

“What’s in it for me?”

Connecting the school librarian with the three International Baccalaureate Programmes

Ingrid Skirrow
Co-ordinator of Primary Library
Resource Centre,
Vienna International School
Austria

Abstract

The International Baccalaureate organisation (IB), with headquarters based in Geneva, Switzerland continues a world-wide expansion of their three educational programmes. An understanding of, and involvement with the programmes to support the school community is vital for the school librarian in those school which are considering adoption of any of the programmes. The three IB programmes encompassing teaching and learning from 3 years to 19 years are:- the Primary Years programme (PYP); Middle Years Programme (MYP); and the Diploma Programme (DP).

The IB “Standards and Practices” guide the Authorisation process for IB World Schools and these in turn can effect and direct the way libraries and librarians are used.

The IB mission statement, the IB Learner Profile and programme specific documentation guide a ‘continuum of international education’ being promoted by IB World Schools. Some aspects of these areas will be explored in the context of possible changes for the school librarian.

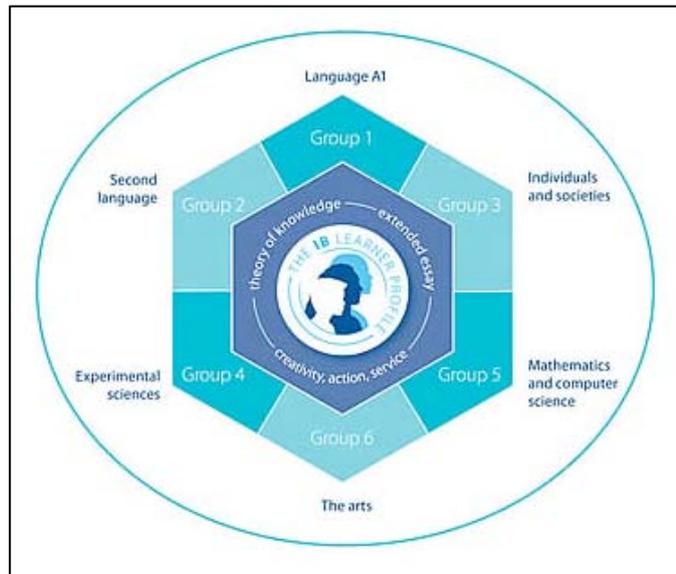
‘What is in it for me?’ will be answered through challenging school librarians to become part of a whole school learning initiative based on International Baccalaureate principles of inquiry and internationalism, and to possibly rethink their role through developing collaborative practices in their educational institution.

International Baccalaureate programmes, collaboration, IB PYP- MYP- DP school libraries and librarians.

1. Towards a continuum of International Education: the International Baccalaureate Programmes

The Diploma Programme (DP) of the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IB) was established in 1968 by a group of international teachers and school leaders based in Geneva, Switzerland. This was to provide internationally mobile students with a balanced programme of studies, including international and multicultural understandings, leading to the IB Diploma, a qualification acceptable for entry into tertiary education.

Figure 1: Model of the Diploma Programme (DP) Source <http://www.ibo.org> May 2009



In 1994, the IB incorporated the Middle Years Programme (MYP) from its earlier beginnings as an initiative of the International Schools Association (ISA) which had begun to develop a curriculum encouraging international awareness and which included developing skills, attitudes, knowledge and the understandings needed to participate in a global society.

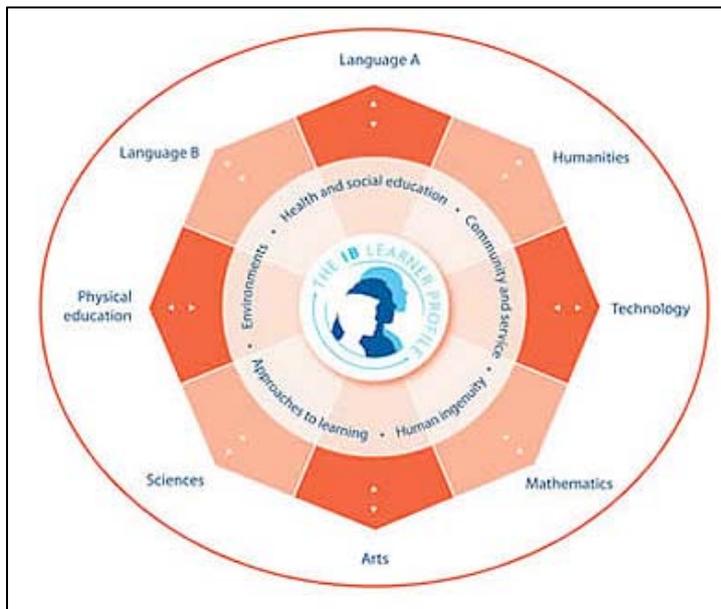


Figure 2: Model of the Middle Years Programme (MYP) Source <http://www.ibo.org> May 2009

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) as the youngest programme was brought under the IB ‘umbrella’ in 1997. Similar to the MYP, the PYP had begun its life ten years earlier as a ‘grass roots’ initiative called the International School Curriculum Project (ISCP). This involved approximately one hundred international school primary departments chaired by Kevin Bartlett, then Head of Primary School at Vienna International School (now Director of the International School of Brussels).

From the very beginning, the purpose of the ISCP/PYP was to promote inquiry learning as its pedagogical approach for creating a common international curriculum with international mindedness at its forefront.

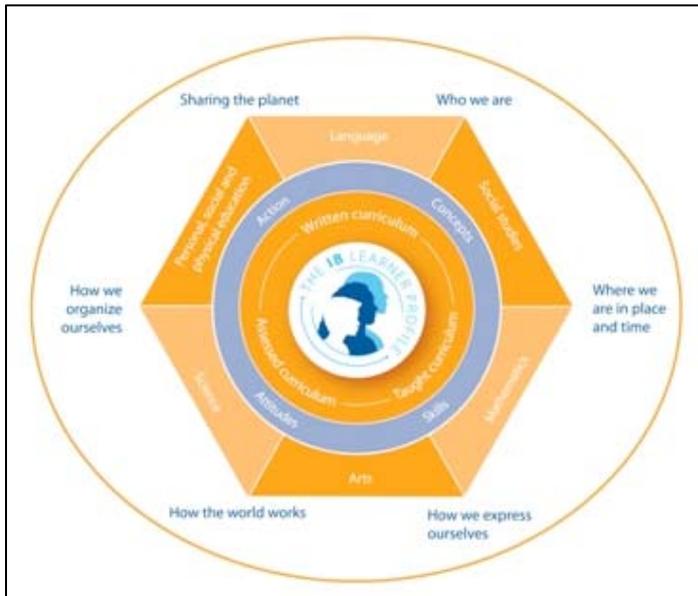


Figure 3: Model of the Primary Years Programme (PYP)

Source <http://www.ibo.org> May 2009

Since those early days, the three IB programmes have continued to develop in importance and popularity not only for International Schools but increasingly also for State schools around the world. To date, approximately 718,000 students in 2,633 schools are involved showing an average annual growth rate of over 13%. (IB 2009). In May 2009, the International Baccalaureate website gave the following additional information concerning the numbers of schools worldwide involved in teaching one or more of its programmes:

2,633 schools in 135 countries teach at least one of the three programmes offered by the IB.

- 535 schools in 81 countries are currently authorized to teach the Primary Years Programme (PYP).
- 706 schools in 76 countries are currently authorized to teach the Middle Years Programme (MYP).
- 1,959 schools in 132 countries are currently authorized to teach the Diploma Programme.

Figure 4. Source <http://www.ibo.org> May 2009

2. IB World Schools authorisation process and the school library

To become an authorised IB World School giving entitlement to display the IB world school logo on any official documents or websites, the IB provides comprehensive guidelines and expectations for each school to undergo an ‘inspection’ visit known as an authorisation visit. The important document for authorisation is called the ‘Programme Standards and Practices’ (IB, 2005).

There is a timeline and process of preparation each school must go through for each programme: Consideration phase; Candidate phase; Application phase which may involve a Pre-Authorisation visit; Authorisation visit; IB World School Authorised Status; and after every three years, a self-evaluation followed by Evaluation reviews.

For school librarians involved in any of the IB programmes, the initial ‘wake-up’ call will be the need to become informed about the content and expectations of the particular programme or programmes they will be involved in. In the nine main generic Standards across all three programmes, there are also specific programme sub-point standards and practices to be evaluated. There is also reference to the library media centre(s).

There are two broad statements explicitly concerning the school librarian:

Standard B1: Organisation p. 4	Standard B1 point 18 p.5
<i>“The school demonstrates ongoing commitment to, and provides support for, the programme through appropriate structures and systems, staffing and resources”.</i>	<i>“The school recognises and promotes the role of the library/media centre in the implementation of the programme”</i>

Figure 5: from “Standards and Practices” (IBO 2005)

Whilst teasing out the important keywords and concepts for these two explicit statements the school management, curriculum development committee and hopefully also the qualified school teacher-librarian / Library media specialist, will need to consider the following questions arising naturally from the standards:

1. How will the ‘school’ demonstrate ongoing commitment and support?
2. What is the role of the school library [and the school librarian] going to be?
3. Who will manage the school library and what qualifications will they require?
4. What are ‘appropriate’ administrative structures?
5. What are the ‘appropriate’ systems to put in place?
6. What should the staffing be to ensure efficient use of the school library?
7. What resources will be needed? How will these be provided? From where?
8. What recognition of the importance of the resources, library, librarian, will need to be made? By whom?
9. How can this all be promoted? Who will promote? When? Where?
10. What is the school specific programme of inquiry / studies and how will the library [librarian(s)] help implement the programme?
11. How will inquiry learning take place in the library?

12. What library specific teaching will need to be incorporated into the developing school programme of studies, and what will need to be 'stand alone'? [conti..]
13. How will the librarian [or the other teachers] ensure the integrity of a well-structured library programme? Will it be necessary?
14. How will information literacy and reader development become more of a whole school focus? What will the school librarian's role be in this?

3. IB continuum initiatives for school librarians

The IB mission statement, the IB Learner Profile and programme specific documentation guide a developing 'continuum of international education' being promoted by IB World Schools. (IB 2008) The school librarian will need to incorporate these areas into any library programme. Some aspects of these areas may lead to possible changes for the school librarian.

The IB Mission statement, as well as the schools own mission statement, will need to be analysed to support the development or review of a mission statement for the school library and inclusion in its policy document thus ensuring a meshing of educational philosophies.

In the IB Mission statement below, careful scrutiny will also advise the discerning school librarian to the directions in which the library resources will need to be developed to include a wide variety of cultural and multicultural resources:-

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Figure 6: The IB Mission statement Source <http://www.ibo.org> May 2009

Depending on the language profile of the students in the educational institution, multi-lingual resources will need to be considered for placing in the library collection and a discussion about the logistic of student, teacher, and parent access to these resources may introduce new timetabling dilemmas.

Of equal importance for the school librarian is the IB Learner Profile described as the:-

“IB mission statement translated into a set of learning outcomes for the 21st century”, and which, “provides a long-term vision of education. It is a set of ideals that can inspire, motivate and focus the work of schools and teachers, uniting them in a common purpose.”

IB learners strive to be:

- Inquirers
- Knowledgeable
- Thinkers
- Communicators
- Principled
- Open-minded
- Caring
- Risk-takers
- Balanced
- Reflective

Source <http://www.ibo.org> May 2009

The IB proposes that to successfully implement the dimension of the curriculum IB Learner profile:-

“the values and attitudes of the school community that underpin the culture and ethos of a school are significant in shaping the future of its young people. In a school that has a commitment to the values inherent in the IB learner profile, these values will be readily apparent in classroom and assessment practices, the daily life, management and leadership of the school.”

(IBO 2006 p.2)

The IB also considers the learner profile as a tool for school development: for evaluating classroom practices; for informing innovative methods of assessment; reviewing reporting practices; and in the daily life of school students – both academic and non-academic. Further, how the school management and leadership support ongoing professional development to ensure facilitation of effective teaching and learning practices. Appendix 1 is one example of how the learner profile has been interpreted and developed in the context of student use of the library

Although there are many facets to the three programmes, and the school librarian may be involved in supporting one, two or even three of them, a good understanding and overview of all of them is recommended. In the ‘IB Continuum of International Education’ a useful chart is available describing the programme structures:

PYP	MYP	DP
Programme of inquiry, including scope and sequence documents for six subject areas	Eight subject areas with aims and objectives and assessment criteria	Six groups of subjects with detailed syllabus and assessment guides
Teaching through six transdisciplinary themes	Teaching through eight subject areas connected through five areas of interaction	Teaching through six subject groups connected by theory of knowledge
Units of inquiry within each transdisciplinary theme, incorporating the learning of language, mathematics, social studies, science, the arts and personal, social and physical education	Units of work in each subject area, with some interdisciplinary units of work, focused on the areas of interaction	Course outlines for each subject including theory of knowledge, extended essay and creativity, action, service
	Language A Language B Humanities Sciences Mathematics Arts Physical education Technology	Language A1 Second language Individuals and societies Experimental sciences Mathematics and computer science The arts
Prescribed planner to support inquiry	Recommended planner for units of work	

*Figure 7:
Programme Structure
Re: Continuum
(IB 2008)*

4. Conclusions: 'What is in it for me?'

For all three IB programmes, there is an expectation that ALL educational staff in a school, whatever their role, work together towards a common goal – the successful education of the student. The IB programmes offer a common framework for teaching and learning based on a shared philosophical mission and belief which in turn guides the continuing professional development and educational discourse in IB World Schools, thus ensuring cross-school collaboration and team-work for the benefit of the students.

It is a clear expectation to work towards an inquiry driven learning environment through curriculum development, consistent and focussed planning for learning, and collaboration with other faculty members - and the librarian must be included in this.

The implicit statements in the Standard C section of 'Programme Standards and Practices" (IB, 2005) describes aspects of 'Curriculum' and will perhaps point towards some new roles for the librarian:-

Standard C1	<i>A comprehensive, coherent, written curriculum, based on the requirements of the programme and developed by the school, is available to all sections of the school community.</i>
Standard C2	<i>The school has implemented a system through which all teachers plan and reflect in collaborative teams</i>
Standard C3	<i>Teaching and learning at the school empowers and encourages students to become lifelong learners, to be responsible towards themselves, their learning, other people and the environment, and to take appropriate action.</i>

Standard D concerns the student and will also have some major implications for the school librarians. It is here that the librarians will be able to contribute directly and substantially to the learning experiences of the students in the each of the final years of the three programmes.

Standard D2	<i>In the final year of the programme, all students complete a programme- specific project that allows them to demonstrate a consolidation of their learning, in the case of the PYP and MYP, and to demonstrate the extension and development of their learning in the Diploma programme</i>
-------------	---

Information Literacy skills and reading ability for substantial research projects will be tested to the full. It will be through the PYP Exhibition, the MYP Personal Project, and the DP Extended Essay that the school librarian will demonstrate the importance of their role within the school as they are the ones with the professional skills most likely to successfully support

and guide the students individual inquiries throughout the myriad of information sources available on any possible topic in the world.

‘What’s in it for the librarian?’ Mention has been made of possible changes and in Appendix 2, a sample table modelled on the PYP changes in practice show this.

The librarian and the library should become the hub of the school if it is not so already. There are challenges and changes waiting for the librarian and there are many opportunities to become a vital and proactive part of the school community.

The IB Standards and Practices can help to make this happen. The school librarian willing to grasp this opportunity can make a difference in the school – for the teachers, the students, the parents – but mostly for themselves. Most important however, is that they become informed themselves though careful dissemination of the extensive IB documentation and reflect on their own personal role in supporting the programmes.

This paper has hopefully given a broad enough overview to make the IB programme school librarian(s) find out more of “What is in it for me.....”

Further note and personal comment

In the IB Standards and Practices, the qualification requirements expected for the person with responsibility for the school library is not indicated. Indeed, in the present Standards and Practices (2005 version) there is no reference to a school librarian - only to a school library. Neither does IB stipulate any specific numbers of resources per student, age of collection, library budget per capita, staffing etc. This is left to individual schools to decide. The only expectation is that there is a library.

If the person designated as school librarian is a qualified teacher and considered part of the school teaching staff as a ‘specialist’ then the full “Standards and Practises” document should be used to guide teaching staff inclusively, therefore specialist teachers – and this term includes the qualified school teacher-librarian, will need to consider each statement from their own perspective.

If the person designated as school librarian has no formal teaching qualifications, has a library qualification but is not considered or remunerated as school teaching staff, then a teaching and learning role cannot reasonably be an expectation. However the responsibility of managing the resource collection may still be part of the library role and the standards should be referred to in aiding and inform this aspect of the position.

If the person designated as school librarian has no formal teaching or library qualifications then arguably the school expectations of meeting the standards with reference to the library may possibly not be met.

References

Bartlett, K. (1992). "Defining International Education: A Proposal for the Future". *International Schools Journal*, number 23, pp 45–52.

IB (2008). Towards a continuum of international education. International Baccalaureate, Peterson House, Cardiff, UK

IB (2006). IB Learner Profile Booklet. International Baccalaureate, Peterson House, Cardiff, UK

IB (2005). Programme Standards and Practices. International Baccalaureate, Peterson House, Cardiff, UK

IB Mission statement, downloaded May 2009 <http://www.ibo.org/mission/index.cfm>

IB programme graphics, downloaded May 2009 <http://www.ibo.org>

Skirrow, Ingrid (2005) Towards the Information Literate School Community: and international primary school library study. Unpublished MSC Econ ILS dissertation, University of Wales, Aberystwyth

Video source of learner profile, downloaded May 2009
<http://www.ibo.org/programmes/profile/index.cfm>

Appendix 1
The Learner Profile in the IB World School library

The IB Learner Profile	The IB Learner Profile descriptor	IB Learner Profile Whole school library	The student in Primary / Elementary Library	Sample indicators for student performance in the primary library (developed by Grade 4 & 5 students at VIS)
Inquirer	They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning.	Students develop information literacy skills that will encourage and support them to become 'life- long learners'. They conduct purposeful, constructive research.	We try to find out new information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Being willing to find out more about my projects and reading books about our subjects. -Inquiring into new books, new genre and new authors. -Coming to the library and regularly borrowing books. -Being curious about new things. -Reading books and understanding what they mean. -Inquiring about the authors and illustrators of the books I choose and read. -Reading books in other languages.
Knowledgeable	They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.	In the library students are exposed to and develop the capacity to recognise information in its multi-formats (print, electronic and audio-visual technologies); to know how and where to find information from these sources, and how to select, organise and communicate information to others.	We want to learn new things every day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Knowing how to find the information needed from books and from the computer. -Knowing and understanding alphabetical and numerical order -Reading non-fiction books that help us learn new facts -Reading lots of different kinds of books. -Being curious and asking lots of productive questions. -Knowing what the library rules are and demonstrating that knowledge.
Thinker	They exercise initiative in applying thinking skilled critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.	Resource-based learning encourages students to become independent, critical thinkers and creative problem-solvers. They build a dynamic view of themselves as confident and discerning information users	We think carefully before choosing books for our needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Thinking about good books that could be helpful for school work -Thoughtfully choosing books after browsing. -Suggesting books that people would enjoy or find useful. -By helping other people choose books. -Learning and understanding the difference between fact and fiction.
Communicator	They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.	In the library students are exposed to a range of visual, written(literary and factual) and oral skills in multimedia formats. Students are encouraged to express their own ideas and interpret the ideas of others.	We show our ideas in many ways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -By knowing how to listen and understand. -Recommending books to others. -Showing others new books and talking about books. -Talking slowly, softly, nicely and with care. -Being well mannered and polite. -Using signs to communicate.

<p style="text-align: center;">Principled</p>	<p>They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.</p>	<p>In the library students are encouraged to respect the rights of all community members and share facilities and resources. Students are conscious of following library procedures.</p>	<p>We do the right thing in the library at all times</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Making sure that we return books on time. -Following the library rules and refuse to follow others who cannot follow them. -Always remembering to be 'Academically Honest' by acknowledging the sources of information used for schoolwork in written/power-point/poster and oral presentations. -Telling the truth and being honest about how your book came to be damaged or lost. -Treat books carefully so others will have the same pleasure as you have had.
<p style="text-align: center;">Balanced</p>	<p>They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.</p>	<p>Students are provided with a variety of literature and technologies within the library that contribute to their personal, social and educational growth</p>	<p>We read different types of books</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sometimes taking a library pass for in-door breaks but also going outside sometimes. -Always choosing different books (a variety) -Taking easy, quick reads sometimes, and challenging books at other times. -Being sensible about how I handle books.
<p style="text-align: center;">Open-minded</p>	<p>They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.</p>	<p>In the library students are exposed to a wide range of literary and factual texts reflecting different cultures, perspectives and languages. These texts extend the student cultural understandings</p>	<p>We think about and respect the ideas of other people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Getting facts from many different sources. -Helping other people if they need -Respecting others' ideas and not just thinking about mine. -Choosing books that inform us about different countries and lifestyles (cultures) to ours. -Finding books that have been translated from other languages into our own to help give me a different perspective of life in a different part of the world. -Accepting other peoples book recommendations. -Helping new people find good and easy books. -Never 'judging a book by its cover'.
<p style="text-align: center;">Caring</p>	<p>They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feeling of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.</p>	<p>The library seeks to develop a lifelong love of reading among our students. Through reading students learn to empathize with the experience of others who are different from themselves.</p>	<p>We look after the library. We care about books and the people we share the library with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Always taking care of books, showing I am responsible. -Being polite to people working in the library. -Sharing books with other students. -Helping other students if they have problems. -Putting things back wherever they come from. -Trying to learn from the books. -Respecting library rules.

Risk-taker	They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.	Students are prepared to take risks in reading and in learning new information skills and technologies within the library	Challenging ourselves to read a new author or new literature genre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reading interesting books on subjects that I have never read before. -I don't always choose the same things. -Trying new books and authors and books recommended by other people. -Reading challenging books, learning hard words as well as easy and favourite books. -Knowing which websites are useful for the information being sought (looked for)
Reflective	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learned and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.	In the library students are encouraged to reflect on the importance of literature, as a way of understanding one's self and others.	We think about the books we have read and their meanings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Respecting the wonderful books and other resources. -Taking time to think about why we have enjoyed a particular book. -By keeping a journal or record about what we read. -Through writing book reviews and recommending. -Being considerate of others in the library and of the library resources, which we share with many others. -Thinking about what we do in the library and with the resources we borrow, and how and why we enjoyed them.
copyright IBO, 2007		Library Profile: 2005/06 Developed and adapted by Ingrid Skirrow, Vienna International School, Austria from 'Australian International School Singapore Library – Student Profiles' created originally by Yvonne Barrett 2004		

Appendix 2

Changes in practice for school librarians after <i>PYP Practices in Planning, Teaching and Assessment</i>	
Decreased emphasis on:	Increased emphasis on:
-the library as a repository of books	-the library as a vital part of the school programme
-the librarian as an unknown 'mystical' entity	-the librarian as a knowledgeable and experienced educator
-the librarian as an isolated person	-the librarian as a proactive member of the school team
-teaching library skills in isolation	-teaching information skills connected to units of inquiry
-distributing grade level reading lists	-sharing information about popular grade level fiction through author talks , reading book extracts, lists based on student input
-giving library rules to memorise	-developing and modelling Learner Profile and PYP attitudes through models in children's literature and clearly stated expectations
-librarians finding information to give to students	-students empowered to independently locate and use information from many sources
-occasionally changing static book displays	-making interactive displays to talk about books/authors and of books to borrow. Connect the displays to Units of Inquiry. Student participation in the displays
-emphasis on memorizing facts	-enabling life long learning through focus on information literacy skills and research processes
-librarian planning for teaching in isolation	-librarian planning collaboratively with other teacher
-class teacher making all key decisions	-other stakeholders (single subject teachers including librarian AND students) involved in planning for learning
-end of topic assessment by class teacher	-continual assessment and input of learning process and objectives by all stakeholders to class teacher
-unplanned, unreported library visits	-library part of planning process and part of report to parents
-focusing on what students do not know	-building on what students already know eg. KWL chart/ 'Frontloading' unit in the library with resources, give time for students to experience/ browse new ideas and concepts.
-over reliance on one teaching resource/style	-provide and use multiple resources representing multiple perspectives
-viewing students as passive recipients of information	-involving students actively in their own information gathering
-teacher directed focus on rigid objectives	-pursuing open-ended inquiry and real life investigations
-employing teaching strategies suitable for grade level , one type of ability, using mono cultural /monolingual materials	-differentiating the needs of students through provision of a range of resources eg. high interest, low reading level for struggling students/ESL beginners; using culturally diverse materials and multilingual fiction and non-fiction resources
-evaluating units in isolation from other teachers	-evaluating collaboratively using an agreed flexible system
-using print only	-using multi-medial resources:- CDROMs, weblinks, webquests, video/DVD; film/digital, sound, pictures [works of art; posters, book illustrations, photos etc.]
-fragmented /fixed scheduling	-flexible / fixed scheduling modelling for the primary library
-teacher-librarian as an infallible expert	-teacher-librarian as a learner, facilitator, collaborator and professional development provider
-simply learning facts and skills	challenging students to find applications for, and take action on, what they have learned. Connect!
Adapted from 'Making the PYP happen', pub. IBO 2000, IB 2007	<i>Developed by I. H. Skirrow Feb. 2005 reviewed May 2009</i>

Biographical Notes

Ingrid Skirrow is teacher-librarian at Vienna International School (from Sept. 2009 on leave of absence). She is closely involved with the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IB) as a workshop leader for the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and as Faculty Member for libraries on the IB Online Curriculum Centre (OCC).

In addition to leading PYP workshops in many schools throughout the IBAEM region, Ingrid has organised three PYP workshops for international school librarians and has been workshop leader at four librarian workshops. She co-presented a paper at the IBAP Singapore Conference in 2007 and in the past has presented at various European Council of International Schools (ECIS) conferences about librarianship.

Ingrid holds a Teacher Certificate from Mather College of Education, Manchester University; an MA in Education from Oxford Brookes University; and an MSc(Econ) in Information and Library Studies from the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, UK.

In 2008 she became the IASL Regional Director for International Schools.

Statement of Originality

This statement certifies that the paper above is based upon original research undertaken by the author and that the paper was conceived and written by the author alone and has not been published elsewhere. All information and ideas from others is referenced. I agree with this statement: I.H.Skirrow May 2009