

Book Week escape with Oliver



Sharon McGuinness, Teacher Librarian, Oliver Implementation, Thirroul Public School

Digital literacy

The implementation of the Oliver library management system has enabled NSW school libraries to springboard into 21st century digital teaching and learning. Having access to a web-based catalogue, an editable home page, a wide variety of recorded training modules and several other library catalogues and databases is the biggest change in NSW school libraries for close to 30 years. More than ever before, teacher librarians are well placed to further students' skills in the area of digital literacy.

A term being talked about more frequently in education arenas, digital literacy has been part of a teacher librarian's vocabulary since 2008. The ALA Digital Taskforce (2011) [defines digital literacy](#) as the 'ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills'.

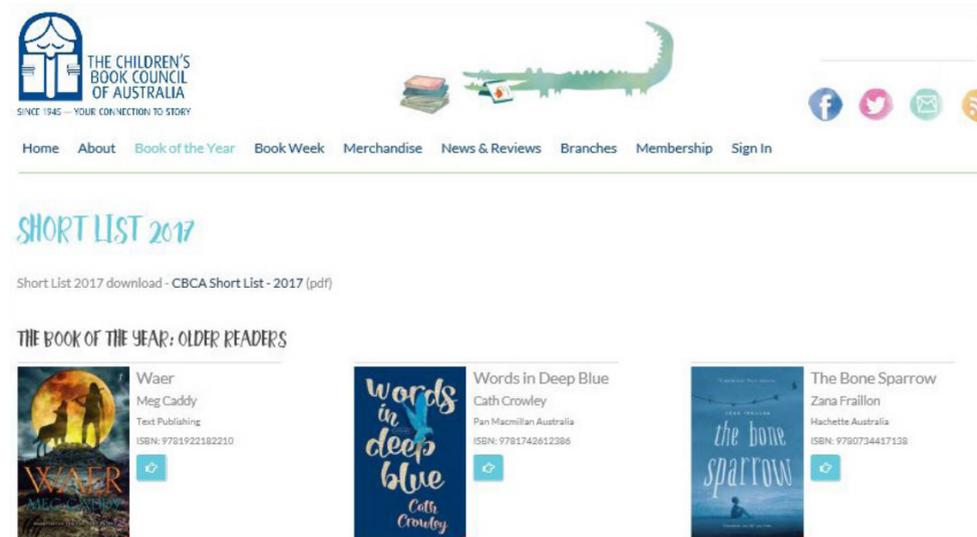
A recent report published by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) entitled [Digital Literacy Skills and Learning Report](#) has examined the teaching of information and communication technologies in initial teacher education in NSW.

The report recognised that there are opportunities to use and exercise digital literacies in every syllabus and in almost every situation. What was also expressed was the realisation that beginning teachers often lack digital literacy skills themselves. As leaders in information literacy, and more recently digital literacy, this presents an opportunity for teacher librarians to mentor and support beginning teachers, in addition to their students, in the acquisition of these skills through collaborative teaching.

The focus on Book Week and shortlisted titles across a number of categories presents teacher librarians with many opportunities to use digital literacy to engage students and staff with fiction and nonfiction titles.

Focus on quality literature

This article illustrates the use of digital literacy as a framework for how Oliver may be used during Book Week to focus on quality literature, in this case any of the texts currently shortlisted for an award by the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) in 2017. Additionally, other quality texts may be used as part of a focus on the 2017 Book Week theme, 'Escape to everywhere'.



Screenshot – CBCA short list 2017

During Term 3, NSW school libraries have traditionally focused on children's literature due to Book Week commencing around mid-August. With the shortlisted titles for awards being announced on 28 March, the interest and excitement builds from then, culminating in the announcement of the books which have been selected as either Book of the Year or receiving an Honour award on 18 August 2017.

Book Week sets the stage for the exposure of students to quality Australian literature each year. It presents a wealth of opportunities to develop students' skills, enabling them to:

- think critically - evaluating/judging the shortlisted titles
- create their own texts
- communicate their opinions and feelings about texts
- use digital technologies to create new information and products.

This year's shortlist contains a number of works by new authors, particularly in the category of Older Readers (suitable for high school) with four of the six nominated authors having written debut novels. For the first time, there are two self-published works in the category of information books (Eve Pownall). This illustrates the strength of publishing in Australia for children and young adults. Indeed, the numbers of works being submitted to the CBCA for consideration has again increased to well over 500.

In a recent article by [Linda Morris](#), the CBCA awards national chair, Professor Margot Hillel, recognised that 'Australian contemporary children's literature is thriving', which is testament to the increasing numbers of books submitted for consideration, including high quality self-published works.

If Book Week provides the stage or rationale, Oliver can be viewed as providing the tools the students and teachers can use. Using Oliver can be seen as a one-stop shop, providing access for students to write their reviews of the shortlisted titles, as well as for teachers and the teacher librarian to upload literature-based activities/links to the home page, specifically designed for Book Week.

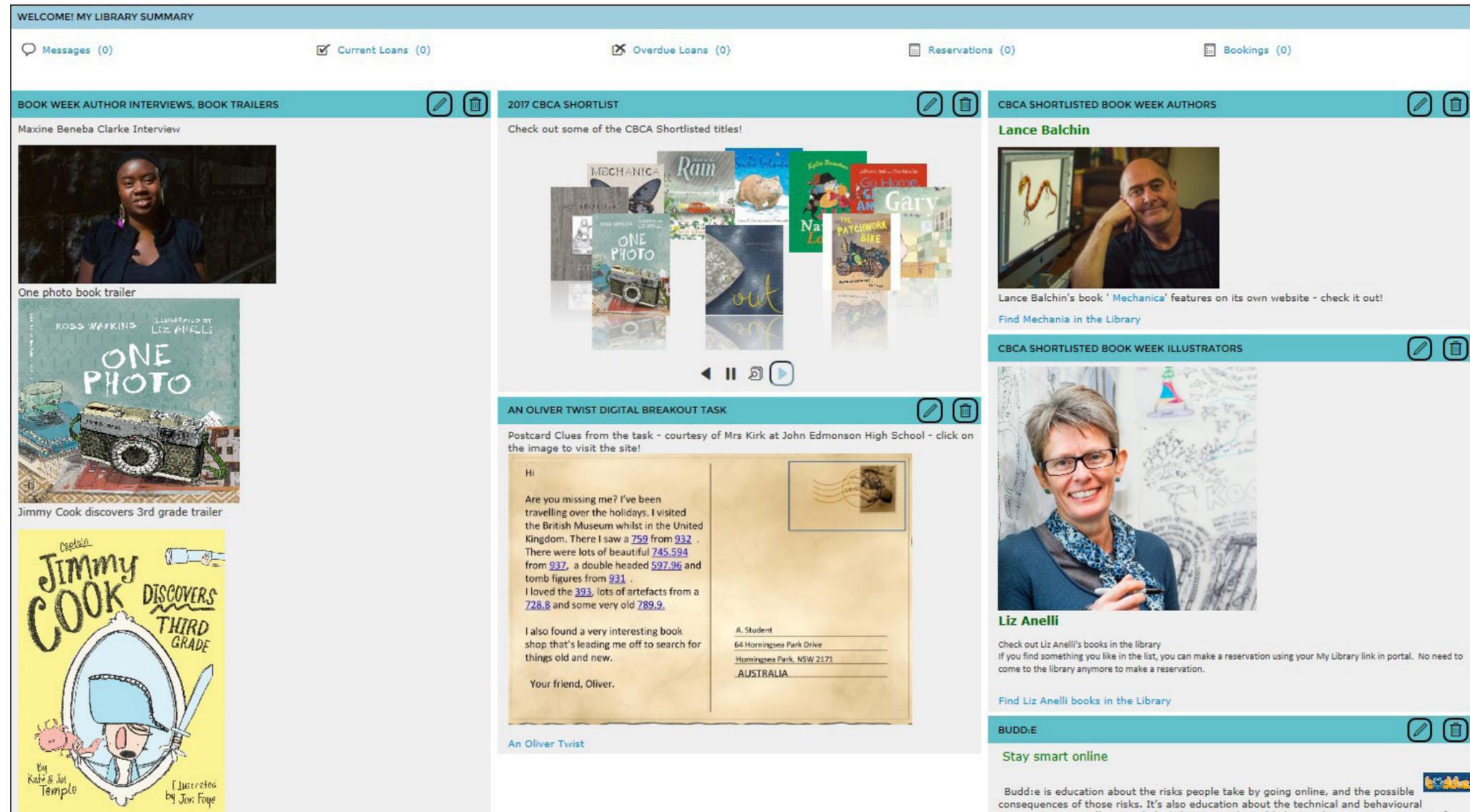
Managing multimedia resources

The role of the teacher librarian is crucial in managing the school library's home page, which is the first point of contact with Oliver for both staff and students.

Comprising several information boxes, each box is editable and a range of different media can be inserted, such as:

- links to shortlisted authors and illustrators websites or other websites, tools, tasks created by teachers/teacher librarian
- video – particularly useful for interviews and book trailers, produced professionally and by students
- image carousel – useful for book covers of the shortlisted categories.

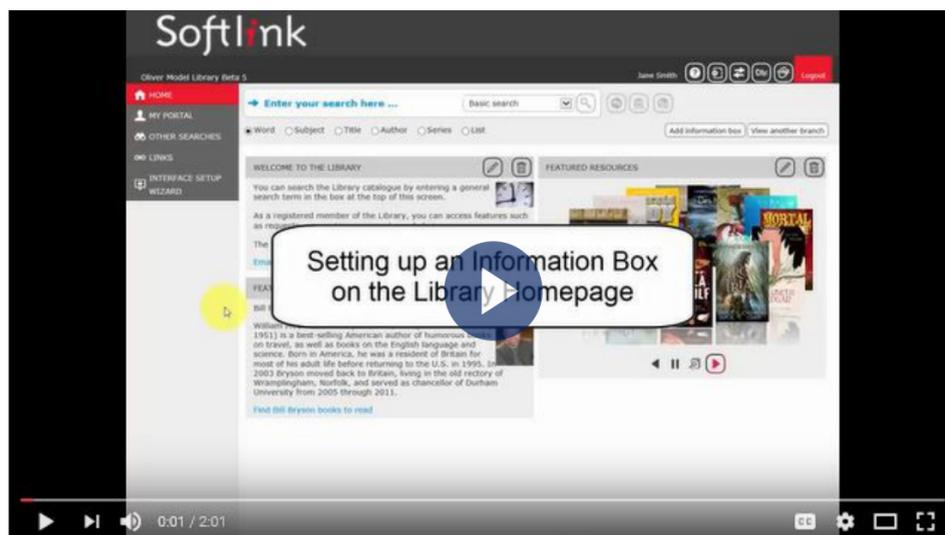
Detailed instructions related to adding specific media, such as video, are available via 'Help'. See, in particular, the 'How to' documents which outline the procedures for adding images, video, linked images and carousels to an information box via the [Softlink support portal](#).



The image above illustrates the use of the information boxes to house a video interview with picture book author, Maxine Beneba Clarke, and the book trailers of 'One photo' and 'Jimmy Cook' which are accessed via linked images. The carousel features the shortlisted titles (10 cover limit) which can be changed to enable different category covers. Featured shortlisted authors and illustrators, with links to their website, are also included.

An example of Oliver's information boxes for Book Week 2017

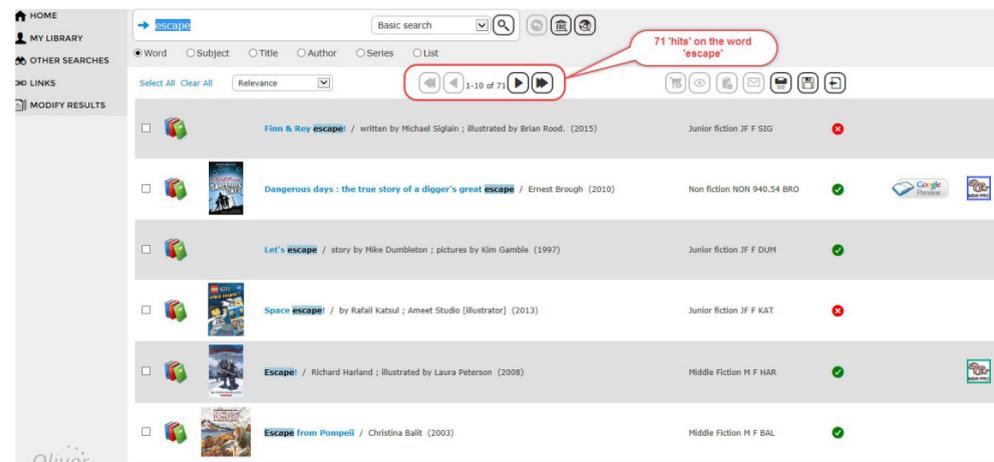
Be aware of the department's access restrictions to some sites such as YouTube and Vimeo. It is necessary that the video is either in mp4 format and downloaded then saved as a file, to be uploaded into the Oliver system, or the video content can be accessed from an unblocked site such as the ABC.



Setting up an information box on the library homepage (Build 8) by Softlink HQ

During Book Week, the Oliver home page can be transformed with a complete literature focus, highlighting the theme, 'Escape to everywhere'.

Oliver Reading Lists can be created for a specific focus. For example, a simple word search using 'escape' in Thirroul PS's catalogue returns 71 hits. These could be filtered by collection or further by theme.



Screenshot of search results for 'escape' in titles from Thirroul Public School's library catalogue

Older students could have the opportunity to search the catalogue and contribute, or a simple brainstorm session may encourage students to think of other stories (fairy tales for example) where a character has needed to escape. A catalogue quiz could easily be developed using the search results – or form part of a larger task.

Create a survey via [survey monkey](#) or Google forms (via G Suite on DoE portal) for each stage to be used as an evaluation/judging tool for some of the categories. Schools can hold their own Book Week award judging, using a simplified version of the CBCA

criteria, which can be found on the [About](#) page on the CBCA website.

Students could be encouraged to write reviews of the shortlisted titles, accessed via the Oliver catalogue, using the CBCA judging criteria.

A library scavenger hunt using Oliver searches could be developed, incorporating the library catalogue and the 'Other providers' search (public library, State Library of NSW, ABC Splash, Trove), in order to collect clues that will earn students a 'key' to unlock further clues. Students can use clues in book covers displayed in Oliver or from outside links housed in an information box on the Oliver home page.

Ideas for shortlisted books challenges

1. Students are required to locate three fiction stories related to 'escape' from their own library catalogue, in addition to one other provider library's catalogue.
2. Copy some of the book covers featuring escapes, but remove author and title – students need to identify them via a catalogue search. See the website [Sporcle](#) for literature quizzes (high school) which also uses covers with key author or title information missing. Contact the site for permission to use covers.
3. Use Trove to locate specific images using the term 'escape' – for example, find Houdini's cot escape.
4. Using [rebus word puzzles](#), students can work in pairs to develop puzzles based on some of the shortlisted titles. Other students, teachers and the principal would be encouraged to solve them, with the best being uploaded as an image

to the Oliver home page. For example, which shortlisted title is this?



5. Design online travel brochures using [Canva](#) to advertise a weekend escape to a fictional place, such as Hogwarts, Oz or Narnia. Students can use their own drawings in addition to photos on the Canva website. They could also use the brochure option in Microsoft Word.
6. Using the quote, 'Reading gives us someplace to go when we have to stay where we are' by Mason Cooley ([Quotery](#)), students can write about a place where they like to escape to read.
7. Mandy Kirk, Teacher Librarian, John Edmonson High School, has created a '[Digital breakout](#)' task. Students use the Oliver catalogue as a tool to crack codes and solve puzzles to finally work

out the solution. This could be easily adapted as a Book Week activity, using the theme 'Escape to everywhere'.

The Oliver library management system provides the tools and framework which enables the teacher librarian to further engage students with both quality literature and digital literacy.

Using imagination to create tasks, creativity in using and applying digital tools, and being able to upload these to the Oliver library home page, reinforces the Oliver system as a 'one-stop shop' for students and teachers.

References and further reading

ALA Digital Literacy Taskforce 2011, '[Digital literacy definition](#)', *ALA Connect*, American Library Association, accessed 30 April 2017.

[Canva](#), accessed 30 April 2017.

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Kirk, M. 2017, '[Digital breakout: an Oliver twist](#)', *Google Sites*, accessed 30 April 2017.

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