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Book Review: Teaching Information Literacy Reframed: 50+ Framework-based Exercises for Creating Information Literate-Learners

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50+ Framework-Based Exercises for Creating
Information-Literate Learners***

By Joanna M. Burkhardt

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Teaching Information Literacy Reframed

Review of *Teaching Information Literacy Reframed: 50+ Framework-Based Exercises for Creating Information-Literate Learners*

By Joanna M. Burkhardt

Many teaching librarians will be familiar with Joanna Burkhardt's *Teaching Information Literacy* (2003), which offered 35 "standards-based exercises for college students," as well as the second edition, *Teaching Information Literacy: 50 Standards-Based Exercises for College Students* (2010). Burkhardt co-authored both works with Mary C. MacDonald and Andrée J. Rathemacher and the 2010 edition included exercises that were contributed by additional colleagues. *Teaching Information Literacy Reframed* takes a similar approach and provides classroom exercises that are aligned with the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (2015). The book is a solo effort and I missed the voices of Burkhardt's prior co-authors and contributors. They represented different academic institutions and their contributions brought depth and unique perspectives to the text.

Burkhardt has structured this work around the *Framework's* six frames and in the first chapter, "Decoding the Framework for Information Literacy," she provides background information on the transition from the ACRL *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* (2000) and the development of the *Framework*. As this chapter title suggests, Burkhardt presents the *Framework* as in need of interpretation or "decoding" (p. 1) and describes the frames as theoretical and difficult to interpret. She suggests that the *Framework* is a "philosophical rather than practical document" (p. 4) with which some librarians may struggle to engage, given limited time, energy, and institutional support (p. 5). Burkhardt's decision to address this may resonate with like-minded readers, as this past year's conversations about the *Framework* on the ACRLFRAME, ILI-L, and CJCLS listservs suggest that many librarians share this perspective and frustration. In this first chapter, Burkhardt also considers each frame and offers her brief interpretation of the *Framework's* key concepts. She gives significant attention to *threshold concepts* but could also have included an overview of *essential questions* and *backwards design*, as presented by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe in *Understanding by Design* (2005), and integrated Thomas P. Mackey and

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Trudi E. Jacobson's scholarship on *metaliteracy* (2013). The *Framework* references each of these directly.

In chapters two through seven, Burkhardt explores each frame and presents the more than 50 exercises that are noted in the book's subtitle and conveniently listed together at the beginning of the book. In each of these chapters she introduces one of the frames and uses this introduction to further "decode" (p. 1) the *Framework*. She also muses about the changing information landscape (online versus print resource access, for example), describes new ways in which students are engaging with research (such as through social media), and provides examples and some context for teaching librarians' use of the provided classroom exercises. Burkhardt might have strengthened these chapters by giving added attention to the *knowledge practices* and *dispositions* that are explored in the *Framework* and to teaching librarians' engagement with both as they develop learning outcomes and related assessment for local information literacy instruction. Readers may find it helpful to turn to Megan Oakleaf's practical article, "A Roadmap for Assessing Student Learning Using the New Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education" (2014), for additional support and context when using the *Framework* to create lesson plans.

Burkhardt presents each included classroom exercise with accompanying, suggested learning outcomes; a sentence or two of directions for the teaching librarian; and instructions for students to carry out the activity, including discussion questions. Teaching librarians could use these questions for discussion or student reflection and they seem most appropriate for instruction with novice learners or first-year students. Many of the exercises could be integrated into a brief, one-shot session, while others might provide the focus of an entire class period and be used as course assignments implemented by a librarian and a primary course instructor. Burkhardt does not indicate the intended audience (e.g. first-year or graduate students) or possible disciplinary connections (e.g. business or writing) for each exercise and readers will need to undertake these considerations when selecting exercises for use in specific contexts. Burkhardt's organization of the exercises across chapters makes it difficult to see the ways in which the frames overlap and connect and how the learning outcomes for a single exercise might address multiple frames. An alternate chapter organization, or the addition of an exercise coding system, could improve subsequent editions.

The book's final chapter, "Creating Exercises, Rubrics, Learning Outcomes, and Learning Assessments," concludes the book while also encouraging readers to articulate clear expectations for student learning and to design instruction that attends to learners' existing knowledge and prior learning. This chapter also considers the design of learning outcomes and assessments, including rubrics. I felt that Burkhardt missed an opportunity in this chapter to provide readers with assessment examples to accompany her classroom exercises. References to helpful, relevant resources, such as the classic *Classroom Assessment Techniques* (Angelo & Cross, 1993) and the more recent *Classroom Assessment Techniques for Librarians* (Bowles-Terry & Kvenild, 2015) would have been useful additions.

While many librarians may be just beginning to work with the *Framework*, others have already examined its theoretical foundations (Foasberg, 2015; Kuglitsch, 2015; Pagowsky, 2015), explored using the *Framework* when collaborating with faculty and initiating dialogues across disciplines (Garcia, 2014; Knapp & Brower, 2014), and developed related classroom activities (Seeber, 2015). Burkhardt may have conceived of this book before she could fully engage with the early flurry of activity that has followed the *Framework's* development and official adoption by ACRL. Instruction librarians might consider supplementing the exercises that are included in this book by seeking out *Framework*-based exercises shared by colleagues on active listservs, at conferences, in Webinars presented by the ACRL Instruction Section and the ACRL Student Learning and Information Literacy Committee, and through shared resources such as the Community of Online Research Assignments (CORA) < <https://www.projectcora.org/>> and the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy Sandbox < <http://sandbox.acrl.org/>>.

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