

# EMBEDDING MULTIPLE LITERACIES IN A MOOC FOR PROFESSIONALS

## INTRODUCTION

The OpenCPD project is a MOOC (Massively Open Online Course) and set of OERs. It came out of the Librarycamp movement. Librarycamps are unconferences for anyone interested in improving libraries. There is no agenda, there are no slides and anyone can lead a session. The movement is hugely popular, with every (free) event selling out quickly, and attracts people from inside and outside of the profession at all levels. It is an excellent learning opportunity, and attendees learn about topics that would never be covered in internal training, professional qualifications and standard conferences.

OpenCPD takes the horizontal learning and open access principles of Librarycamp and takes it online so that everyone can benefit from this collective educational experience. People with caring responsibilities and evening and weekend work can struggle to get involved with in-person events, as can other marginalised groups, so the MOOC and OERs can make this type of learning more accessible and broaden the reach of the social elements too. It's a shame the cake can only be virtual.

Content blocks for the MOOC will be "pitched:" in the same way that sessions are initially pitched at Librarycamps, using a wiki. Similar topics will be grouped together and participant interest will be assessed when drawing up the programme. Some content will be generated by the core project team, including a compulsory block on Open Literacy for content creators that will be offered as an extra credit module for other participants.

## ASSUMPTIONS

The MOOC (and the OERs that will ultimately come out of the MOOC materials) is aimed at information professionals. However, this does not mean assuming a certain level of information literacy or the presence of specific skills is appropriate, whether thinking about those who will lead sessions or the learners participating in the MOOC. The course will be open to all and accessible to all, for both production and consumption, and there is a real need to consider concepts such as differentiation.

## DEFINITIONS

**Information literacy** - "knowing when and why you need information, where to find it, and how to evaluate, use and communicate it in an ethical manner." (CILIP, 2013)

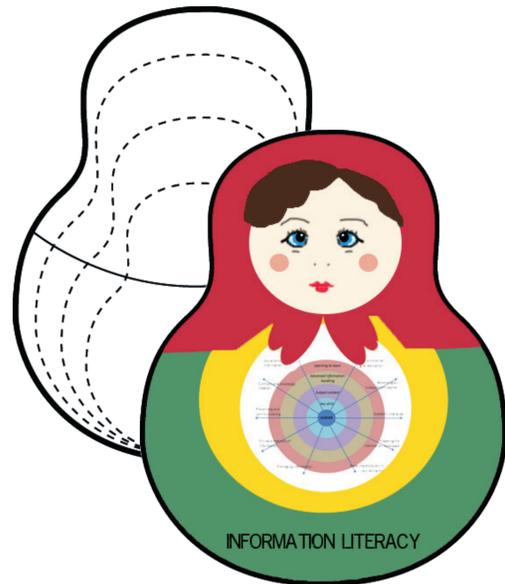
**Media literacy** - "the ability to use, understand and create media and communications in a variety of contexts" (Ofcom, n.d.)

**Digital literacy** - "the ability to make and share meaning in different modes and formats; to create, collaborate and communicate effectively and to understand how and when digital technologies can best be used to support these processes." (Futurelab, 2010)

**Open literacy** - see definition opposite.

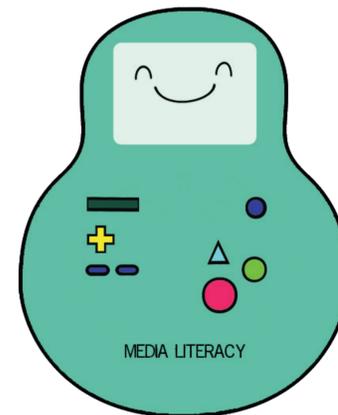
**Critical literacy** - "language use that questions the social construction of the self. When we are critically literate, we examine our ongoing development, to reveal the subjective positions from which we make sense of the world and act in it." (Shor, 1999)

**Differentiation** - when differences between students are accommodated in teaching (TES Magazine, 2013). Teaching can be differentiated by task, support or outcomes (Tomlinson, 1999).



## INFORMATION LITERACY

Information literacy is the literacy that contains all the other academic literacies. Florence Dujardin (@afdujardin) originated the idea of a matryoshka doll (set of nested dolls) as a metaphor for this concept. Information literacy as a container is not an uncontroversial position, and some people have tried to define and apply new terminology like transliteracy (Thomas et al, 2007) and metaliteracy (Mackey & Jacobson, 2011) to find a different "bucket" for all the literacies, while others see literacies like media literacy and digital literacy as separate from information literacy.

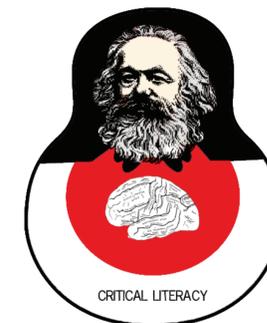


## MULTIPLE LITERACIES

The literacies key to the OpenCPD MOOC project, while incorporated in the wider information literacy concept, are: media literacy, digital literacy, open literacy and critical literacy. The different component parts have their own issues that must be addressed separately in the context of course design, as must the functional information literacy skills necessary for all learning.

## OPEN LITERACY

The definitions section of this poster gives an overview of the more familiar literacies, however Open Literacy as it is defined here is a new concept. In this context, this does NOT mean accessible learning materials about traditional (reading and writing) literacy. Open Literacy is the ability to create, use and reuse open content; be it open access scholarly literature, Open Educational Resources (OERs), open source software, open data and more. It is about more than checking and applying open licences or uploading resources, but understanding the principles of open culture and open education, what makes content open and how to make that content accessible as well as available for others to use.



## HOW LITERACY NEEDS ARE ADDRESSED IN OPENC PD OUTPUTS

Functional information literacy skills - IL learning outcomes must be defined by creators for every content block pitched and assumptions must be challenged (see *Definitions and Assumptions box*).

**Media literacy** - There will be a core "keeping up to date for continuing professional development" block, which will include content on creating as well as finding, evaluating and analysing media for CPD

**Digital literacy** - there will be a technology skillshare wiki, hosted on the project website, to enable would-be content creators to access equipment, develop new skills, find support to film and edit their work etc and encourage a buddying system. An Evidence Hub (De Liddo & Shum, 2013) will be hosted on the website after the MOOC has run for further sharing of skills, stories and best practice.

**Open literacy** - all content creators are required to participate in an open literacy content block before preparing their block. This will also be offered for extra credit to other participants. Open principles will be used to recruit participants, via a wiki, with alternatives offered. Creators are encouraged to supply reading lists of openly-licensed resources.

**Critical literacy** - we will encourage Freirean pedagogical guidelines, creative use of open access reading lists and a critical context for social aspects to the MOOC such as the forums and Twitter chats. We will encourage participants to be critical and reflective about the Internet and education (Selwyn, 2013) as part of the course.

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