
When ACRL officially adopted the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education in 2016, fun was not a word many librarians would associate with this new Framework, as it required new ways of incorporating information literacy concepts and skills into library instruction sessions. Instead of strict standards, the Framework interconnects ideas and concepts about information, research, and scholarship that will allow the student, instructor, and librarian greater flexibility in developing new curricula.

The Fun of Motivation is a great resource to use for librarians considering, or in the process of, incorporating the Framework into their instruction sessions. Experienced instruction librarians revising the way they teach library instruction, as well as brand new instruction librarians, will find something helpful in The Fun of Motivation. This book helps librarians be deliberate in their teaching of the Framework's threshold concepts by incorporating engaging instruction techniques into their library instruction sessions. The first part introduces motivational theories, the relationship of fun and education, and instructional techniques. Instruction librarians with education backgrounds or who are familiar with education theories, could probably skim through part one quickly. The second part is an articulation of the theories and techniques discussed in part one, including lessons plans and learning objectives, as well as assessment ideas and rubrics.

The lesson plans and rubrics can easily go from the office to the classroom. By utilizing an instructional design approach, this book helps librarians plan and organize their instruction sessions by starting with learning outcomes. Every chapter also includes a section with ideas on modifications and accommodations for discussions during the session, as well as how to adapt the lessons to different student groups and classes. The Fun of Motivation will help librarians “approach the new Framework with a spirit of fun as [they] work toward the shared goal of developing information-literate students” (p. 4).—Magen Bednar, Student Success and Engagement Librarian, University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma


Why do students seek information from academic libraries? More often than many librarians and other educators might hope, their goal is box-checking, finding the required number of resources of the prescribed type to fill the mandatory bibliography to get the assigned paper finished (and forgotten). Librarians risk reinforcing this mindset when we treat the research process mechanistically, as a sequence of steps to be executed: learn these tools, enter these keywords, apply these limiters, click here to save results—check these literal boxes. In Inquiry and Research: A Relational Approach in the Classroom, Reale proposes that librarians instead view their interactions with students as opportunities to encourage a “spirit of inquiry.” Begin, Reale proposes, by pausing the hunt for immediate answers in favor of helping students learn to ask interesting and worthwhile questions. Value curiosity and thoughtfulness. Seek opportunities to center students in their own learning, and help them reflect throughout the research process.

The book is organized into ten chapters that outline different aspects of inquiry and discuss how it applies to different contexts. Each chapter concludes with a list of suggested strategies for implementation. Some of the recommendations are for specific actions (e.g., “Let students know you are available for individual consultations by ending each classroom session with your contact information”) (p. 104). Others are much less concrete, having instead to do with the attitude or mindset with which librarians might approach instructional encounters (e.g., “Understand the power of conversation and articulation of ideas in the inquiry and research process”) (p. 105). This is in keeping with the tenor of the book overall, which is as much conceptual as practical. Although it can be read in barely an hour, this title nonetheless has the potential to encourage librarians to think about our teaching more ambitiously.—Molly Strothmann, Library Collections Strategist, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma


Information literacy is one of the most important aspects of librarianship. If students do not understand how to find and successfully use library resources, of what use and purpose is a library? In the past (and mostly to this day), live instructional classes were the norm for introducing students to library resources, but for convenience and reach of a wider audience, more and more information literacy sessions are being held online. However, these sessions only last an hour or two. With such a short time frame, how can instructional librarians make an impact on their audience? Editors Sarah Steiner and Miriam Rigby, an instruction librarian at Western Carolina University and a social sciences librarian at the University of Oregon respectively, have created a one-volume library instruction book with enough information on this topic to cover multiple volumes. Throughout its nineteen chapters, Motivating Students on a Time Budget explores diverse tools to foster motivation and learning for library instruction students, for both in-person and online library instruction.

The book begins with a useful feature: a chapter dealing with students’ motivational analysis, specifically the ARCS model (which stands for attention, relevance, confidence