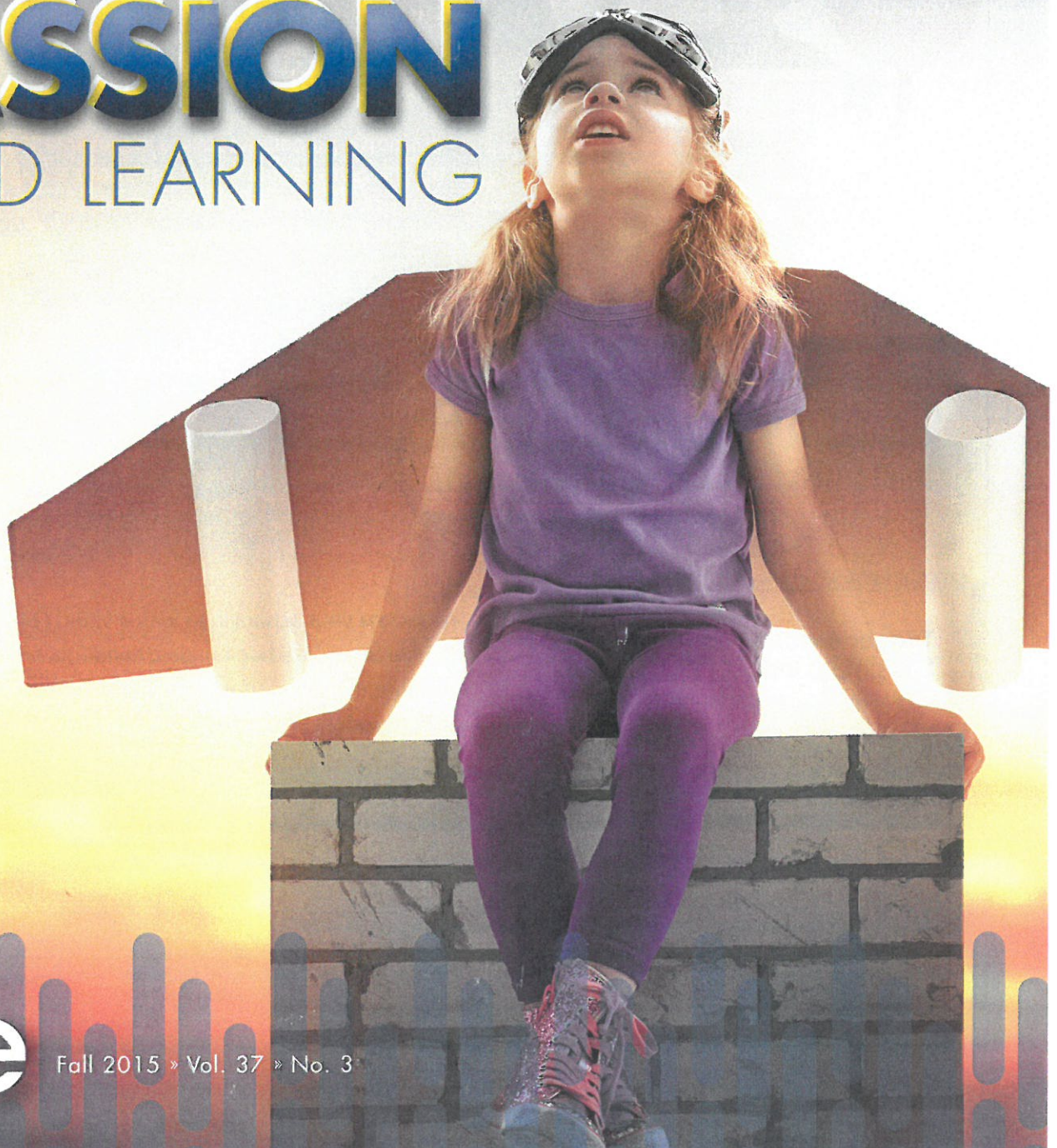


# ON CUE

## PASSION BASED LEARNING



# “WHAT MATTERS TO YOU, MATTERS!” THE FOUNDATION OF PASSION-BASED INFORMATION LITERACY

## LOVE OF LEARNING (LOL)

It has been wonderful to see a growing acceptance of student centered learning, where the student is welcomed to pursue any course of inquiry while at school, even if it is for just a small part of the school day or week. In a sense this is the beginning or the revival of academic freedom for our students! The language and branding that connect to this idea include but are not limited to labels like: *Twenty Percent Time*, *Genius Hour*, *Genius Projects*, *Passion-Based Learning*, *Project Based Learning*, etc... All of these are steps in the right direction for sure! The Common Core State Standards have helped spur this thinking forward by providing standards that call for small research projects but do not specify the content/subject of the student created products.

Common Core has helped open the door to the student to learn just about anything, including the student's own personal interests. This pursuit of **“Anything Learning”** and the requirement that students be equipped to research has helped surface Information Literacy as an essential academic foundation for all students no matter how young. When students learn and practice Information Literacy skills in the context of Passion-Based Learning it transforms the implementation from a part-time event for Geniuses into an embedded part of the learning process where students believe that each learner is a valuable gift! Information Literacy provides the academic structure to help students see that “how we learn” is applicable to “everything we learn.” Information Literacy provides the systems to move forward from PBL (Passion-Based Learning) to the life long **LOL** (Love of Learning)!

*“Cultivate Love, Generate Energy, Inspire Audacity and Provide Proof” – The Radical LEAP (Farber)*



## WHAT MATTERS TO YOU MATTERS!

We know that if we want a student to be excited about reading or become a better reader, an important part of that process is to let him/her choose books of their choice or interest. However the student may not know what he/she wants to read, so classroom teachers and teacher librarians help introduce options that may have been previously unknown. By allowing students to become a partner in the learning process by empowering them to choose their own books, helps create better readers. As students grow in their reading skills, the complexity of the books they choose can broaden in complexity and depth. In essence, we are saying to the student “What matters to you, matters!”

Similarly when we let students choose what they want to learn as an important part of their education they become better learners. As they grow in their own learning skills (information literacy) the

complexity of what they can learn changes. What is incredibly exciting about this is we can now say to the student "What matters to you, matters!" not only when it comes to what they want to read, but also what they want to learn. The options are almost infinite. Information Literacy makes it possible for the student to **INTEGRATE** their interests in everything including their core academic subjects and vice versa. Teachers can track individual student information literacy progress throughout the year by gathering data on how students **access** information, **evaluate** information, **integrate** information, **originate** information, and **use** information safely, ethically, and legally. We call it the AEIOU of Information Literacy.

## THE AEIOU OF INFORMATION LITERACY 101

*"Information literacy forms the foundation for all of the other literacies. Students need to know how to state their information need, search for it effectively, evaluate what they find for validity, and utilize the information they find."* – Kathy Schrock, [blog.cue.tc/PBL2015A](http://blog.cue.tc/PBL2015A)

In California the state board of education adopted the official Information Literacy Standards called the Model School Library Standards (MSLS). These standards address the process of learning anything and are a perfect fit for structuring **Anything Learning!** The four strands address learning outcomes for each grade level related to how students access, evaluate, integrate, and use information. Within those standards are found multiple requirements for students to be originators (creators, authors, producers) of information. The following is a brief introduction that can be implemented in any grade level or subject.

### ACCESS INFORMATION

Students need to recognize their own need for information. The need for information is realized when students are proficient at formulating their own questions. A wonderful way to teach students to formulate their own questions is with the Question Formulation Technique (QFT), found in the book "Make Just One Change" by Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana. For more information on the QFT check out the website: [rightquestion.org](http://rightquestion.org)

### EVALUATE INFORMATION

Technology has provided almost unlimited access to information. Students need to be taught the basics of evaluating the information they find online and in print. One way to begin teaching the process of evaluating source is through the C.A.R. method (Credibility, Accuracy, and Relevance). It is easy for students to remember, and versions of it can be implemented starting in Kindergarten.

### INTEGRATE INFORMATION

The "I" is the most exciting because it requires the student to make divergent and convergent connections. For example, if a student's personal interest is dinosaurs, we would require the student to connect dinosaurs to Math, Science, Language Arts, and History (Divergent) and how Math, Science, Language Arts, and History can help the student learn more about dinosaurs (Convergent).

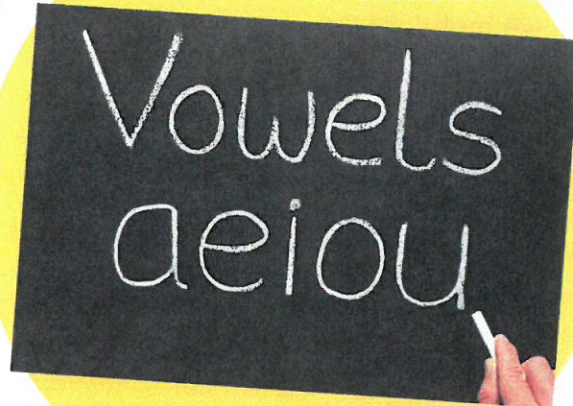
### ORIGINATE INFORMATION

Our students have become authors at the youngest ages thanks to the digital publishing world we live in. When a student creates an original work, no matter how young, he/she owns the copyright to that material. This is exciting because we can use this pride of ownership to teach about levels of sharing through Creative Commons ([creativecommons.org](http://creativecommons.org)). We also need to

equip students with an increasing level of understanding about Fair Use. And since the amount of plagiarism among students is rising, the need to teach respect for authorship is needed now more than ever.

### USE OF INFORMATION

Use addresses the need for our students to use information in a safe, ethical and legal manner. Teachers as well as students need to be aware of issues of student privacy before clicking "agree" on that new application.



program.

### INFORMATION LITERACY BY DESIGN

More schools are embracing Maker Spaces and Career Technical Education, and it is wonderful. As a result Design Thinking has started to emerge in support of the creative, collaborative process. Remember, Design Thinking assumes that the participant has a foundation of Information Literacy. One example of this is when a group of teachers designed an awesome new kind of wallet. We were ready to take the billfold to market as our own and make some money. However, nowhere in the process were we exhorted to research if there was already a patent on our design. Upon exhortation, we applied some basic information literacy skills and found that our design was already patented.

### EXTREME CONCLUSION

*"Thinking of education as a transformed landscape lying beneath an insurmountable glacier, is the first step in setting a vision. Take a moment and imagine redesigning today's schools without any restrictions. Forget about curriculum and standards. Think beyond the traditions of how we typically assign students to classrooms. Don't worry about the money it would take to redesign the*

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**8. Build a new culture of learning.** Give good reasons for learning. Watch this video from Dr. Tae about the culture of learning [cue.tc/PBL2015C1] with secondary science teachers and university professors. What is the secret to learning? Real learning is mostly self-motivated paired with the right mentor. Read Terry Heick's article *Promoting a Culture of Learning* [cue.tc/PBL2015C2] that walks you through using a gradual release of responsibility model:

- Show Them
- Help Them
- Let Them

**9. Create a Makerspace.** Diana Rendina, (above, right) Media Specialist/School Librarian at Stewart Middle Magnet School in Tampa, FL transformed her library to serve as an informal STEM learning space for her learners. Check out *Renovated Learning* [cue.tc/PBL2015C3] to follow her Makerspace journey.



When I think of all the educators I know who stretch their thinking and go the extra mile like Diana, Julie, Rich, Jackie, and George and others, I know that no one can transform education alone. We all need to share and learn together. I found my purpose. It is to learn all I can about learner-centered environments, connect to others who believe all learners can learn their way, and share their stories of transformation of "school" to cultures of learning. I wrote this quote over ten years ago...

*"Go with your strengths and interests, find your passion and, then discover your purpose."*

I am thinking of changing that last part to "and your purpose will discover you." Has your purpose found you?



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*physical space. Overlook time constraints of calendar years and bell-to-bell school days. Ignore policies that limit reform. With all of these factors aside, what would education look like?"*

- *Transforming Ice Age Schools: A Practical Guide for School Leaders* (Brady & Johnson)

The school I envision is where our students have an authentic, life long LOVE OF LEARNING (LOL)! I imagine if we could have one teacher on every school site dedicated to supporting the students and teachers interests. Of course the school library has always been dedicated to that idea! Let's make sure we have truly equipped our students to LOVE learning! Let's create systems where we can say to all of our students "What matters to you, matters!"



**Glen Warren** is the Chair of the CUE Library Media Educator Network and the Vice President of the California School Library Association. He is currently advancing Professional Learning in the areas of: The "What Matters to You, Matters!" framework, Integrated Literacies for Teachers, and Radical LEAP for Educational Leaders. You can reach him at [K12edge@gmail.com](mailto:K12edge@gmail.com)