

Leading Students to the Future with the Literacy Skills they Need

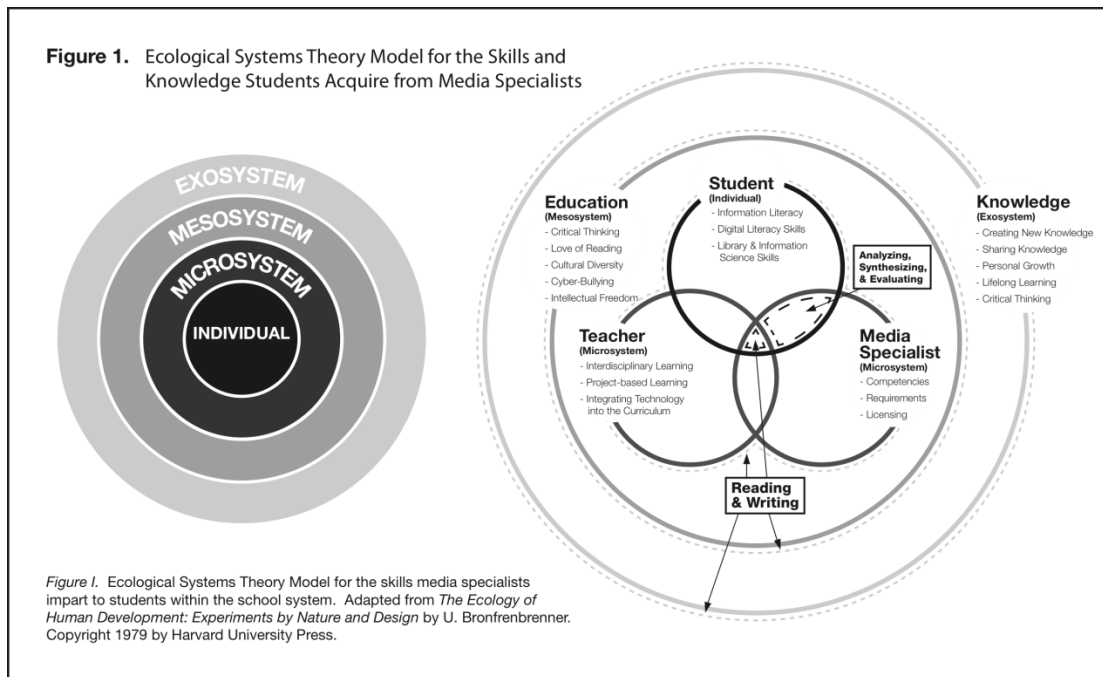
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- It is becoming imperative for students to know if what they are reading online is true or not.
- How do students know if what they read on We Chat, Facebook, Instagram, and other social platforms is true?
- Social media is as influential as main stream media in shaping student thinking.

Students learn the literacy skills they need for current and future effectiveness from school librarians or certified media specialists. In the process of learning how to access reliable information and knowledge, students analyze, evaluate, and synthesize the material they find online. Media specialists teach these skills.

WHAT LITERACY SKILLS DO STUDENTS NEED AS THEY FACE THE FUTURE?

- Digital Literacy Skills
- Information Literacy Skills
 - Reading Skills

DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS FOR K-12 STUDENTS

Material originating from online sources requires the ability to analyze the source to determine its validity and reliability and synthesize it in order to create an internal framework and understand it's meaning. Skills associated with digital literacy include aggregating, analyzing, and synthesizing information from online sources such as:

- social media platforms, blogs, email, wikis, and other accessible online sources.

In addition, digital literacy skills include basic electronic communication skills such as keyboarding, word processing, communicating clearly and effectively through email, and how to search online effectively are necessary for students in K-12.

How do students know if what they find online is true?

INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS FOR K-12 STUDENTS

Information literacy skills are at the heart of academic work and basic to how we come to know what we know. Published research articles require valid and reliable data analysis and include a peer review process before they are published. Scholars publishing research draw from existing published research articles to build their own work and most research articles include a literature review of existing research studies that pass a peer review process. Hence, when we read published research, the articles we read have gone through a rigorous process to reach publication.

Unlike searching any and all sources online, which produces information, finding and using research articles produces knowledge.

It is these resources that students need to find to produce their own academic work and meet core academic standards. These resources are found in electronic databases, which can be expensive. However, in Minnesota, all Minnesotans have access to *eLibrary Minnesota*, which gives us access to articles for free. See: <https://elibrarymn.org/>

Some of the fulltext articles found through searching online databases are available online, but many are not. In these cases, it is essential to have a collection of journals. Students need to be taught the skills necessary to locate and use research articles. This process is called "Information Literacy".

In addition, databases give access to newspapers and magazines, which are more reliable sources of information than the material produced through an online search. Valid, reliable, truthful information is not free, but proprietary, and copyrighted.

READING SKILLS FOR K-12 STUDENTS

Reading skills are basic and essential for all students. School librarians represent these skills and give access to reading collections that build reading skills.