Information Literacy Instruction

THEORY AND PRACTICE

Second Edition

Esther S. Grassian and Joan R. Kaplowitz

Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc.

New York London
Dedications

I dedicate my portions of this book to you, dear readers, in the hope that you will teach your learners and learn from them, joyously, with caring and with heart.

—Esther S. Grassian

This book is dedicated to all the teachers who have touched my life and who believed in me long before I believed in myself, to my many students who asked me interesting and challenging questions and helped push me outside my comfort zone; to my friends both personal and professional who were always there when I needed them with a pep talk, a shoulder to lean on, and as many hugs as necessary; to my cats who always knew when I needed a cuddle and a purr; and finally to my wonderful family (Hillary, Greg, and Mike) who seem to be as proud of me as I have always been of them.

—Joan R. Kaplowitz
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SEARCHABLE AND LIVE LINKS FILES

Searchable Book Table of Contents

“Read More About It . . .” (from each chapter with live links)

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Searchable Book Index
When we think of information literacy, there are two names that always come to mind—Esther Grassian and Joan Kaplowitz. Together, they have continued to advance our knowledge of the field of information literacy. Before the information literacy movement swept across the libraries of the nation, they were already writing and teaching about it. At every turning point in the practice of information literacy, they were already ahead of us, guiding us toward new directions and new approaches.

Now, these two scholar–practitioners have issued a second edition of their popular book, *Information Literacy Instruction: Theory and Practice*. Refreshed and updated, this book is very worthy of another reading. It is comprehensive in scope and turns a spotlight onto such dimensions as planning, instructional modes, copyright, new technologies, library anxiety, and assessment. For those new to the field, Esther Grassian and Joan Kaplowitz include clear definitions and a history of information literacy. Very useful also are chapters on how students learn and how students can become fully engaged in the learning process.

Reading through this book, I was struck again with the importance and urgency of teaching information literacy. Information is so abundant now and technology so pervasive that information literacy only continues to increase as a critical foundational skill. For this reason, librarians have to keep information literacy in the forefront of any educational process; this means that we, ourselves, must keep learning about this important skill.

It is easy to learn from this book. Written in their personal and comfortable style, this book is loaded with practical illustrations and examples. Esther Grassian and Joan Kaplowitz move easily between the theoretical and the practical as they lead us through every aspect of information literacy instruction.

The audience for this book is wide—librarians starting their careers, librarians who wish to increase their knowledge of information literacy, faculty who are teaching information literacy, and library administrators interested in program growth and resource needs can all benefit from this comprehensive book. This book can easily serve as a textbook or as a desk manual kept handy for any situation.

I have enjoyed and have benefited greatly by everything that Esther Grassian and Joan Kaplowitz have ever written. I have always admired their unparalleled depth and range of understanding about information literacy. All I can say is that they have worked their magic again, and I know that you will think that reading this valuable, important, and insightful book was time very well-spent.

Susan Carol Curzon, PhD
Dean, University Library
California State University, Northridge
Imagine, if you will, the following scenarios . . .

Scenario 1: The phone rings off the hook, 15 voice-mail, instant messages (IMs), or text messages wait for an answer, and e-mail never seems to end. Administrators press for experimental pilot projects using new, untested, or difficult-to-use products. They insist on complete statistics, fully trained staff, and frequent progress reports. Meanwhile, instructional staff worry about being overloaded, having too little time to prepare, and looking foolish trying to teach without full understanding of, or comfort with, a broad range of instructional modes—not to mention an endless parade of new equipment, hardware, and applications. Instruction schedules need to be set up for ongoing programs; equipment checked and maintained; and examples, handouts, and Web sites, even virtual world sims and objects, created or updated.

Scenario 2: Your phone is silent. Your e-mail messages are mostly from listservs, colleagues, and friends. You rarely get requests for information literacy instruction (ILI), and very few people attend library workshops or visit your instructional Web pages. You wonder where all the learners have gone. You also wonder how they are evaluating the quality of online tools and materials they find, and if they even know about your library's licensed databases, much less how to use them effectively.

Four basic questions—what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and how to measure success—weigh most heavily on all librarians involved in ILI. Information Literacy Instruction: Theory and Practice is designed for anyone involved or interested in ILI, whether your situation falls under Scenario 1, Scenario 2, or somewhere in between or whether you are a library school/information studies student, a new librarian, or a seasoned professional.

Librarians have always taught people how to use libraries and information sources. Over the past 40–50 years, instruction has grown in importance in libraries and other information settings, even eclipsing traditional reference service. As computers entered library settings, training became an expected part of the librarian's job. Until relatively recently, though, few library schools have supported this role through either full-length credit courses or continuing education. In comparison to technology training and education, few opportunities for in-depth continuing education in ILI exist either. As was the case for the first edition, we intend this newer edition to fill a dual need by serving as both a textbook for library school ILI courses and a support and self-education tool for practicing instruction librarians by deepening their background knowledge and expanding their instructional skills.

We have been instruction librarians and instruction coordinators for many years. We proposed a User Education/Bibliographic Instruction course to the UCLA library school in 1989, and, when it was approved, we designed and taught it together the first time it was offered. Since 1990, we have alternated teaching this course each year at the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, Department of Information Studies. We have based this book on our course, on our own practical instructional planning and delivery experiences, on our educations, and on our intensive studies of publications and other materials in information literacy and related fields, such as psychology, education, management, and technology.
We have designed this second edition of Information Literacy Instruction to include both theoretical underpinnings and practical applications that may be adapted or used as they are in a variety of settings, in all types of libraries and information arenas, wherever librarians help people learn. The material covered in each chapter was gathered from a wide variety of sources. Many excellent books, articles, and Web sites are available that offer more in-depth analysis of the material covered in our book. A selection of these works is included in the “Read More About It” sections at the end of each chapter. To acquire a thorough understanding of the theory and practice of ILI, we recommend reading this entire book. To take you even deeper into the topic, we suggest our companion volume, Learning to Lead and Manage Information Literacy Instruction (2005), which covers topics such as leadership, management, collaboration, research and grant writing, marketing, and managing technology. To gain the most out of these books, we recommend sampling additional suggested readings and trying out the exercises that are included at the end of each chapter.

ORGANIZATION

We have arranged the chapters of Information Literacy Instruction: Theory and Practice in the order in which we feel those new to ILI should learn about it. In Part I, Information Literacy Instruction Background, we begin by discussing definitions in Chapter 1 and then present the history of library instruction/bibliographic instruction/information literacy in Chapter 2. In Chapter 2, we also introduce the concepts of “synchronous” and “asynchronous” instruction used in many of the following chapters to mean, respectively, simultaneous and in real-time, for two or more individuals, as opposed to nonsimultaneous, any time/any place instruction for a single person.

We continue in Part II, Information Literacy Instruction Building Blocks, with a solid grounding in learning theory and styles and the application of theory to the practice of ILI ( Chapters 3 and 4), followed by in-depth discussion of library anxiety, mental models, and conceptual change ( Chapter 5) and then critical thinking and active learning ( Chapter 6).

Parts I and II provide an essential foundation for all instructional planning and development. With this foundation on which to build, in Part III, Planning & Developing Information Literacy Instruction, we move on to Needs Assessment and goal-setting ( Chapter 7), followed by principles for selecting instructional modes with pros and cons, as well as tips for effective use for each ( Chapter 8). We do not, however, recommend specific modes of instruction, or even combinations of modes, as many different factors may influence your mode selection decision. Instead, we recommend offering a range of modes to meet a variety of learning styles and needs.

Part III of Information Literacy Instruction then moves on to Chapter 9, “Basic Copyright and Design Issues.” Chapter 10 continues this theme by focusing on design of specific instructional modes and materials. Chapter 11 delves into the theories and practices of assessing, evaluating, and revising to round out the cycle of planning, designing, and developing ILI programs.

As Part III illustrates, planning, developing, assessing, and revising effective ILI programs takes time and effort. It also takes time and effort to prepare and deliver instruction for a variety of groups in different environments and under different physical and technological circumstances. Part IV will help you do just that. Chapter 12 is devoted to learner-centered teaching for synchronous and asynchronous formats (face-to-face or online), followed by four more chapters that are closely related: how to teach diverse groups ( Chapter 13), how to develop instruction for particular library environments ( Chapter 14), how to use technology to support pedagogy ( Chapter 15), and how to approach teaching online tools and resources ( Chapter 16). The final part of Information Literacy Instruction, The Future of ILI, is our view of what the future may hold for the topic ( Chapter 17).

The accompanying CD-ROM offers a great variety of useful support material and information. Materials include a sample PowerPoint presentation slide show, a sample one-shot class/workshop outline, a table that describes a variety of learning styles, a table that discusses different types of assessment tools, an example of minimalist documentation, a snapshot of a Second Life (virtual world) ILI example, and a Two-minute Yoga exercise that can be used as a relaxation technique for instructors and as a stretch break during face-to-face sessions. We have also included a “Read More About It” list for each chapter of the book, as well as the complete book bibliography, both with live links. For a complete list of items on the CD-ROM, see the CD-ROM Contents list.

Information Literacy Instruction: Theory and Practice, 2nd edition, is intended to give you a basic grounding in ILI. Learning to Lead and Manage Information Literacy In-
struction (2005) builds on that base and takes you further into the topic, helping you acquire skills that will enable you to move on to a leadership and management role in ILI. We see these two books as a two-part publication, with Information Literacy Instruction: Theory and Practice as the first part and Learning to Lead and Manage Information Literacy Instruction (2005), as the second. We hope that after reading this updated edition you will understand the current range of instructional choices available and be able to plan, prepare, evaluate, and revise ILI programs in any environment, for a variety of audiences, utilizing emerging and traditional tools and resources as the need and circumstances warrant.

We may not have supplied answers to all of your ILI questions, but we hope this second edition of Information Literacy Instruction: Theory and Practice, along with its companion volume, Learning to Lead and Manage Information Literacy Instruction, will provide sufficient background, support, and guidance so that you will be able to ask the right questions and explore possible solutions and new technologies in support of teaching and learning. We also hope that you will reach out to others within and beyond librarianship for ideas and information sharing, as well as collaboration and partnership, and that both books will serve as support and stepping stones to your success in information literacy instruction.