LITERACY OBESITY

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FUNCTIONAL VS EXPERIENTIAL

- Function literacy : provides for base utilitarian purposes

- Experiential and Creative literacy: opens up worlds for people, to engage and experience imagination, beauty, connection, and artistry

UTILITARIANISM & EDUCATION

When we value knowledge within a utilitarian framework, students ask:

- Why do I need to know this?

- When will I use this?

- How will this help me get a job?

INSTANT GRATIFICATION

When we value knowledge within a gratification framework, students ask:

- How does it make me feel?

- What do I get out of it?

- How much effort will I have to give to gain gratification?

LITERACY OBESITY

- Our children have grown fat on words but they are losing nutritional value to use language to build thought, expression and imagination. There seems to be a paradoxical correlation that the more our society becomes a text-based society, the shallower those texts become.

- "I don't read anything I haven't written myself" – Elle Macpherson (1980)

LITERACY OBESITY

Despite the abundance of words that make up our worlds, our vocabularies have shrunk, our capacity to engage in linguistic beauty is minimal and even our ability to engage in witty repartee that doesn't devolve into obscenity has disappeared. There has been a steady ushering in of Orwellian Newspeak, where language has been intentionally diminished to reduce any complexity of thought.

LITERACY & LITERATURE

Literature confounds the iGnereation because it challenges, invites, problematises the world, requires careful thought and engagement; whereas YouTube offers a funny video of a cat.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

- Language is a precious gift from God

- We can't read the Bible fully if we can't decode literature

- You are the leaders of language in your school

WHAT TO DO

1. Be committed to being counter-cultural
2. Build a compelling vision
3. Engage school leaders
4. Build your support base

WHAT TO DO

5. Increase expectations and opportunities for staff

6. Be critical of what you have in the library

7. Enlist parents

8. Build better transitions