THE TRIAD MODEL

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ICT @ your library ®

For many reasons, teacher-librarians are often expected to be the "IT gurus" in their schools. Several of us actually are, with part time hours in the library and part time hours in the computer lab. Of course, as is often the case, the position becomes something like the situations described below, which I have gleaned from an informal e-survey:

■ "Mine is a sad situation this year, due to the loss of teachers. I am technically half literacy co-coordinator, and half teacher-librarian/computer teacher. However, in the afternoon, I cover prep in the lab, with only two periods in the week covering library. I have Wednesday afternoon technically for Partners; however, since my prep is supposed to come out of the afternoon, not LC, there is no time for that. So basically I do library admin/prep/computer troubleshooting/report card printing/book buying and whatever else I can fit into that time. Sometimes it even includes a little partnering!"

■ "I am half library and half computer teacher (I work in separate rooms). I give 90% prep during this time...."

■ "80% library, 20% kindie prep and two intermediate computer classes. No time for anything else, including partnering and info tech program delivery."

If a position had to be twinned with teacher-librarianship, that position could be aptly called key computer teacher; academic service associate; or information and communications technology provider—or whatever the favoured term of the month might be. Amazing integration can occur. Computer skills are taught within the context of the Information Studies curriculum. Information literacy skills are guaranteed to be applied to activities such as using search engines and reading Web sites critically for information. Incidents of plagiarism are cut significantly because the students are taught how to cite sources and synthesize facts in their own words.
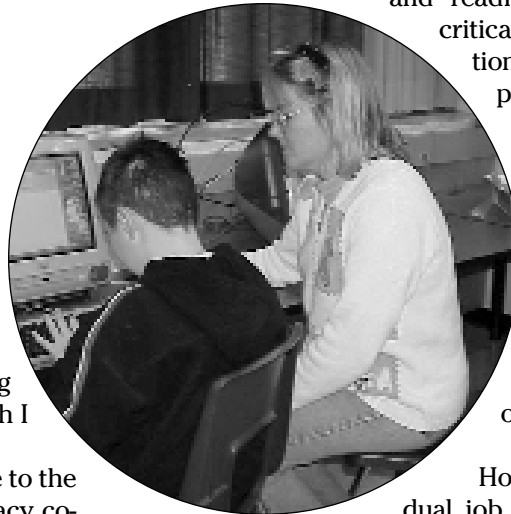
However, this dual job description is not without its problems, as you can see from the aforementioned tales of woe.

A unique situation, and one which works for all involved, exists at Pringdale Gardens Junior Public School. At Pringdale, a triad situation has existed since the early 1990s. This was an extension of the 1982 Partners in Action Ministry document, but with a 21st century twist.

As it is described in the staff handbook, grades 4, 5 and 6 are part of a collaborative team in which the classroom teacher, computer teacher, and library resource teacher share the planning and teaching of the class. Twice a week the classes divide in half between the lab and the library.

For a particular project, students may be involved in thinking skills, research, note-making and editing on paper as well as word processing, page layout and design, Web page creation and multimedia on the computer.

The purpose of this arrangement is:
■ to serve as an extension of the regular classroom program especially in social studies, science