment as students’ make decisions about powerful techniques and the ways they are being positioned by the creators of the text.

Providing opportunity to deconstruct and recreate televisions advertisements provides opportunity for students to interact with language that describes the ‘grammar’ of the structural elements of the text. Further, examining the relationships between the types of text within the genre, provide scope to explore the functions or meaning making roles of these. This results in a metalanguage where meaning making in social contexts is fundamental to students’ knowledge as they create, collect, organise and share their generated text.
CLOSING REFLECTIONS

Each example of classroom practice describes technology in pedagogically responsive ways to support literacy learners. While we have identified age groups within each example, the possibilities for literacy learning with technology across the K-12 learning and teaching continuum are enormous. The enthusiasm many young people display towards technology (e.g. Combes, 2007; Oblinger, 2005; Hill, 2004) can be used as a way to motivate and engage students across the grades as they participate in learning experiences.

The experiences we report show how clear identification of the scope of a task, while still providing room for individual response, can provide powerful literacy experiences. When teachers support tasks with careful planning, preparation, and resource allocation with ongoing monitoring and reflection, a supportive learning environment that fosters meaningful activities transpires. This enables teachers to teach about literate practices in a collaborative culture where ongoing, purposeful learning is valued (Comber & Reid, 2006; Leu et al, 2005). Further, students need to understand the task and its requirements to enable them to develop appropriate responses. Opportunities to collaborate and connect with others support the contemporary learner (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Prensky, 2005).

What is imperative though, is that access to, and use of, the technology for teachers and students are shared throughout learning experiences. Each example actively engages students in manipulating the technology for the intended purpose of the task. The focus is not on learning the technology, rather using the technology to support their response to complex tasks (Kim & Reeves, 2007). In each example, the technology is used in ways that support the task, with clear connection to the rationale, authenticity and awareness of literacy demands encapsulated within the experience.

The students within our examples were engaged in opportunities to ‘consume’ and ‘produce’ knowledge within an authentic framework. We argue that such opportunities empower students as they strive to respond to a task with real world connections. Further, the tasks promote extended thinking as they are investigated over sustained periods of time (Herrington, et al., 2003). The construction and presentation of a ‘final product’ builds accountability for learning into the experience, as the students are acutely aware of the learning goals and final assessment.

The discussion of New Literacies within the experiences reveals the complexity of literate practices in the construction and deconstruction of technology-based texts. An increased understanding of what constitutes text poses significant considerations for digital genre, semiotic systems, modality and use of space. The emergence of new genres, and the acceptance of these within learning experiences, is a consistent theme within the experiences we share. Awareness of the learning opportunities (Jewitt, 2003) and literacy demands (Walsh, Asha & Sprainger, 2007) they present is critical to learning experiences.

We believe technology has the potential to support classroom experiences, and subsequent literacy practices, if it is used in ways that are theoretically sound. In this chapter, we suggest that developing learning experiences in connection with the principles of authentic learning is one way to do this. Further, we argue it is imperative that this is done with awareness of the literate activity afforded by the technology. For this to happen, it is necessary for teachers to carefully plan for and facilitate learning tasks that promote the nexus between literacy, technology use and learning. Engaging students in opportunities to create, collect, store and use knowledge as they connect and collaborate with people and resources across the world results in powerful learning.
REFERENCES


Using Technology in Pedagogically Responsive Ways to Support Literacy Learners


Oblinger, D. & Oblinger, J. (2005). Is it age or IT: First steps towards understanding the net generation. EDUCAUSE, 2.1-2.20


Using Technology in Pedagogically Responsive Ways to Support Literacy Learners

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Authentic Tasks:** Complex and collaborative activities that mirror real-world, professional tasks and are investigated by students over a sustained period of time.

**Learning Experiences:** The activities planned by teachers and enacted by students in classroom environments. These are carefully designed to meet a specific rationale, learning objective or outcome.

**Literate Practices:** The knowledge, skills and strategies needed to respond to print, paper, digital, visual and oral communications.

**Multimodal Text:** Text that blends print with visual, audio, spoken and nonverbal information.

**Non Linear Text:** Traditionally the pathway in a text is from left to right and top to bottom with information organised sequentially. In many digital texts, multiple pathways for interaction become possible through hyperlinking, making it a non linear text. These allow a reader to access information as needed and a writer to create opportunities for a reader to make these choices.

**Oral Language:** The skills of speaking and listening and being able to interpret this.

**Pedagogical Practices:** The strategies that teachers use to teach students. Strategies are selected according to the beliefs of the teacher, the needs of the learner and the demands of the task.

**Visual Texts:** Text that is mediated through film, video, advertising, gaming and the Internet. The ability to interpret and make meaning from colour, line, format, light, texture and shape is important.