

Process, Not Product

Teaching and Assessing the Critical Process of Information Literacy

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Desired Outcomes

Participants will reflect on their pedagogy to recognize that:



the work of information literacy instruction is unavoidably theory-laden.



perpetuating product-driven models of instruction is unsustainable.



there are weaknesses inherent in the “one-shot” paradigm.



librarians need to do something about it.

The prevailing model of library instruction is one that teaches students the *skills* necessary to acquire a *product*.

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What do we
mean by
“product”?

Sources which are
used to write *papers*
to earn *grades* to
amass *credits*.

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INFORMATION LITERACY



*Desired
Product
Imposed*

*Product-
Focused
Instruction*

*Product
Acquired*

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This focus on product forms
the basis of ACRL's Standards for
Information Literacy.

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INFORMATION LITERACY



*Desired
Product
Imposed*

*Product-
Focused
Instruction*

*Product
Acquired*

Information
Needed

Information
Sought

Information
Found

Information
Evaluated

Information
Used

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What's the problem?

Emphasizing the product reduces information literacy to a set of tools and tasks.

INFORMATION LITERACY



*Desired
Product
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*Product-
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*Product
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***This model largely ignores
context and student agency.***

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“By objectifying and decontextualizing phenomena in the search for broad structural patterns, information literacy researchers have separated students from social and economic contexts, thereby detaching them from school, teacher, and society in an effort to isolate variables to create more pure ‘scientific’ studies” (Elmborg, 2006, p. 194).

The Positivist/Neoliberal/Banking Model

Learning should be measured by the accumulation of **stuff**.

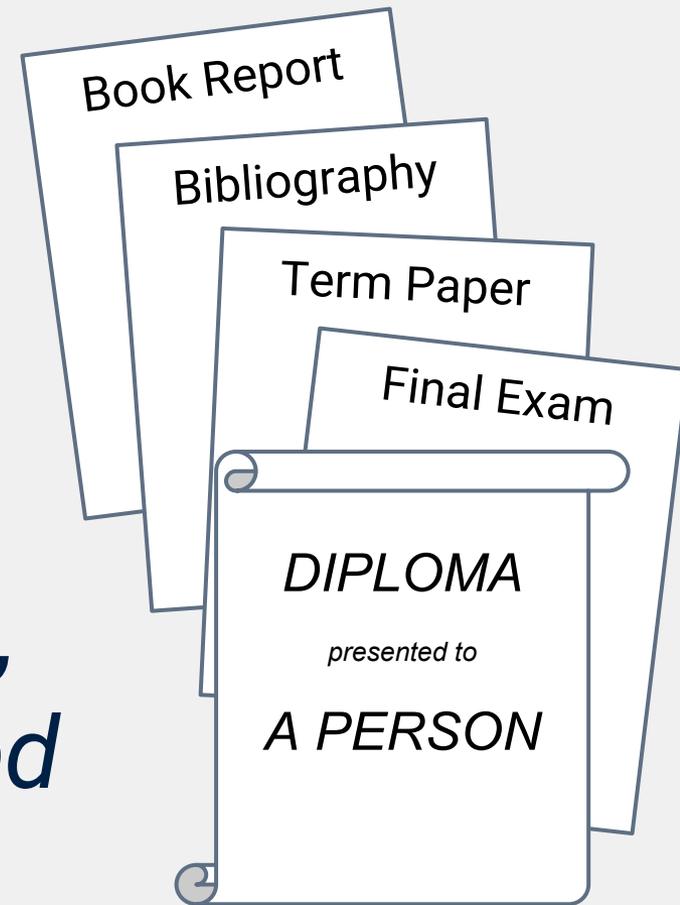
Teach skills that will acquire **stuff**.

Count the **stuff**.

Are students getting enough **stuff**?

If they're not getting enough **stuff**, you might not be that valuable.

Quantitatively assessing a product tells you what a student obtained, but not how it was acquired, or if the student even wanted the product to begin with.



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The context surrounding how and why information is created, distributed, and valued needs to be addressed.

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Discussion!

*How can we reconcile
the gap between “tasks”
and “the larger context” in
information literacy
instruction?*

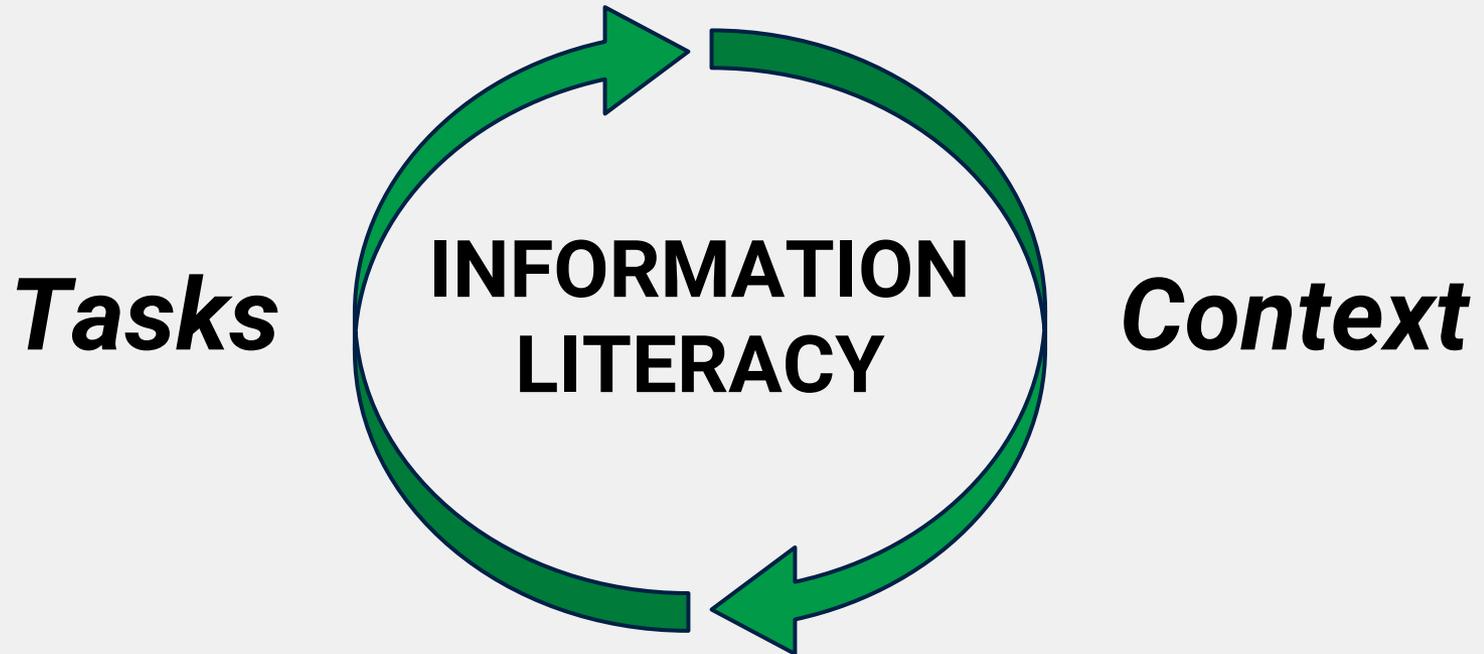
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Our Solution?

Emphasize that tasks and context are inseparable.

They are all part of the same process.

The Hermeneutic Process



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“Knowledge was suddenly about information only. It had no relation to how one lived, behaved...” (hooks, p. 3)

Acknowledging affect is vital to discussions of context.

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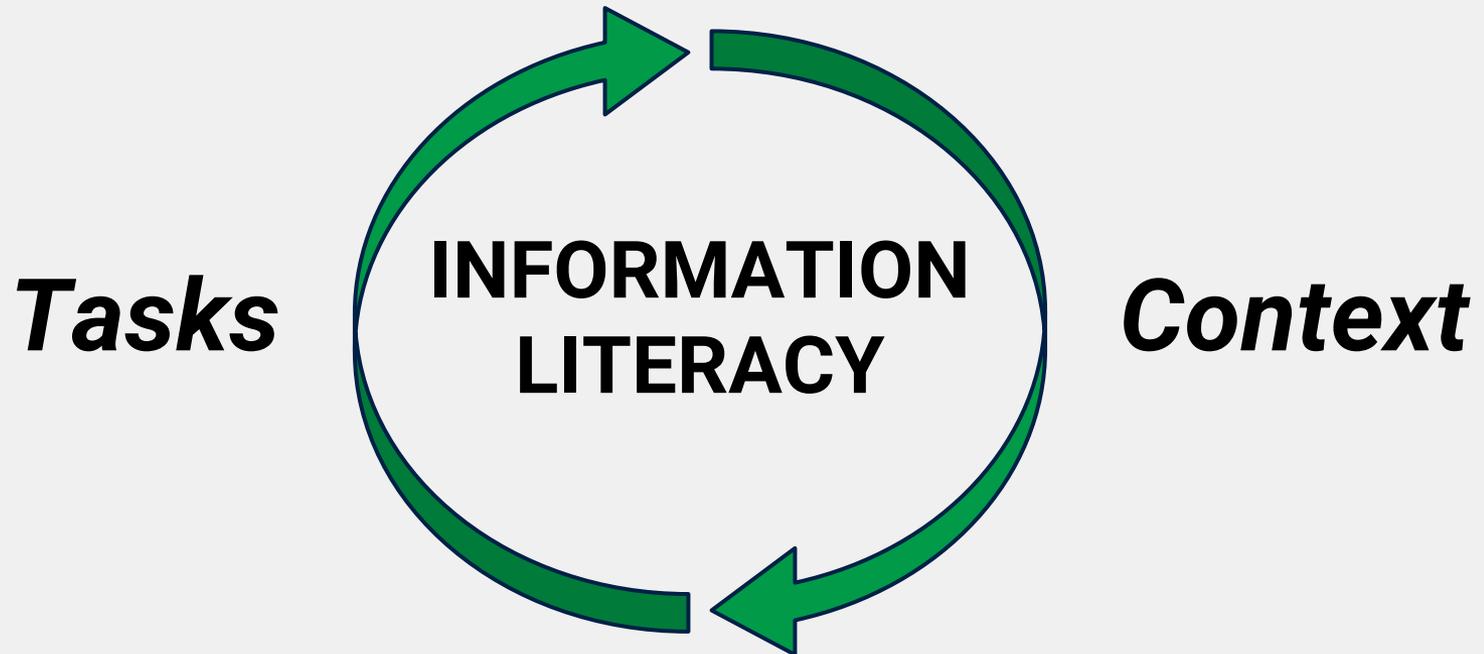
Information literacy is a process driven by affect and interpretation.

*What we think and feel.
What students think and feel.
These things matter.*

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The Hermeneutic Process



This process requires consistent critical reflection.

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This approach to process enables students to develop a critical consciousness of information.

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**This critical
consciousness
is dispositional.**

**It cannot be
standardized
across learners.**

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This is why we like the
Framework.

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Discussion!

*What is the ideal model of
(process-driven?) information
literacy instruction?*

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***We thought about this
and realized...***

**One-shots are a
disingenuous form
of instruction.**

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“Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other” (Freire, 1970/2003, p. 72).

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The Critical/Phenomenological Process

Learning should be measured by how we perceive what is around us.

We should use those perceptions to inform social change.

What we accumulate is not nearly as important as what we do in our lives and how we relate to each other.

Assessment of this process should be qualitative, including reflection, discussion, and creation.



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Discussion!

How do you reconcile your practice with the process-based approach we've outlined?

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Research is a **process**. We should be teaching the **process**. We should be assessing the **process**. We should be critical of the **process**. We should be teaching students to be critical of the **process**. We should be critical of how we are assessing the **process**. We should be assessing how well we are teaching students to be critical of the **process**. We should be critical of how we are assessing how well we are teaching students to be critical of the **process**.

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Questions?

Keep the conversations going!

#critlib

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Freire, P. (2003). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (30th anniversary ed.), trans by Myra Bergman Ramos. New York: Continuum Books. (Original work published 1970).

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