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# Ideal libraries: A guide for schools



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# Ideal libraries: A guide for schools



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## Ideal libraries: A guide for schools

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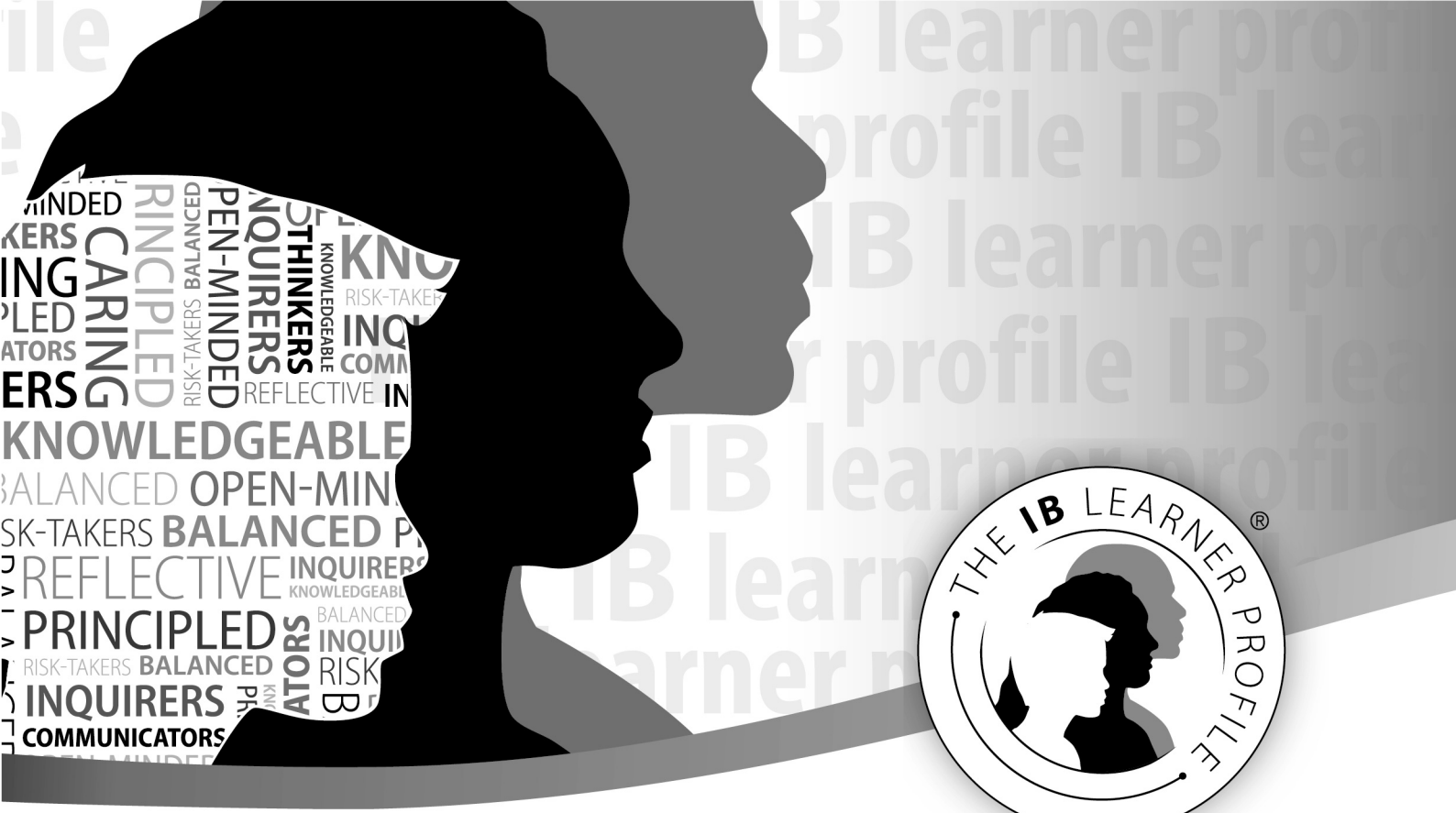


## IB mission statement

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.



# IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

## INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

## KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

## THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

## COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

## PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

## OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

## CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

## RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

## BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

## REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.





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## Overview

There are exciting conversations happening in schools on how to prepare young learners for an increasingly connected and complex world. Information is readily available in most countries, and any person with an internet-ready device can produce content that could potentially become public knowledge. Education and instruction are evolving from the transferring of information that students must learn or memorize, to the sorting and analysing the large amount of information that is already available.

In the past, the only place where information was reliably sorted and analysed was the library—without question, this is still true today. The sorting looks different, the analysis is more complex and libraries have competition from other sources, but the library is the most reliable place to find the information learners need. By extension, librarians, specialists in understanding and using information, have become more important than ever.

Many schools are reconsidering the role of libraries and librarians to make the best of technological and informational resources to enhance learning. Libraries and librarians can drive and support varieties of learning, teaching, and service across the school. Choosing the best approaches to energize the school community is a more complex process, and worthy of ongoing, meaningful conversations that can transform how they impact the community.

This resource contains many discussion points and questions which schools can use to inform how their library can be developed. It aims to explore what a library and librarian means for IB schools, and how they integrate into a single system, the library/librarian (library/ian), to enhance learning across the community. The roles that active IB librarians have chosen for themselves are set out and can serve as real-world inspiration for others. This document makes the case that the library/ian can help shape the content, the curriculum and the community in a way that gives learners the best chance to succeed.

# The changing roles of libraries and librarians

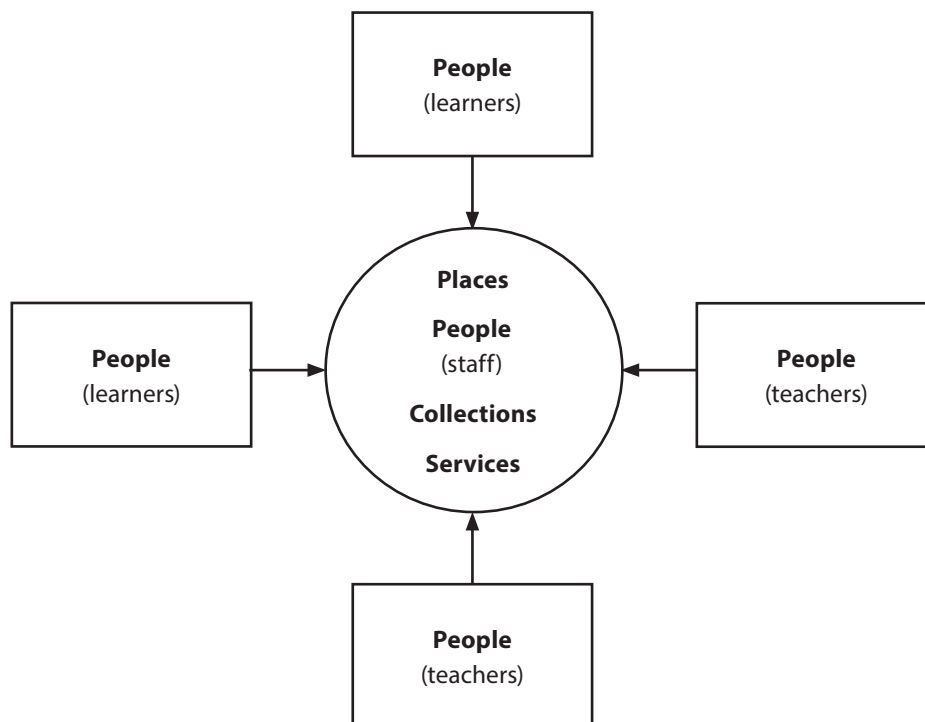
It may seem obvious what libraries are and what librarians do, but they have evolved beyond many people's perceptions so it can be helpful to look at how they have changed and are still relevant. The phenomenon of imagining libraries as they were in the past is called "library nostalgia", a perception of the library or of librarians that does not always mesh with the realities of libraries in the 21st century.

The IB definition of a library is designed to focus on maximising its effectiveness:

"Libraries" are combinations of people, places, collections and services that aid and extend learning and teaching.

The library and the librarian can be thought of as an interdependent system or a library/ian (Tilke 2015). This system consists of active parts which combine to achieve prescribed outcomes, monitor progress towards them, and is efficient and active in its support.

This resource refers to both libraries and librarians, but assumes they work together even if there is emphasis on one part of the system over another.



**Figure 1**

*An illustration of the elements of a traditional library hub*

The library/ian supports all learners' and teachers' progress towards becoming better inquirers, consumers and creators of information. This support requires a solid vision, good planning and consistent collaboration. It also requires clear communication of how inquiry in particular is promoted in the school community, and how the library/ian fits into it.

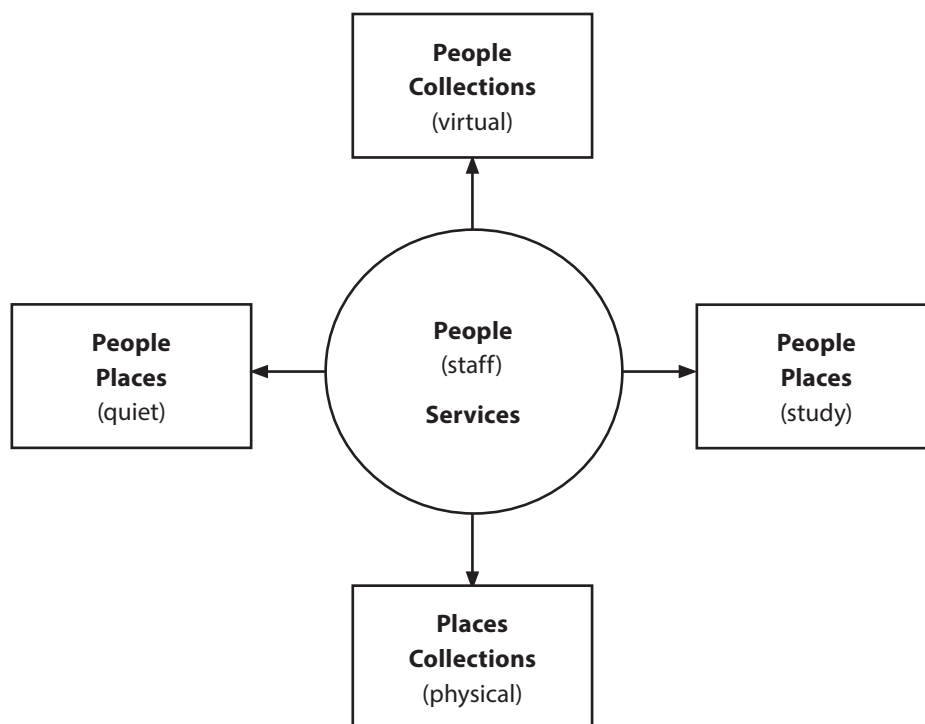
## The foundations of the system

**People:** The people who coordinate the activities of the library are staff, students and relevant members of the school community.

- The vision for the promotion of inquiry is communicated by the pedagogical leadership team and it is ideal that librarians participate in creating it.
- At a minimum, learners and teachers should collaborate with librarians to design the places, collections and services of the library.
- Planning with the entire community helps to make the library a welcoming, active space for learning, research, and reflection.

A library system is rarely effective without people to design and support it.

**Places:** Since libraries aid and extend learning and teaching, they have to aid and extend to all learning spaces, classrooms, performance spaces, virtual platforms or other places where learning is monitored by the school. Libraries are not static, not necessarily one central space, and can be placed where the community needs them.



**Figure 2**

*An illustration of a distributed physical library model*

**Collections:** Libraries house, catalogue, coordinate and distribute many kinds of resources, physical or virtual, and not all are directly related to the content of the curriculum. The collections in a library help learners make sense of their environment, their learning, and their own personal and academic goals.

**Services:** Libraries/librarians create networks of information within and outside the school community, which is both ideal and required to teach the IB curriculum and foster international mindedness. Librarians are often tasked with providing opportunities and space for students to learn about themselves, their learning, and the world around them. Therefore, the library/ian manages or supports multipurpose spaces, pastoral care, just-in-time learning, and a wide range of activities relevant to student life. For IB programmes, the library/ian supports and energizes reading, inquiry, multiliteracies, approaches to learning, approaches to teaching, and learner profile development.

# The 6+1 framework

To summarize the services that the library/ian system provides for schools, it is helpful to utilize a “6+1” framework: six practices that energize learning and inquiry, and one that tends not to.

1. Curating
2. Caretaking
3. Catalyzing
4. Connecting
5. Co-creating
6. Challenging
- +1 Catering

Library/ians act as curators of information, caretakers of content and people, catalysts of people and services, and connectors to sources of information, multiliteracies, and reading. Librarians’ responsibilities are inspired by the learning environments they engage with, and in that capacity, they are co-creators of information with the school and the wider community. They challenge learners to seek appropriate information, to use sound methods of inquiry and research, and teach them to question the information they find and use.

The last, less effective library/ian practice, is catering to its users.

Information on the internet is organized for each person using the data about what they try to look for. Many internet sites use algorithms and software that are designed to track preferences and provide information based on what was previously searched; some track responses to commercial sites and social media to refine searches. In short, they cater to what users ask for, and by extension, what they want.

For deeper inquiry that requires analysis and multiple perspectives, search engines and algorithms can fail. It takes face-to-face interaction and discussion to discern the best information for a given task. It becomes very important to offer alternatives to the information that learners will not (or cannot) find on their own. Librarians’ face-to-face interactions with people and collections help to make searches for information more diverse, enriched, and fit-to-purpose for learning. Librarians often directly energize teachers, learners, and even the wider community to seek a wide range of information and experiences. Many also preserve and distribute content that is suppressed or endangered because of financial, cultural or political circumstances.

The library should be designed to suit the community’s needs. Librarians are a crucial part of this as they can teach how to access information while using it responsibly. The 6+1 framework can be used as a starting point for schools to work together to make the most effective library system possible for their context.

# Misinterpreting the role of the library/librarian

The library/ian system can be misunderstood, or practices can evolve around it that do not support or energize learning. Librarians across the IB community were asked about practices that they felt did not promote the library as a system that aids and extends learning and teaching.

The feedback indicated that libraries were sometimes used as storage for things that had not been catalogued, or used as a “time-out” or “punishment” space, which challenged their role as welcoming places. Others said the library could become a default place to gather without inquiry, action or reflection. Meanwhile some schools had attempted to create the library as a completely virtual information space, effectively removing the support of students’ well-being that many library/ians provide.

Many of the issues discussed raised questions of how libraries can be designed so they would not be used as storage areas, empty of people during the day, and be reimagined as vibrant social and academic spaces. It is important for learners to have designated physical spaces as well as virtual spaces, so libraries could be designed to blend the two in a way that gives learners experience with a variety of media.

Some school communities impose total quiet on library spaces. However, in order to support and energize the full range of learning that happens in IB programmes, libraries provide activities that are not always helped by silence. These opposing needs could result in discussions about how a library could be designed to accommodate noise levels appropriate to the learning that needs to happen.

It is important that librarians do not find themselves undervalued or isolated from the school community, which can happen if the system is not designed to play an active role in energizing the curriculum. Librarians should be included in planning, teaching and learning to the greatest effect, rather than being “the last people to know” what is going on in the school.

In schools where the library is used as “punishment” space, librarians are sometimes asked to take on the role of an “enforcer.” Librarians are responsible for managing behaviour as any adult in the school might, but their places and roles could also be reconsidered to minimize enforcement.

Some librarians may feel that they have been entrusted to “protect” or “guard” resources. Schools could ask whether collections could be better shared and properly catalogued to make them easier to use.

Librarians are often asked to do data entry and/or administrative work that is outside of their role or job description. They may also need help with cataloguing collections and conversations could explore how cataloguing and administrative duties could be spread across the school to allow the librarian to manage the library system.

# Exploring effective practice

Libraries and librarians often create spaces and opportunities for learners to explore what learning and inquiry mean to them. This should be combined with the development of key tenets of IB philosophy to structure learners' journeys. Approaches to learning, multiliteracies and the IB Learner profile are commonly used by librarians to develop services and collections. The guidance here is meant to support librarians in particular, but also leaders and teachers to further consider how these aspects of IB philosophy can influence their work. Schools can use the questions to guide conversations about the library/ian and its role across the school community.

## Links with the community

Libraries by their nature generate conversations about life and learning. In the most basic sense, they are repositories of information and stories of the human experience (Lankes 2007) that serve as a basis for inquiry that prompts discussion and reflection. The first conversations need to establish how the library/ian's role and position is articulated to the community, which sets the conditions for energizing and supporting learning.

- What does the community expect from the library/ian? Are those expectations based on a survey of the community's needs, or assumptions about what libraries are "supposed to be"? (Hochman 2016).
- What is the librarian's job description, and how much agency did the librarian have in writing it?
- What are the school's objectives for learning, and how does the library/ian support them?
- At what point is the library/ian involved in curriculum development?
- How is the library/ian involved in supporting approaches to learning (ATLs)? What about approaches to teaching (ATTs)?
- How does the library/ian support the development of learner profile attributes?
- Has the school defined the multiliteracies it supports, and has the library/ian been involved in developing the definitions?
- How does the school define inquiry? How is the library/ian integral to inquiry?
- How is the library/ian represented in key school or district policies (inclusion, access, or academic integrity)?

## Understanding multiliteracies

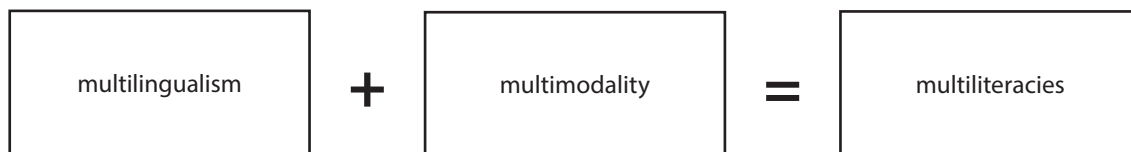
Libraries contain and manage collections of media that serve as the basis for learning and teaching multiliteracies. IB learners are not only expected to explore multiple languages, but also multiple modes of communication. *What is an IB education?* explains multiliteracies as follows.

All IB programmes require students to study, or study in, more than one language. This is because we believe that communicating in more than one language helps students to appreciate that his or her own language, culture and world view are just one of many. In this way, it provides excellent opportunities to develop intercultural understanding and respect.

(*What is an IB education?* November 2019)



Multiliteracies can be seen as the combination of multilingualism (using more than one language) and multimodality (using a number of modes of communication).



**Figure 3**

*The components of multiliteracies*

It is important to frame the conversation around multiliteracies with some essential questions.

- Does the school community understand how multiliteracies are formed from multilingualism and multimodality? Who is responsible for sharing that information?
- Is the library/ian actively involved in learners' development of multiliteracies?
- Are learners encouraged to express themselves in multiple languages and modes of communication in both academic and personal contexts?
- Does the school have a stated approach to teaching multiliteracies? Is the librarian involved in designing this approach?
- Is the library/ian resourced adequately to support multiliteracies, in terms of staffing, spaces and equipment?

The following sections break down the multiliteracies structure and the role librarians play in developing them.

## **Multilingualism: the language profile**

The combination of languages and dialects learners use is called a language profile, which includes learners' personal languages and dialects, functional languages and dialects, and languages of instruction.

- Personal languages and dialects are often associated with a learner's personal identity, used to interact with family, friends, and in informal contexts.
- Functional languages and dialects are used to interact with others in the wider community in formal and informal contexts. Many learners use their functional languages the most often, as they are what is necessary to "function" in the wider community.
- Languages of instruction are those used for formal learning. The vast majority of IB programmes are taught in English, French and/or Spanish, with a few exceptions based on national arrangements.

Some learners' personal and functional languages and dialects are the same as their languages of instruction, but any combination or number of languages and dialects can make up a learner's language profile.

Librarians are key in curating content and creating services that support diverse language profiles, and should be actively involved in respecting and supporting languages and dialects used throughout the school.

The goal is to support multilingualism, which is required to support multiliteracies. Librarians should strive to support as many language profiles as possible, but the degree and type of support can vary significantly based on the school community's needs. The librarian must be fully engaged with the community to

develop collections and activities that sensibly support language development. A number of questions should be asked concerning the development of language profiles.

- Has the librarian been asked to consider how to support personal language development for all students, especially those who speak languages and dialects not widely represented in the community (Skutnabb-Kangas 1995)?
- Does the librarian know the range of languages used in the school community?
- Who advocates for supporting personal and functional language development in addition to the language of instruction? How can the librarian involve others in supporting them?
- Has the school developed approaches to monitoring the language profiles of learners in the community? Has the librarian been consulted in the process?
- Is the librarian given dedicated time and resources to support and possibly train other educators about how to support multilingual teaching?
- Has the school provided resources that support reading and interaction in personal and functional languages and dialects, where appropriate, in addition to languages of instruction?
- Where can learners go in the school to seek content in their personal languages, whether for reading for pleasure or study?

It is key that language development in all IB learners serves to enhance their personal, social and academic communication. Language development is considered a central aspect of an IB education that supports the rights of learners to learn about themselves and the world through language.

### Multimodality

The process of using multiple modes of communication is called multimodality (Jewitt 2005). Librarians are well suited to teach and support students and other educators in using a variety of materials and content. A number of questions should be asked when considering multimodality.

- Is the librarian given dedicated time to support and possibly train other educators about multimodal teaching (using different media to enhance inquiry and understanding)?
- Who is primarily responsible for technology integration and implementation in the school?
- Does the librarian contribute to purchasing resources for multimodal learning and teaching?
- How is the library designed to provide access to multimodal content for a variety of inquiries?
- How are library spaces designed to accommodate multimodal learning and teaching?
- How does multimodality support inclusion and learner variability (Meyer, et al. 2014)?

### Other compatible literacies

The IB provides multiliteracies as a basis for understanding how literacy is articulated with the IB curriculum—many literacies can be included in the multiliteracies structure. We recognize that many other literacies and frameworks are used in schools, and only want to be certain that multilingualism and multimodality inform conversations on which literacies are used by the school community. Examples of literacies commonly supported in schools include:

- information literacy
- media literacy
- digital literacy (the IB refers to technology literacy instead—digital citizenship is also included)
- critical literacy

- critical design literacy (Watkins 2012)
- visual literacy
- numeracy
- transliteracies.

## Libraries and inquiry

Libraries are where most forms of inquiry, not just academic ones, begin. Whether students go to the library to work on an assignment, investigate a question, consult virtual information sites, or rent a piece of equipment (from libraries such as the Library of Things [www.libraryofthings.co.uk](http://www.libraryofthings.co.uk)), inquiry is initiated by the learner, not when the learner is assigned an inquiry. The school may set the conditions for inquiry, encourage inquiry, and to some extent direct it, but learners must initiate inquiry for it to happen. Libraries are more often than not where learners begin inquiry, either by design or their needs.

Libraries are also often the places where inquirers learn to deepen their searching and researching skills. For example, a learner typing a word or phrase into a search engine may produce results, but they often need help to understand which results are useful and accurate. The librarian may have to teach and unteach searching habits that learners use to initiate inquiries. Self-directed learning exponentially increases the importance of the library not only as the first point of research, but as a source of wisdom on the nature of inquiry and research. The library also becomes the hub of communication between learners and teachers.

IB programmes encourage inquiry in a number of areas.

- **Curriculum:** relating directly to the content teachers are responsible to facilitate, and for students to learn. Research is a form of inquiry, and commonly associated with the curriculum.
- **Social and emotional learning:** relating to the growth and personal development of learners, and by extension the school community.
- **Service learning:** relating to the knowledge and wisdom gained through serving the community.
- **Experiential learning:** relating to what is learned through experience, experimentation, and reflection upon both (specific to the Diploma Programme [DP]).
- **Play:** relating to the use of different forms of play and games, and reflection on the process and outcomes of them (specific to the Primary Years Programme [PYP]).

Inquiry is more expansive than research, and facilitating it requires expertise beyond research methods (Callison, 2015 and Levitov 2016). Libraries are where many inquiries begin and continue, and the librarian is responsible for energizing and maintaining the inquiry process. Ideally, the librarian is trained in many ways of creating conditions for inquiry within and beyond the classroom.

Schools may improve their approaches to inquiry through exploring the following questions.

- What agreements and services are in place between the classroom and the library/ian to support and energize learners when they begin inquiries?
- How does a student transition from being given an assignment to researching said assignment and making it their own? Who supports that transition?
- How does the librarian build relationships with learners to enhance the inquiry process?
- How does the library/ian help to unteach inquiry habits that do not support academic integrity and deeper research?

- Who is responsible for the methodologies and processes of inquiry and research in the school (searching for and evaluating sources, citations, copyright and fair use, good practice in collecting data, ethical experimentation)?
- How much time and effort does the librarian need to take to build and participate in systems that help students inquire and conduct research?
- Where can students go to inquire about their personal experiences and feelings? What support do they get when doing so?

# Summarizing library/librarian services

Libraries/ians are central to far more varied and complex conversations than those around academic knowledge and research, especially those that affect the wider community. There are numerous examples of the complexity of librarians' interactions with the community; librarians often record, support, aid and extend all conversations across the school community through the services they provide. Even when librarians do not design learning, they observe it across the school, offering their insight to teachers and leadership.

The conversations between librarians and learners about their literacies, interests, concerns and inquiries are unique in the school community and usually very different from those between learners and teachers. These conversations can be used as evidence of a school community's success in creating lifelong learners. Librarians often facilitate structured online use and advise learners about how to navigate for information as well as social interaction online.

Digital or virtual collections can be co-designed by the librarian with the community. Participatory design (Lankes 2007) makes library collections that are fit-for-purpose, adaptive, and tailored to the needs of the community.

Many librarians become responsible for school information systems that affect curriculum design, student performance, and in some cases teacher or school evaluation. Most librarians utilize public, national, private or university libraries for collections and services. Some librarians build specific relationships with external libraries to aid and extend learning and may be deeply dependent on them.

The following questions may help schools and communities to focus on optimizing their library/ian.

- How does the library/ian reach out to the wider community for resources and information, and does the school support this both culturally and financially?
- Does the library/ian system regularly include external physical libraries or external virtual collections? How are those connections managed?
- Does the library host and/or monitor virtual communities in the school?
- Does the librarian want to design, manage, contribute to or oversee the school's information systems (for example, the school website)?
- How does the librarian contribute to which platforms and databases are used to aid and extend learning in the school?
- How does the library/ian gain access to external collections when needed?
- Does the librarian offer and receive regular professional development on services and systems pertinent to the librarian's role?

# Conclusion

The IB strongly recommends that the library system of people, places, collections and services—or what is referred to as the library/ian—be designed to support and energize academic learning, service learning, and social and emotional support for the community. The library/ian should be directly represented in curriculum planning and development in the school community.

Librarians should not be solely responsible for initiating conversations on the role of library/ian systems in the community. Effective library/ians result from purposeful collaboration between leaders, teachers, learners and library staff, with the community's needs at the centre. These open, meaningful conversations can transform how the library/ian aids and extends learning and teaching.

# The basics for all IB library/ians

## Refining the definition

The standard definition of libraries points to their role as a system of the library/ian.

Libraries are combinations of people, places, collections and services that aid and extend learning and teaching.

The definition can be refined into the basics of what IB librarians do.

- Design, manage, and adapt the system of the library in order to energize and support what other educators and learners do with the curriculum.
- Survey the school community to address needs for content and activities related to learning and teaching. They look for the systemic impact of the library as part of their work. Librarians are expected to develop a deeper understanding of the communities they energize.
- Share observations on approaches to learning in the school community and develop services to promote them.
- Provide services that complement and energize approaches to teaching.
- Share observations and strategies on how learners use the IB learner profile in their daily lives.
- Develop collections that reflect the community's needs and objectives for personal, academic or professional learning, multiliteracies, and language development.
- Encourage reading for personal enjoyment, with the aim of creating lifelong readers.

IB librarians should at a minimum be aware of ATL, ATT and the IB learner profile as they are applied in the programmes offered in the school. They should also be prepared to support both multilingualism and multimodality as outlined in Ideal libraries resources.

## Shaping the IB library/ian

Using data collected from librarians' responses and contributions to teacher support material, the IB has compiled six archetypes, or models, which describe the ways librarians work in schools. Data analysis of the Ideal Libraries forum revealed that the majority of IB librarians fall into five archetypes: teacher librarian, school or district librarian, media specialist, designer librarian and student life librarian. There is also a sixth archetype, the super librarian.

In real life, the role overlaps across the five main types. However, separating them out can help librarians forge new roles and responsibilities for themselves, communicate this to the school community and create a shared understanding with school leaders about how the role can be developed.

Aspects of the following archetypes are interchangeable, providing possibilities for librarians and offering inspiration on how to make the library/ian system evolve and come to life.

Each archetype is accompanied by main themes and questions that can be used to inform and direct meaningful conversations between the library/ian and the school community.

### **The teacher librarian**

This is the most commonly discussed archetype in IB programme resources and many new librarians try to shape their roles according to the guidance provided. It can be a more difficult role to implement than anticipated as it takes time to gain adequate knowledge of the programmes and cultivate collaboration with other educators and students.

The primary responsibility of teacher librarians is to collaborate—they co-design unit and lesson plans, projects and school-wide learning initiatives. They are also the collections experts used by the school community for inquiry and research. Teacher librarians often support technology literacy and multimodal development as part of their work.

Teacher librarians are encouraged to seek IB-specific professional development or content to support programme-specific elements in the curriculum such as the PYP exhibition, Middle Years Programme (MYP) personal project, DP extended essay (EE) and Career-related Programme reflective project. In some schools, the teacher librarian coordinates these elements.

This archetype is not equivalent to the teacher librarian qualification that is available in some countries, though the qualification is ideal to the role.

Some of the major themes for teacher librarians are collaboration with other educators and students, learning planning and support, multiliteracies support and support for IB programme-specific elements.

The following are key questions used in shaping the role of the teacher librarian.

- How does the librarian secure dedicated time with other educators to collaborate (Montiel-Overall 2005)? Is the librarian interested in co-teaching?
- In what ways does the librarian collaborate with students, and does the librarian have processes in place to share observations about student learning?
- What aspects of the school's curriculum warrant the most library support in terms of time and content?
- How does the library/ian have a presence in the classroom?



- How is academic integrity being taught and reinforced in the school community?
- How is the library/ian visible in unit and lesson planning?
- How does the library/ian energize and support inquiry?
- When and/or how should the librarian be involved with a core activity such as the exhibition, personal project, EE or reflective project? Should they coordinate it, or is a supporting role more appropriate?
- How does the librarian support and monitor development of ATL, ATT, and learner profile attributes?

## The school or district librarian

School and district librarians may or may not have a direct relationship with educators or students, but always coordinate collections and resources for learning and teaching, including human resources, and generally manage groups of schools with multiple curriculums and programmes. School and district librarians are usually budget holders for collections and new learning technologies. They may also be responsible for hiring additional library staff, coordinating professional development and promoting awareness of library services.

Many school and district librarians support other curriculums, or are responsible for local and national standards as well as the IB curriculum. Knowledge of specific IB activities is not as common, though it offers a clear advantage.

Some of the major themes for school and district librarians concern resource management and distribution, and technology purchasing and support. They may be called on to promote awareness of the library system, support local and national learning and teaching standards, or support and train other library specialists.

The following are key questions used in shaping the role of the school or district librarian.

- How does the school or district demonstrate the value of the library/ian in school life and culture?
- How does the school or district demonstrate the value of the IB programmes? How can the library/ian contribute to promoting them?
- How is access, inclusion and diversity addressed in library services?
- What parts of the schools' curriculums warrant the most library support?
- How familiar is the school or district with the tenets of an IB education?
- How are resources managed to match curricular goals?
- How do library services support meeting local, national and IB standards?
- How are resources distributed or made available to teachers and students?
- How many and what kinds of library collections and spaces are managed to promote reading and inquiry? Which have been designed to be used primarily with the IB programmes?
- How does professional development or in-school training promote academic integrity?
- How does the school or district address the development of multiliteracies?

## The media specialist

Librarians generally support technology literacy and multimodality, but some schools prefer roles that are specifically designed to encourage technology literacy and skills. Media specialists may have specific training in using apps and digital media—some media specialists have skills in coding, digital design, online teaching, or digital learning environment development.

Like teacher librarians, media specialists are encouraged to seek special training or professional development to support specific activities in the IB curriculum. Some are suited to teach technology-related subjects such

as MYP design or DP information technology in a global society. They may focus on promoting approaches to learning that complement technology use. How media specialists collaborate with other educators may differ slightly, depending on how much emphasis is placed on the technical aspects of their role. Some media specialists are active collaborators in designing learning, others act as “technical support” for learning engagements.

Media specialists’ themes may include resource management and distribution, and multiliteracies support—especially literacies developed through digital technologies. They may also involve learning planning and support and support for IB programme-specific elements.

The following are key questions used in shaping the role of the media specialist.

- How is the media specialist expected to collaborate with teachers and students?
- In what ways do new technologies and media energize and transform learning and teaching?
- What technologies does the school need or already use to energize learning and teaching?
- How is academic integrity promoted in environments with multiple technologies and media options?
- What does inquiry look like using new technologies?
- How can students’ learning be connected across multiple spaces and technologies (Bilandzic 2013)?
- How much time does the media specialist spend on technical support versus supporting and energizing learning and teaching?
- Should the media specialist also teach a unit, subject or course?

### **The designer librarian**

A significant number of librarians in IB schools are responsible for designing learning spaces, engagements and systems. Learning spaces can be physical, such as a new library hub, or virtual, such as websites, online learning platforms and pathfinders. Learning engagements usually involve designing spaces and resources for wider pedagogical goals. Designer librarians almost always have another role, with teacher or school librarian being the most common, and are involved in more intense work on designing when the school decides to invest in new physical or digital resources. Head librarians in schools or districts are the most likely to match this archetype.

Designer librarians often have experience with managing metadata, building websites, or have technical expertise that warrants their involvement in creating new spaces and systems. They are called upon to create blended and virtual learning environments (Boyer 2015). Some librarians evolve into this role when a school decides to adopt new systems, others are appointed because of their design experience. It is not as common for a designer librarian to know the IB programmes well, though it is very helpful to understand how the programmes are implemented when developing learning engagements and management systems.

The major themes for the designer librarian concern resource management and distribution, data and systems management, technology purchasing and support, and the coordination of activities, spaces and experiences.

The following are key questions used in shaping the role of the designer librarian.

- How is space used for inquiry and research in the school community?
- What creative ways can multipurpose learning spaces accommodate learning and teaching?
- What systems and applications are used to manage learning, teaching, and communication in the school community?
- How does the school community envision the value and use of new spaces and resources?
- How can classroom spaces accommodate library/ian services and vice versa?

- How does the designer librarian involve students in the co-creation of new learning environments (Clark 2010)?
- How can spaces and resources be designed to accommodate the widest variety of learners?
- How is quiet managed in the school? How does the librarian monitor learners' and teachers' need for quiet (McCaffrey and Breen 2016)?
- Where are safe spaces in the school community, and how are students and teachers made aware of them (Shaper and Streatfield 2012)?
- How is data being used in the school community? How can its use be improved (Lankes 2007)?

## The student life librarian

Some schools use the library as a conceptual or physical hub of activity, engagement and pastoral care for learners (Shaper and Streatfield 2012). The librarian takes an active role in designing and coordinating student activities, providing appropriate spaces and resources, and directly teaching areas of the curriculum such as ATL development, service learning, or social and emotional learning. Many student life librarians have training in pedagogies that support students' social and emotional development, and may be called on to advocate for emotional health in the school community. As a result, many student life librarians promote inclusion and actively participate in removing barriers to learning across the school (some also act as counsellors). Like designer librarians, student life librarians almost always have another role, with teacher or school librarian being the most common.

Student life librarians are most often found in primary schools, though all ages benefit from pastoral care as well as activities that promote social and emotional learning. Evidence suggests that the library/ian system also plays a strong pastoral care role in the lives of learners in disadvantaged communities or in communities where the number of safe and quiet spaces may be limited (Regalado and Smale 2015).

Most student life librarians seek professional development in specific areas of the IB programmes, and are very familiar with the curriculum. They also collaborate most with learners, and support both academic and personal inquiries.

The major themes for the student life librarian are pastoral care, social and emotional learning, collaboration with students and other educators, coordination of activities, spaces and experiences, and specific knowledge of IB programme activities.

The following are key questions used in shaping the role of the student life librarian.

- How is inquiry supported in and out of the classroom?
- Where are safe spaces in the school community, and how are students made aware of them (Shaper and Streatfield 2012)?
- How is quiet managed in the school? How does the librarian monitor the need for quiet (McCaffrey and Breen 2016)?
- How is access, inclusion and diversity addressed in library services?
- How does the student life librarian communicate with other educators about students' balance and well-being?
- What activities and services help students develop their own identity and agency as part of their learning?
- How do multiliteracies expand beyond academic areas into other aspects of life?
- What areas of the IB curriculum should the librarian coordinate?

## The super librarian

In 2004, the New Jersey State Library launched the Super Librarian campaign to elevate the image of libraries and librarians across the state, and to showcase their work. An organizer for the campaign discussed the reasoning behind reimagining the librarian:

This campaign dares to use a powerful concept of a superhero to describe librarians working in the local neighborhood library. It calls attention to the excellent services they provide routinely. It also challenges the individual to achieve whatever they want to by using this wonderful resource.

(Keresztury 2004)

The campaign was successful, with over 50,000 hits on the website immediately after its launch. The image of the librarian superhero portrayed a way of representing all that librarians can do. More campaigns evolved, and the archetype became popular with librarians as well as the general public.

On the surface, the super librarian looks like a successful archetype as there are many ways that librarians energize their communities, and their roles and responsibilities often transcend traditional curriculum structures and subjects. However, because their responsibilities are more loosely defined than other educators it is common to find them over-extending themselves to meet the needs of the community. This sometimes happens because of external circumstances, but librarians can get the impression that this is the most effective way to bring attention to the library.

Joyce Valenza's manifesto for 21st century librarians lists 92 activities and services that librarians might be expected to offer their communities. The manifesto became one of the most popular resources accessed online by librarians (Valenza 2010).

There is no doubt that energetic librarians can transform learning and teaching, but they can be stretched too far. Some schools assign too many responsibilities to librarians, or create roles that are difficult to reconcile or contain within manageable spaces and blocks of time. Librarians sometimes take on too much to prove their significance to the community, especially in situations where librarianship is misunderstood and undervalued. The super librarian has been promoted as an ideal, but it may have more drawbacks than benefits, especially for new librarians who need more support and resources.

The super librarian archetype may not be an aspirational archetype, but a reminder of the importance of not trying to do too much, and instead thinking about the right levels and types of services that work. There is a difference between what librarians can do, should do, and will do. There is also merit in considering the extent of the library/ian system in the question: what can and should be handled by digital solutions, other people, or other services to make best use of the library/ian?

These are the main questions to identify the super librarian.

- Is the librarian working overtime to meet school or curriculum demands?
- Are there significant unanticipated demands on the library/ian's time and resources?
- Is the librarian being asked to attend many meetings without a clear mandate or reason for attending?
- Is the librarian being asked to learn a significant number of new skills, applications, and systems in short amounts of time?
- Is the librarian asked to do manual tasks that can be handled with simple computing systems, such as cataloguing or collections monitoring?
- Is the library/ian solely responsible for most aspects of academic integrity for each student or teacher?
- Does the librarian have to travel across schools or campuses regularly?
- Is the library/ian always available online? How is that time managed?

- Are many elements of learning and teaching, both in and out of the classroom, defaulting to the library/ian, rather than being intentionally planned as part of their work?
- Is the librarian asked to be part of school activities when other educators are not?
- Does the librarian have to force themselves into many discussions simply to be recognized as a pedagogical leader?

There are few people who can be a super librarian. However, thoughtful management of library spaces and services can create the conditions to develop the kind of well-placed, learning-focused librarians supported by the IB. It is worth comparing a library/ian's actual roles and responsibilities against the archetypes, and considering how to make the most effective use of time and resources. Many librarians are given responsibilities that can be difficult to connect; are asked to work across buildings and even campuses, and are often left to determine their schedules as well as priorities without adequate support. Examining different archetypes can make it easier to see how certain skills and responsibilities complement each other, and to find ways to manage and optimise a library/ian.

# Glossary

<b>Archetype</b>	An example or model that can be emulated or adjusted to different contexts. Librarian archetypes are derived from the experiences of IB librarians about what they do in their work and with the library/ian system.
<b>Conversation</b>	A dialogue that is prepared for and designed to generate ideas, plans, concerns, and actions that transform the school community. Conversations are meaningful when they are open, ongoing, and relevant to the entire learning community.
<b>Hub</b>	A centre of activity that energizes and supports the community. Hubs do not have to be physical; they can be virtual or social.
<b>Inquiry</b>	The process of asking questions, seeking information, and exploring the wider world for answers, ideas, and ways forward. Inquiry begins with learners, and the community energizes and supports what they want to know. Inquiry is often conflated with research, which is a type of inquiry. Inquiries can be personal, physical, social, and academic.
<b>Just-in-time learning</b>	A pedagogical strategy designed to promote the use of class time for more active learning.
<b>Learner variability</b>	A term that embraces all students and does not exclude on the grounds of age, social status, economic status, language, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, or dis/ability. Within this understanding it is recognised that brain networks are variable, there is no average brain and thus there is no average student. Learner variability upholds that categorising students against levels of dis/ability does not provide sound indicators of a student's potential, nor specific teaching strategies. Taking into account changing histories and circumstances it is recognised that all students will experience barriers in the learning environment at some point in their educational journey.
<b>Library</b>	The combination of people, places, collections and services that aid and extend learning and teaching. Many libraries are also the hubs of learning communities.
<b>Library/ian</b>	The idea that the library and the librarian are a connected system, working together, to energize and support the learning community (inspired by Tilke 2015).
<b>Library nostalgia</b>	A perception of the library or of librarians that is based on the past. Misconceptions of the library and librarians can contribute to their removal or disenfranchisement from learning communities (Hochman 2016).
<b>Multilingualism</b>	"an individual store of languages at any level of proficiency, including partial competence and incomplete fluency, as well as metalinguistic awareness, learning strategies and opinions, preferences and passive or active knowledge on languages, language use and language learning/acquisition." (O'Laoire and Aronin 2006: 17–18)
<b>Multiliteracies</b>	The ability to engage with multiple texts and in multiple modes. Multiliteracies is a structure that combines multilingualism and multimodality. Many types of literacies can support a multiliteracies structure.

- Multimodality** The process of using multiple modes to communicate (Jewitt 2005). Multimodality often refers to the ability to use and interpret multimedia sources, as opposed to multiliteracies, which includes language as well as modal expression.
- Pastoral care** The process of maintaining positive relationships, creating and maintaining safe and welcoming environments, social inclusion, and emotional support in libraries (Shaper and Streatfield 2012).

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