

"Threshold Concepts for teaching Information Literacy in the classroom"

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Definition: "A threshold concept can be considered as akin to a portal, opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something." Meyer & Land

The **Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL)** last updated their Information Literacy standards for higher education in 2000. A new Information Literacy framework evolved out of a need for a richer, more complex set of core ideas to meet our rapidly-changing higher education environment. In 2014, a new framework of **six threshold concepts** (or frames) was developed that organizes ideas about information, research and scholarship into a coherent whole.

What are the 6 Threshold Concepts for Information Literacy?

<https://library.carleton.ca/help/information-literacy-higher-education>

Authority is Constructed and Contextual

Information resources reflect their creator's expertise and credibility and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used.

Information Creation as a Process

Information in any format is produced to convey a message and is shared via a selected delivery method. The iterative processes of researching, creating, revising and disseminating information vary, and the resulting product reflects these differences.

Information has value

Information possesses several dimensions of value, including as a commodity, as a means of education, as a means to influence, and as a means of negotiating and understanding the world. Legal and socioeconomic interests influence information production and dissemination.

Research as Inquiry

Research is iterative and depends upon asking increasingly complex or new questions whose answers in turn develop additional questions or lines of inquiry in any field.

Scholarship as Conversation

Communities of scholars, researchers, or professionals engage in sustained discourse with new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations.

Searching as Strategic Exploration

Searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative, requiring the evaluation of a range of information sources and the mental flexibility to pursue alternate avenues as new understanding develops.

*The library's teaching staff is engaged in integrating **Information Literacy** across the curriculum.*

*Using the threshold concepts is essential for **critical thinking**, a major component for student success.*

The library is transforming student's understanding of research and learning strategies.

*The library is developing **active learning** strategies in the classroom with measurable learning outcomes.*

If you have ideas on applying threshold concepts in your classroom, start a conversation with your librarian or subject specialist. All feedback welcome!

Meyer, Jan H.F., Land, R., Baillie, C. Threshold Concepts and Transformation Learning, Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2010.

ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education: www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework