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Welcome to the New Perspectives

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WELCOME TO THE NEW PERSPECTIVES

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Communications in
INFORMATION LITERACY

[PERSPECTIVES EDITED BY KIM LEEDER REED & SARAH E. NORTH]

Welcome to the re-envisioned Perspectives Section of *Communications in Information Literacy* (CIL). The Perspectives Section began with volume three of the journal in 2009 as a platform for discussion about issues in information literacy. Freed from the research requirements and peer-review constraints applied to the rest of the journal, the Perspectives Section has long provided an important platform for authors seeking to creatively and thoughtfully explore issues in information literacy. Information literacy instruction is constantly evolving as the environment in which we teach continues to change around us. As library professionals, we must revisit what information literacy is, what it means to us, and how it impacts our students and our institutions. How do we best advocate for the integration of information literacy among college administrators and faculty? Are there more effective ways to teach and assess our teaching? Are our instruction methods keeping pace with the changing demographics of our students? Through the sharing of ideas, stories, and strategies, the articles that have been published in the Perspectives Section to date have contributed towards advancing our understanding of information literacy as a concept and, for many of us, a passion. Beginning in 2009 with three articles setting the historical and theoretical foundations of assessment in library instruction, CIL's Perspectives Section over the years has offered many new ways to think about information literacy in practice: for instance, a theory on bringing digital disorder into the classroom (volume 4, number 1), an exploration of the reasons that information literacy is largely "invisible" beyond the library (volume 4, number 2), and the proposal of an alternate model for conceptualizing information literacy

through its connection with digital literacy (volume 5, number 2). Through these and other pieces published in the section, Perspectives authors challenge our thinking and lead us forward in our practice.

The re-launched Perspectives Section aims to push the envelope even more. As the new co-editors of the section, our goal is to dig deeper by publishing provocative editorial articles that explore ideas and concepts related to information literacy from new perspectives. While we recognize and affirm the importance of the work of established scholars and the value of proven research in information literacy (and we focus on these in other areas of CIL), the Perspectives Section is the creative sandbox of the journal, where we encourage and support experimentation and risk-taking in thought and theory. These creative, stimulating articles aim to provide a rousing complement to the more objective, peer-reviewed research articles that are published as features in the journal. As section co-editors, we are excited to coordinate this platform for forward-thinking librarians, teachers, and others involved in information literacy to share their ideas, opinions, and experiences in the field. We bring varied experiences to the editing table. Sarah E. North is the Instruction and Outreach Librarian at the College of Western Idaho, and a graduate of the ACRL Immersion Teacher Track program. She engages with the local library community as PR & Advocacy Chair for the Idaho Library Association and as a member of the Continuing Education Advisory Board for the Idaho Commission for Libraries. On a national level, Sarah is active in the Community and Junior College Libraries Section of the Association of College & Research Libraries, as well as the American

Library Association Library Marketing and Outreach interest group. Kim Leeder Reed is the Director of Library Services at the College of Western Idaho and a member of the Association of College & Research Libraries Board of Directors. She edits a column on community college libraries for the *Journal of Library Administration* and is co-editor of *Planning our Future Libraries: Blueprints for 2020*. Kim was a co-founder of *In the Library with the Lead Pipe* and has been recognized as an American Library Association Emerging Leader and a *Library Journal* Mover & Shaker.

What we have learned through our own work is that information literacy instruction takes a variety of forms in our various types of libraries. What is wildly successful at one institution may not work well at another, and all of these different voices are important to the larger conversation as we assemble a broadly applicable meaning of information literacy. Authors submitting to the Perspectives Section should feel free to approach information literacy from any angle, and in works of any length that substantively explore and advance the topic at hand. Section articles are not peer-reviewed, and as such authors are welcome to approach topics in an editorial tone, without focusing on primary research. We are particularly interested in articles that address new or controversial topics related to information literacy, that emphasize collaboration and inclusivity among institutions, and that constructively challenge and offer alternatives to established practices. In pursuit of the section's goal of pushing information literacy in cutting-edge directions, newer librarians and first-time authors are encouraged to submit for publication, along with those more experienced in the field.

Unlike many other journal editors, we are willing to provide feedback and work with authors who have great ideas but little publishing experience.

Our view is that we all, as librarians on the ground, are the ones who get to invent (and reinvent) the meaning of information literacy. We believe that in order to be authentic, our theory and practice must be developed from the bottom up rather than the top down. While standards may be set at the national level, and while some librarians may live or die by those standards, the truth is that no single group of people—no matter how well endorsed—can define this critical work. Every day, we create our own definitions in the classroom by choosing particular activities and goals for our students. In short, each and every librarian who teaches and thinks about teaching defines what information literacy means. By curating this section of *Communications in Information Literacy*, we hope to create a platform where those individual meanings will combine to reflect a dynamic, collective definition of information literacy gathered from librarians all over the nation, and where that definition can take on its own life to guide our practice in librarianship. Those are the type of standards we prefer to live by, and we invite you to help us create them.