

## APPENDIX 2

# Language and literacy strategies to support ICT and digital media activities

Providing literacy, ICT and digital media support is often difficult for facilitators who work with youth in non-formal learning environments such as those described in this book. New media is, however, an integral, yet often unrecognised facet of work with Indigenous youth. In this light we offer a few useful language and literacy strategies.

### VOLUNTEERS

Organisations may consider engaging volunteers as support workers. The following organisations can be contacted for more information:

- ▶ Indigenous Community Volunteers  
<http://www.icv.com.au/>
- ▶ Youth Challenge Australia  
<http://www.youthchallenge.org.au/>  
Central-Australia

Even without additional support, facilitators may consider some of the following strategies.

### SCAFFOLDING

Providing assistance and support to aid learning, literacy and independent engagement with ICTs and online media activities:

- ▶ **ENLARGE FONT SIZES ON COMPUTER SCREENS**  
Font sizes on computer screens are often too small for people with poor eyesight.

- ▶ **ICONS**

Users typically use visual-spatial references and icon-based navigation to complete actions on the computer screen. Many can be figured out intuitively. However some icons or symbols may need to be 'decoded'. These could be identified on a handy chart posted nearby the computer/s.

- ▶ **SHORTCUTS**

As computer users become more proficient they will need to know how to use 'shortcuts'. Create a chart of the most common shortcuts for Macs and PCs. For example:

COMMAND	MAC	PC
Copy	Command [⌘] + C	CTRL + C
Cut	Command [⌘] + X	CTRL + X
Paste	Command [⌘] + V	CTRL + V

- ▶ **SAVE > SAVE AS (new name)**

Teach people how to do 'Save As' > new name. Many users use the same name for new documents or files (eg in Word or new projects in *GarageBand*) and accidentally override previous saves.

- ▶ **SEARCH WORDS and ALPHABETICAL LISTS**

Users may have trouble searching for specific information (e.g. in *Google* or in *Ara Irititja*) because they don't know how to spell words or cannot discriminate between similar listed words, that is, they tend to follow links between sites rather than search for specific information/sites.

Such searches require accurate spelling AND an ability to read through words or fields listed in alphabetical order to find the correct search item.

To assist users:

- i. A reference list of predictable search words with the correct spelling can be listed next to the computer.
- ii. Teach users how to skim through lists and predict correct choices.
- iii. When searching for specific information, e.g. for a 'used car', it is useful to understand how to enter required information, often in an abbreviated forms, e.g. min/max price range, make/model, diesel/petrol etc. To assist users a list chart of predictable categories and/or abbreviations could be made.

#### ► **PASSWORDS**

People commonly need a LOG IN customer number/member number/customer ID/email address, plus a password (i.e. for internet banking, *Facebook*, etc). These are easily forgotten, so keep a list in a private and secure location. Remember to tell users to copy passwords carefully, taking care with spaces, underlines and lower/upper case letters.

#### ► **CASE SENSITIVE TYPING**

Ensure that users are aware of the difference between upper and lower case letters, and how to use the 'Shift' and 'Caps lock' keys on the keyboard. This is especially relevant when typing in case sensitive passwords.

#### ► **INTERNET BANKING**

Teach internet banking in two stages:

- i. passive—going into an account and checking the balance.
- ii. active—going into an account to transfer money.

#### ► **iTunes PLAYLIST**

Make a chart showing users how to make their own playlist. For example, to choose songs according to genre, band or singers, 'Ctrl click' choices and drag them to the playlist.

- Burn playlist on CD
- Drag to iPod.

#### ► **COMPUTER GAMES**

Games are typically learned not by following the written rules, but random pressing of buttons until a 'pattern' emerges. Users can be systematically taught how to find new games on the web or in folders.

## SCAFFOLDING THE READING/ WRITING PROCESS

Many multimedia activities involve reading and/or writing. Young people typically want to label photos, write short texts in films, write songs or transcribe songs. These literacy tasks may be done in English. Young people may ask for assistance from someone who is literate in English, however that person may still need help with writing words and phrases correctly.

To assist users: compile a list of typical words, phrases and place names with the correct spelling and attach the list to the wall.

## VERNACULAR LITERACY

It is also commonplace for young people to want to write in their Indigenous mother tongue. Few young people are literate in local Indigenous languages. While it may not be possible to organise vernacular literacy lessons, other strategies will help:

## Orthography

The sound system of Aboriginal languages differs from English therefore a different spelling system tends to be used. The orthography is the 'alphabet' or sound/symbol system for the language. You can assist users by placing a language dictionary and/or learners guide in the space for users to access. These resources can also be used to:

- i. Find or make an 'alphabet' chart for the wall. Make sure that all diacritics are included (i.e. underlines or other marks attached to letters that indicate how to pronounce the symbol).
- ii. Find or make syllable charts.
- iii. Find or make charts of predictable key words and place names with correct spelling.

Resources such as dictionaries or learners guides for many Indigenous languages can be purchased. See IAD Press, the Indigenous publishing house in Alice Springs:  
<http://iadpress.com/>.