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Book Review

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Chan, L. et al 2002. *Budapest Open Access Initiative.* New York: Open Society Institute. Available at: http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml [Retrieved 22 January 2007].

Blanchett, Helen, Powis, Chris, and Webb, Jo. 2011. *A guide to teaching information literacy: 101 practical tips*. London: Facet Publishing. pp.256 ISBN. 978-1-85604-659-6 £49.95. Pbk.

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This text is intended to work as a practical guide for anyone involved in teaching information literacy, offering advice and ideas for the planning and delivery of sessions which can be applied to a range of situations and environments. The tips contained in the book have been used in real-life teaching situations by the authors, who are LIS practitioners with much experience of teaching information literacy, and are explained in the context of learning theory and models of information literacy. The book gives a thorough treatment to all aspects of teaching, from planning a session and ensuring an effective delivery, to selecting an engaging activity to consolidate learning and choosing the most suitable methods of assessment and evaluation. It is intended for any LIS practitioner involved in teaching, whether new to the role or experienced, and I think that it succeeds in being useful for all; as a newly-qualified practitioner just beginning to teach, I found the guidance for the basic aspects of planning and delivering a session, as well as the suggestions for activities, very helpful, but the range of possible activities explored means that there will surely be useful suggestions made for those looking to develop their established teaching practices.

The book consists of 101 “tips” arranged into three sections; planning, delivery and activities. The tips vary in length but are generally between two and four pages long. The authors explain the topic, aspect or activity being discussed, suggest ways in which it can be varied or developed, and warn of things to watch out for. Samples or examples are included to illustrate some of the tips, and others include suggested further reading. The authors state in the introduction to the book that it is intended “to be dipped into as and when required” (viii) as a reference text for teaching, rather than read all the way through, and this is certainly how it would work well; each tip is substantial and provides plenty to think about. However, those new to teaching information literacy may find it useful to read the book from start to end, to gain an overview of and some ideas for each stage and aspect of teaching.

The book is well written and organised, and easy to read. The first section, *Planning*, introduces teaching and learning theories and models of information literacy, and makes suggestions for pre-session audits, methods of assessment, evaluation and reflection. The second section, *Delivery*, offers tips for managing sessions effectively in a variety of teaching situations, from the practicalities of ensuring that the room layout is suitable and working around technical problems, to dealing with disruptive or unresponsive learners. This section could even be used as a kind of check-list to ensure that the practitioner has considered everything before starting their session.

The final, and most substantial section of the book revolves around activities which could be used in information literacy teaching. There is a massive range of tips here, from concepts which can inform or direct a session, such as the Cephalonian method and Technology-Enhanced Learning, to ideas for specific activities to suit a variety of teaching situations and learning objectives. Although I was already familiar with some of these, many were entirely new to me, such as “Stop, Start, Continue” feedback and “Dividing the Dots”, and I have drawn plenty of ideas from this section of the book; as I read, I found myself making notes to myself to consider certain activities for forthcoming teaching sessions. With the format of the tips offering alternative or further suggestions for using the activity, even experienced practitioners familiar with many of these activities could potentially find some new ideas to integrate into their teaching. I can envisage myself returning to this section of the book repeatedly in the future. It is also reassuring when the authors include warnings of potential issues or pitfalls based on their own experience, as this demonstrates that the activity has been tested in a real-life teaching situation.

This is a useful and accessible text which I would recommend to any LIS practitioner involved in teaching information literacy. It is organised in a way which makes it easy to use as a reference guide, and covers aspects of planning, delivery and content to suit a variety of teaching sessions for different types of learner. Although the authors are from an academic library background, they do not focus solely on academic libraries, and thus this book could be useful to those teaching information literacy in all LIS sectors. My only criticism of the book is that it ends abruptly; although it is meant to be a reference guide, rather than a book read from beginning to end, a conclusion of some kind would have been welcome. However, this is a minor fault which does not detract from the usefulness of the text. I would suggest that this is an essential book for those new to teaching information literacy, and a useful addition to the collection of experienced practitioners. It is certainly one to which I will return in the future.