

Whether we talk about an “information society”, a “knowledge society” or a “network society”, it would appear, especially to UNESCO, that information literacy is a necessary skill for all 21<sup>st</sup> century men and women. France adheres to the international challenge set by UNESCO which is coherent with the education program.

Today we must master the information to participate in the knowledge society. Providing continuous training and developing citizenship, facilitating social and cultural integration, also for economic reasons, because they are strongly connected to the daily context in which we live.

The objectives of information literacy training for students are the development of information culture, an effective and coherent training, the awakening of critical thinking, the apprenticeship of autonomy, and the acquisition of the « how to learn » process.

How is this training implemented today ?

Officially, some directives for obtaining knowledge and competence in information literacy skills exist in the education system, for example in the “loi d’orientation 2005”<sup>i</sup>, in “Le socle commun”<sup>ii</sup>, in the “B2I”<sup>iii</sup>, in the curricula of some disciplines.

What conclusion can we draw from the application of this training ?

The teaching of information literacy is split into small pieces, and taught in a sporadic and uncertain way, thus giving rise to inconsistency regarding the education dispensed to pupils.

The teaching of information literacy is considered increasingly necessary. However, teaching conditions of the teacher-librarians are less and less adapted to dispensing this type of training, this, despite the recognition of the pedagogical role of the French teacher-librarian via the CAPES diploma created in 1989.

The FADBEN Association points out the lack of official guidelines or curricula stipulating the contents and the concepts, that the pupil should know, along with the lack of a framework for their implementation.

There are no official texts for the selection of qualified professional staff, for the conception and the implementation of this necessary training in information literacy. At best, we can see in some disciplines, is an initiation, often reduced to the teaching of a search procedure, or to the mere use of information tools or documents, without considering either the information, or the document, as possible teaching tools.

What are the pupils supposed to learn and in what context ?

“Training pupils, all pupils, means giving, at the least, the ability to identify the information they require, to search for it, to evaluate it, to make good use of it, to understand it and to communicate it”. To do so, they must be familiar with the information tools at their disposal, aware of the concepts linked to them, and, in addition, be acquainted with the principles of their organization, in order to develop a critical eye.

For many years the FADBEN Association have demanded the recognition and the formalisation of the training contents as part of a specific field : i.e. “Information-Documentation” ; the contents should be taught by the teacher-librarian in the “CDI”, the learning and resources centre managed by the aftermost teacher.

Today, the FADBEN Association recommends the setting up of a training programme, to be included in the academic curriculum of all pupils aged from 11 to 17 years old.

It could take the form of a coherent unit, based upon a gradual progression and a defined assessment of the items to learn.

FADBEN also stresses the need to develop this teaching programme under the responsibility of the teacher-librarians, qualified in « Information-Documentation », working in close pedagogical collaboration with their fellow teachers.

FADBEN calls the Institution to formalize this teaching programme through the implementation of a task force so that it can figure in the official directives.

FADBEN reiterates the necessity of appointing a sufficient number of qualified teacher-librarians to guarantee both the quality of the teaching dispensed in the Information-Documentation field, and the added value of the pedagogical database system.

The FADBEN Association is ready to meet and to discuss with everyone who considers that information literacy training plays a part in equal opportunities.  
Strong and clear steps must be taken immediately !

\*\*\*\*\*

Translated into English by Danielle Martinod (Académie de Lyon) and revised by the national board of the FADBEN (Fédération des Enseignants Documentalistes de l'Éducation nationale), from the French text worded by the FADBEN on : <http://www.fadben.asso.fr/spip.php?article46>

<http://www.fadben.asso.fr>

---

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.education.gouv.fr/bo/2005/18/MENX0400282L.htm> : This law underlines the necessity for all pupils to have a training in basic computing skills (article 9)

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.education.gouv.fr/cid2770/le-socle-commun-de-connaissances-et-de-competences.html> : this document states the "common core of knowledge and skills" that every student should know and control at the end of compulsory schooling. Introduced with the 2005 law (note 1), it specifies all the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes necessary for successful schooling and the individual life of future citizens. From 2011 onwards, seven skills will be required to obtain the national diploma of the DNB (Diplôme National du Brevet) which is taken at the end of secondary school. (Equivalent to Leaving Certificate)

<sup>iii</sup> <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid46073/b2i.html> : At school, college and high school, the diploma in computer science and the Internet (B2i) underlines the need to provide each future citizen with a training that eventually will enable pupils and students to make wise use of information technology and communication, perceive the possibilities and limitations of computer processing, to think critically about the results of these treatments, and identify the legal and social use of these technologies.