

# Information Literacy and College Readiness

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**Homewood-Flossmoor High School  
ACT Midwest Region EPAS Invitational  
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**“We should be educating all high school students according to a common academic expectation, one that prepares them for both postsecondary education and the workforce.”**

From the ACT publication: *Ready for College and Ready for Work: Same or Different?*

# However...

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**“despite the importance of postsecondary education, many high school students graduate under prepared for college-level courses.”**

From the ACT publication: *Breaking Barriers: A Case Study of Two High-Performing Schools.*

# Are our students able to:

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- Gather information from a variety of sources
- Search for and identify a source
- Take notes
- Assess quality and degree of information
- Connect information to support an argument
- Tell the difference between primary and secondary sources
- Separate fact from opinion



# Current scenario...

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- Many high school graduates, accustomed to easy success in high school, struggle in college.
- A recent California study suggests that a contributing factor is poor information literacy and research skills.

*From: Academic Literacy: A Statement of Competencies Expected of Students Entering California's Public Colleges and Universities. 2002.  
(Cited in Fitzgerald 2004)*

# Today's students: not as tech-savvy as they appear.

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- **Can they use a search engine to find reliable information to help them choose a new car?**
- **Can they determine whether health information on a Web site is legitimate or bogus?**
- **Can they compose a decent e-mail?**

*Chicago Tribune, February 18, 2007*

# Results of recent ICT assessment:

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- Only 52% could correctly judge the objectivity of a Web site.
- Only 65% assessed the site's authority.
- Only 40% entered multiple search terms to narrow the results when using an Internet search engine.
- Many had trouble determining when it is ethical to use information found on the Internet in their own work and rewrite the facts for a new audience.

**The numbers only confirm what teachers and librarians have known for years:**

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- **“Being able to use Google or Wikipedia doesn’t mean a student is capable of doing college-level research.”**

Chicago Tribune, February 18, 2007



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**What can we do to  
promote information  
literacy?**

# Definition— The Information Literate Student:

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- **Accesses** information efficiently and effectively.
- **Evaluates** information critically and competently.
- **Uses** information accurately and creatively.

~ Information Power, ALA 1998

- **Information literacy** – a life skill that applies across all disciplines.

Apply for a mortgage...Vote for a candidate...Buy a car...Take an informed position on an important issue...Choose a graduate program...Research your family history...Plan a wedding...Write a dissertation...Understand a disease or drug...



*The possibilities are endless.....*

# Illinois Learning Standards

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- English Language Arts (Goals 1-5)
- Mathematics (Goals 6-10)
- Science (Goals 11-13)
- Social Science (Goals 14-18)
- Physical Development & Health (Goals 19-24)
- Fine Arts (Goals 25-27)
- World Languages (Goals 28-30)
- Social/Emotional Learning (SEL Goals 1-3)

# Develop Strong Electronic Library Collections



The screenshot displays the website for Homewood-Flossmoor High School Library. At the top left is a photograph of a library interior. The top right features the school's name and a circular seal with the text "HOMewood FLOSSMOOR HIGH SCHOOL EXCELLENCE 1959". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: "Our Mission", "Library Staff", "Library Guidelines", "Area Libraries", and "Staff Resources". The main content area contains several red buttons: "H-F Reads", "Online Databases and E-Books", "Library Catalog", "How to Cite Sources", "Class Research Guides", "Reading and Literature", and "Reference Links". A yellow box on the left highlights the "2007-08 H-F Reads" list, featuring the book cover for "Zlata's Diary non-fiction".

**Homewood-Flossmoor High School Library**

to H-F Home

[Our Mission](#) [Library Staff](#) [Library Guidelines](#) [Area Libraries](#) [Staff Resources](#)

**H-F Reads** **Online Databases and E-Books** **Library Catalog**

**How to Cite Sources** **Class Research Guides**

**Reading and Literature** **Reference Links**

**2007-08 H-F Reads**

**Zlata's Diary non-fiction**

# Offer Better Choices...

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**“If given a choice, many students will choose to search the Internet for information. This approach doesn’t require developing search strategies or critical thinking skills. Just go to a search engine, type in keywords, hit enter and – thousands of results in just seconds. Any information is good, and the more of it, the better.”**

# Advantages

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- **Authoritative, current**
- **Always appropriate for academic research**
- **Delivered in convenient, easy to search electronic format**



# Collaborate across disciplines

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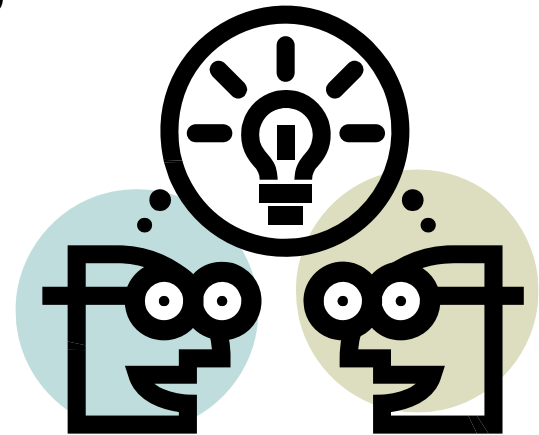
English, Reading, Social Sciences and Library faculty coordinate their efforts in delivering four years of instruction in research and writing skills.



# Collaboration With Faculty

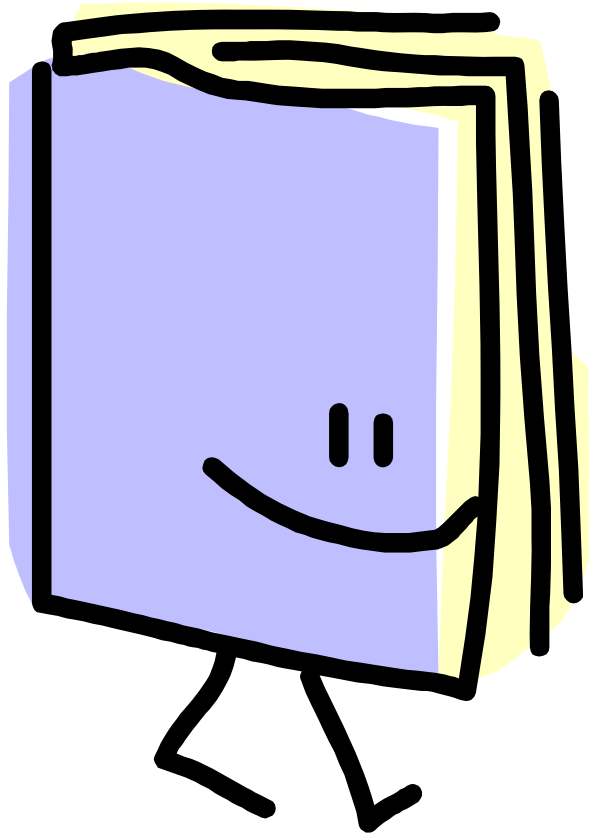
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- **Integrate research skills with specific assignments and projects.**
- **Project planners**
- **Pathfinders and research guides.**



# School Library Media Center

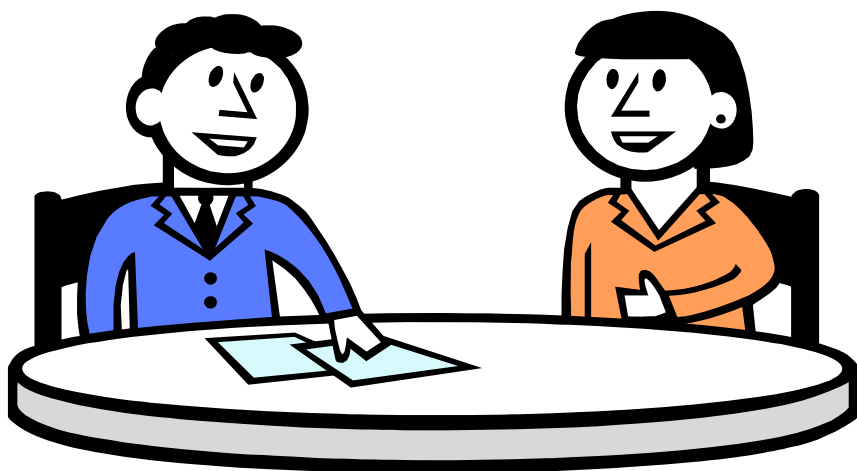
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- **Welcoming**
- **Positive Learning Environment**
- **Student-centered**

# Collaborate with Area Libraries

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- **Coordinate efforts with feeder schools**
- **Communicate with area public libraries.**

# Sources

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- Fitzgerald, Mary Ann. "Making the Leap from High School to College: Three New Studies about Information Literacy Skills of First-Year College Students." *Knowledge Quest* 32.4 (Mar./Apr. 2004): 19-24.
- Geck, Caroline. "The Generation Z Connection: Teaching Information Literacy to the Newest Net Generation." Teacher Librarian 33.3 (Feb. 2006): 19-23.
- Heyboer, Kelly. "New Test Finds Students' Cyber Aptitude Wanting." Chicago Tribune 18 Feb. 2007: 6.
- O'Sullivan, Michael. "Analyzing Student Search Strategies: Making a Case for Integrating Information Literacy Skills into the Curriculum." *Teacher Librarian* 33.1 (Oct. 2005): 21-5.