



## Using the science of reading and the school library to raise student achievement

A professional learning course for high school teachers

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**This program provides information for teachers on how to effectively utilise the school library in combination with pedagogical approaches based on the science of reading to build students' content knowledge and literacy skills. By implementing the research described in this program, and with support from the library staff, the library has the potential to become the hub of all learning and teaching, raising student achievement in the process.**

A knowledge-rich curriculum is foundational for student achievement and for ensuring educational equity for disadvantaged students (Lewis Hennessy, 2021). School library staff have the knowledge and skills to effectively support teachers to build students' subject knowledge and research confirms that the presence of a well-resourced and well-staffed school library has a significant impact on student achievement (Merga, 2019). Yet, despite this, the library is often under-utilised by teachers and students.

This program:

- provides current research into the science of reading that is relevant to subject teachers.

- assists content teachers to build domain-specific literacy skills and knowledge.
- provides high-impact strategies for increasing the volume students read.
- outlines how a teacher librarian and library technician can support subject teachers.

This is a text-based program and there are no restrictions on the copying and distribution of the materials within the school that purchased the program, enabling all teachers to have their own copy of the materials. The program consisting of the following fact sheets:

1. Strategic selection of texts
2. Reading complex texts
3. Building knowledge through vocabulary
4. Questioning
5. Locating information
6. Skimming and scanning
7. Note-taking and note-making
8. Paraphrasing
9. Summarising
10. Supporting students with word reading difficulties

Each fact sheet provides some discussion and reflection ideas to encourage collaborative learning among staff. The material can be used by individuals, small groups of teachers or

by the entire staff. Alternatively, a library staff member could distribute one fact sheet per week to subject teachers which they can collate and use as a reference tool for lesson planning. The program addresses the following AITSL standards: 1.2, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4.

### **About the author**

Catherine Duffett originally trained as a high school science teacher and has worked as a teacher librarian in both primary and high schools. She has worked in Alice Springs, Darwin and Hobart. She is registered as a literacy consultant ([Mshauri Education](#)) and

writes professional learning courses for under-resourced schools in developing countries. *Mshauri* means *advisor* or *teacher in Swahili*. The name was chosen by a Tanzanian NGO.

### **Accessing the program**

Visit Mshauri Education ([www.mshauried.org](http://www.mshauried.org)) for more details regarding the program and to access the first fact sheet *Strategic selection of texts* for free. Email [info@mshauried.org](mailto:info@mshauried.org) for more information.

### **References:**

Lewis Hennessy, N. (2021). *The reading comprehension blueprint : helping students make meaning from text*. Baltimore, Maryland: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Merga, M.K. (2019). *Reading engagement for tweens and teens : what would make them read more?* Santa Barbara, California: Libraries Unlimited, an imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC.