

Transliteracy: The Word is Not Enough, Part I


Kristin Fontichiaro - AASL Fall Forum

Friday, October 11, 2012, 4-5pm

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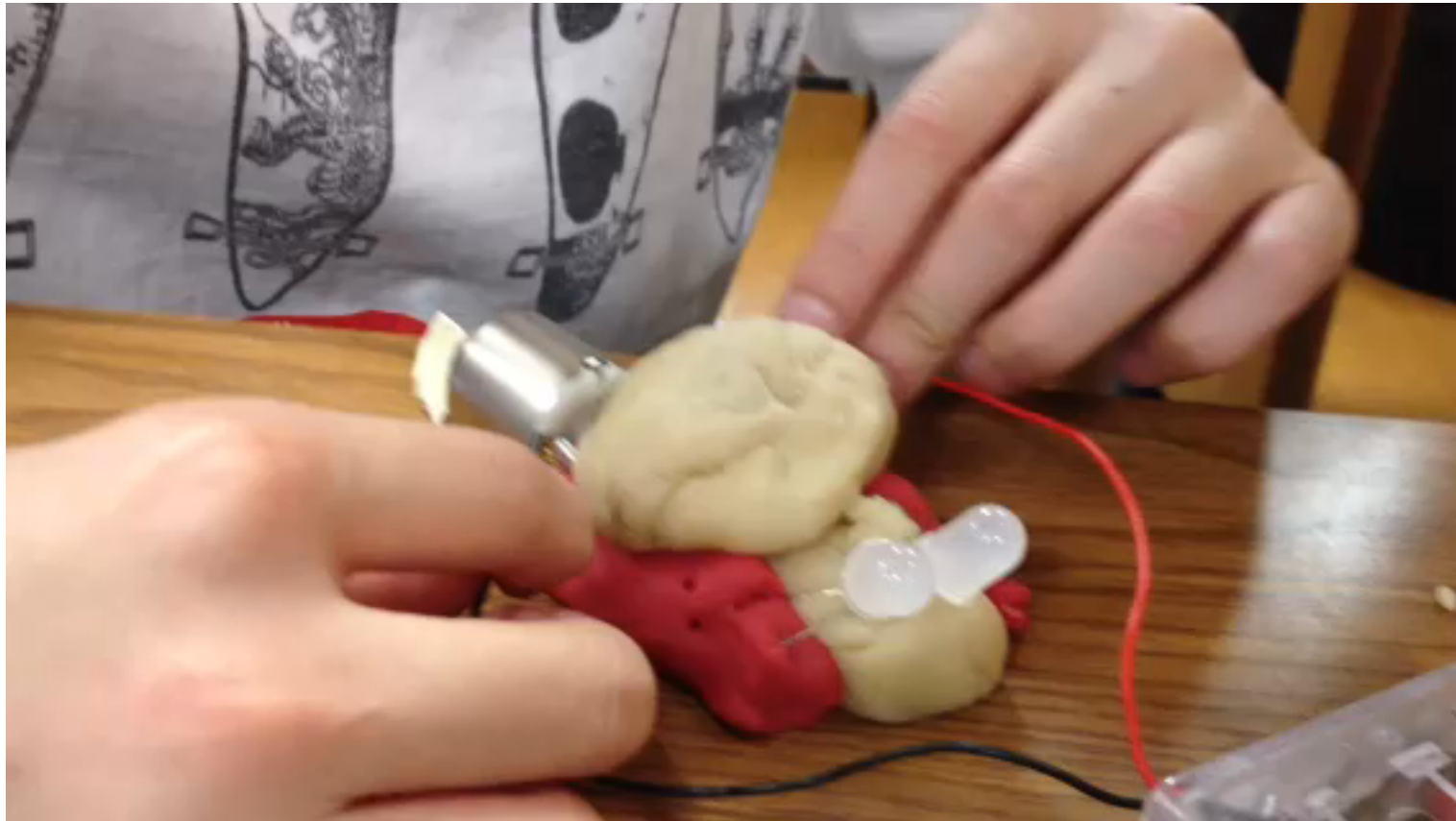
**Minor changes
have been made
to the slides in
your booklet.**

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**while I tell you a story
about *EB* and Wikipedia.**

Why We're Here



Today's Landscape

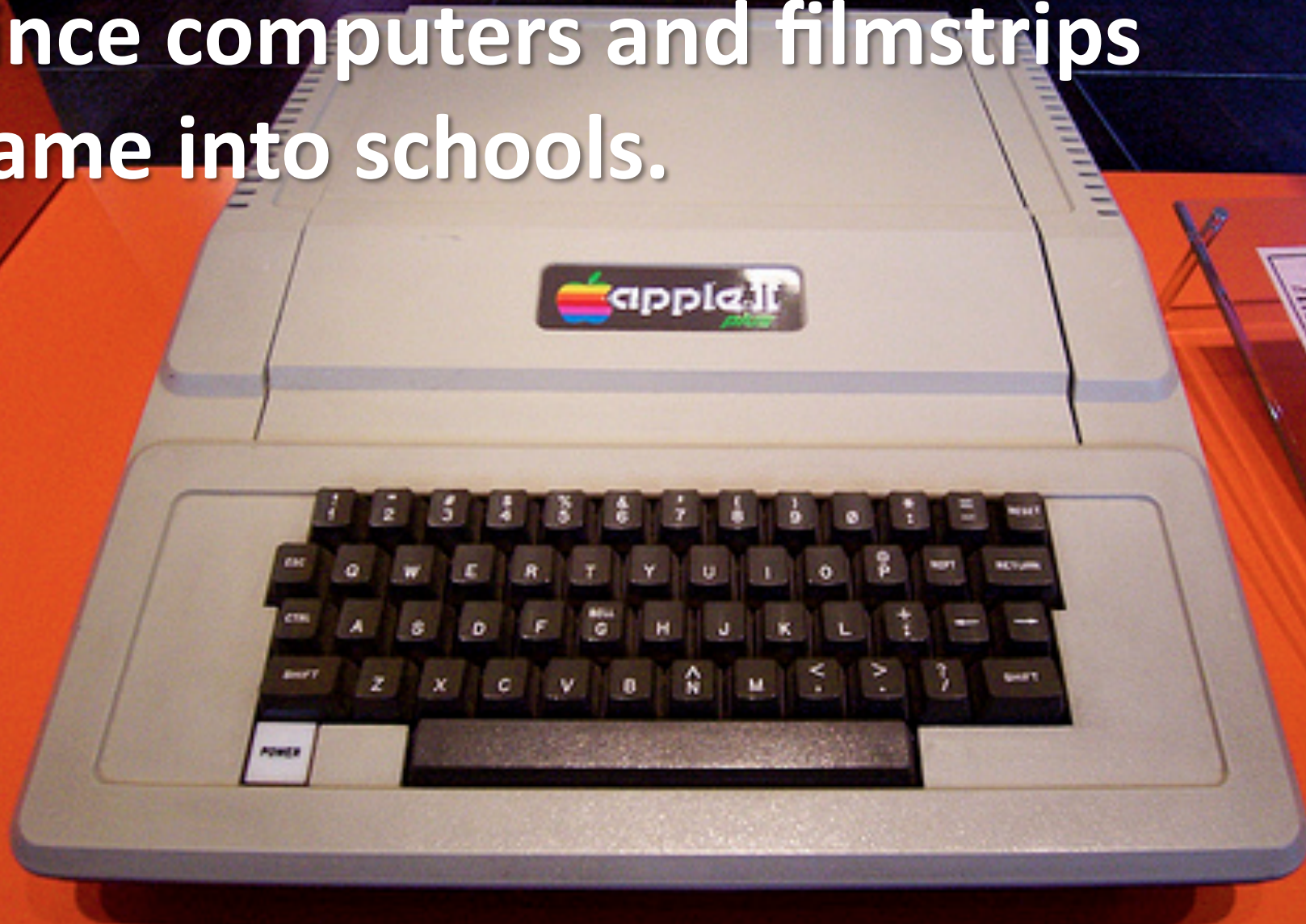
- What is transliteracy?
- What makes it different from information literacy, media literacy, or transmedia work?
- What does it mean to move “trans” or between genres or formats?
- Looking ahead to Saturday morning

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What does it mean to be literate today?

What skills do you need to navigate the physical and virtual worlds?

We've been pondering this ever since computers and filmstrips came into schools.



But sometimes, to be seen as “current,” we’ve leapt into multimedia or technology projects without calibrating the quality of the new experience against the quality of the traditional modality.



Image: 'Mr. Jacksons right eye' by Amagill on Flickr. Used with a CC BY 2.0 license.
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**This weekend is our chance to
look and think more deeply.**

I'm looking for
transliteracy
lesson plans!

It's all about
transliteracy!

**I have to admit ...
I spent months watching the
“transliteracy” battle cry begin,
and all I could think was ...**

Our library has
GarageBand ...
that's
transliteracy!

Our library program
is based around
transliteracy!

We're putting a
transliteracy
track into our
conference!



http://youtu.be/Qw9oX-kZ_9k (Fair Use exemption)





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I kept asking, “How is transliteracy different from tech integration? From multimedia work? From what we’ve already been doing?”

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**Alan Liu's UCSB Transliteracies Project,
2005 – present**

“

Users of today's digital, networked information spend an increasing amount of time each day “reading” online textual and multimedia materials. **Yet the practices of digital reading in online environments are not well understood** according to the protocols of reading that arose in the last two centuries to support the individual, organizational, and social needs of late-literate societies.

“

Instead, reading in digital networked environments often places a premium on searching, scanning, jumping, filtering, aggregating, organizing, and other kinds of radically discontinuous, low-attention, peripheral-vision, or machine-assisted reading practices that **do not map exactly over predecessor practices of individual or organizational literacy.**

“

Digital networked environments also make more important the **social, collective experience of reading**, especially what might be called active social reading (as instanced by Web blogs, wikis, and other forms of Web 2.0 “crowd-sourcing”). Active social reading today expands such earlier practices as keeping diaries or commonplace books, annotating the margins of books, or writing “letters to the editor” into major new forms of knowledge-production and social experience.

“

Such new modes of online reading are shaped, and in their turn shape, the new technologies that allow computers to “read/write” to each other across platforms and software applications in ways that support, and **even at times seem to supplant, the human activity** of reading (as in the case of search engines, information aggregators, news feeds, and other Web services).

“

How are people today in fact “reading” online individually, in organizations, with social others, and in league with a burgeoning society of semi-“literate” machines? What innovations in technologies or interfaces are possible to **increase** the productivity, variety, and pleasure of these new kinds of reading?

“

And how can the historical diversity of human reading practices **provide a metric—quantitative and qualitative—against which to gauge the robustness of the new digital practices?** Reciprocally, how can contemporary practices provide new ways to understand the technical, social, and cultural dimensions of historical reading?


”

- Alan Liu, UC Santa Barbara, 2006

[Transliterations Project Blog](#)

Turn and Talk

- What resonates to you about this language?



**Sue Thomas, De Montfort
University, Leicester**

“

Transliteracy is the ability **to read, write and interact** across a range of platforms, tools and media from signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV, radio and film, to digital social networks.

As a behavior, it is **not new** — indeed it reaches back to the very beginning of culture — but it has only been identified as a working concept since the Internet allowed humans to communicate in ways which seem to be entirely novel ...

“

The word ‘transliteracy’ is derived from the verb ‘to transliterate’, meaning **to write or print a letter or word using the closest corresponding letters of a different alphabet or language**. This of course is nothing new, but transliteracy extends the act of transliteration and applies it to the increasingly wide range of communication platforms and tools at our disposal.

Transliterate (v). to represent or spell in the characters of another alphabet. – Merriam-Webster.com

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Quick Write (1 min., then share with a partner for 2 min.): What does transliteration mean to you in terms of your practice?

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From early signing and orality through handwriting, print, TV and film to networked digital media, the concept of transliteracy calls for a change of **perspective away from the battles over print versus digital**, and a move instead towards a unifying ecology not just of media, but of all literacies relevant to reading, writing, interaction and culture, both past and present. It is, we hope, an opportunity to **cross some very obstructive divides**.

”

- Sue Thomas et al,
de Montfort University, Leicester, UK
[“Transliteracy: Crossing Divides”](#) (*First Monday*)

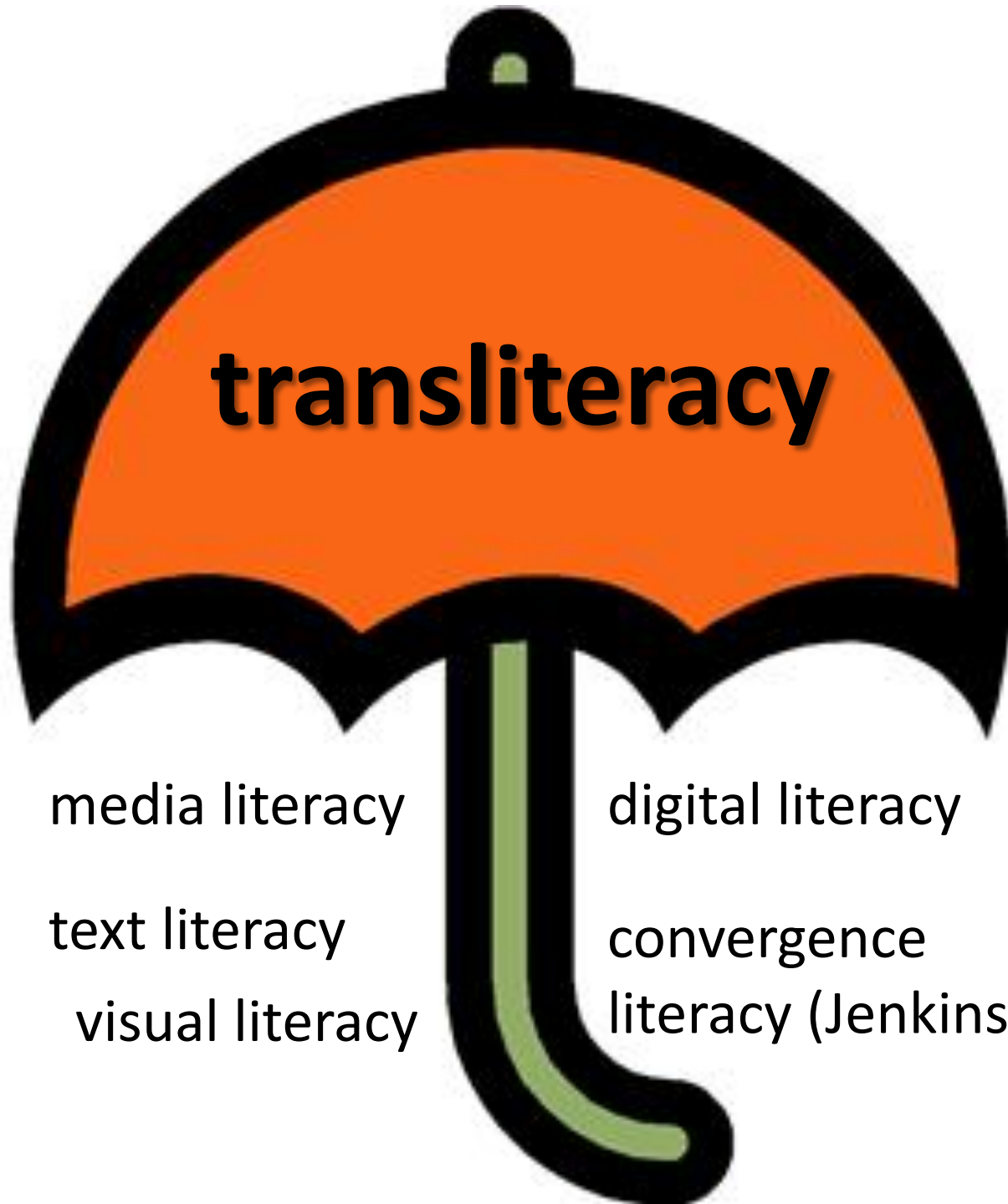
“

**Turn and Talk to a Partner:
What would a unifying
ecology look like?**

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transliteracy

media literacy

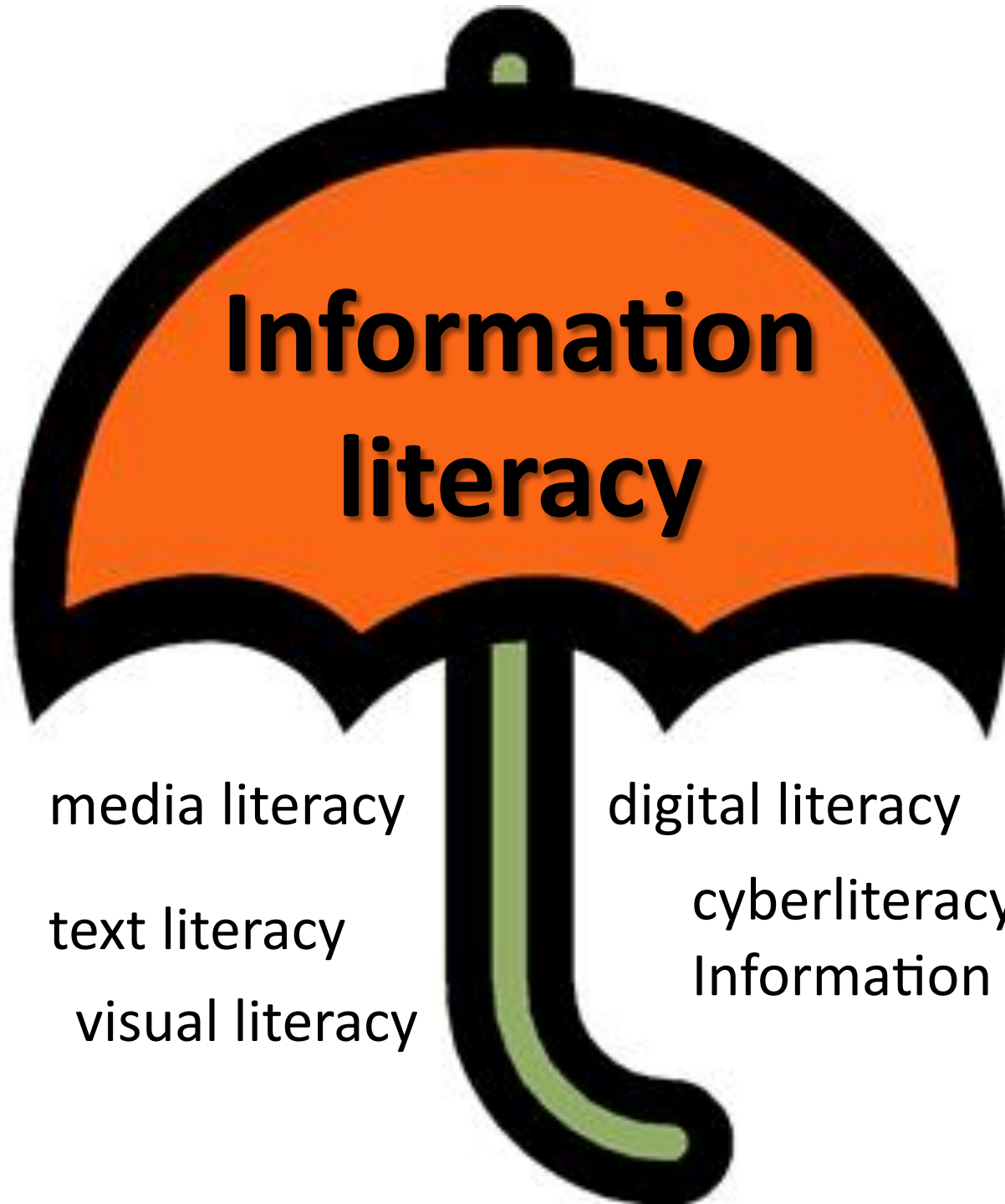
text literacy

visual literacy

digital literacy

convergence

literacy (Jenkins)



media literacy

text literacy

visual literacy

digital literacy

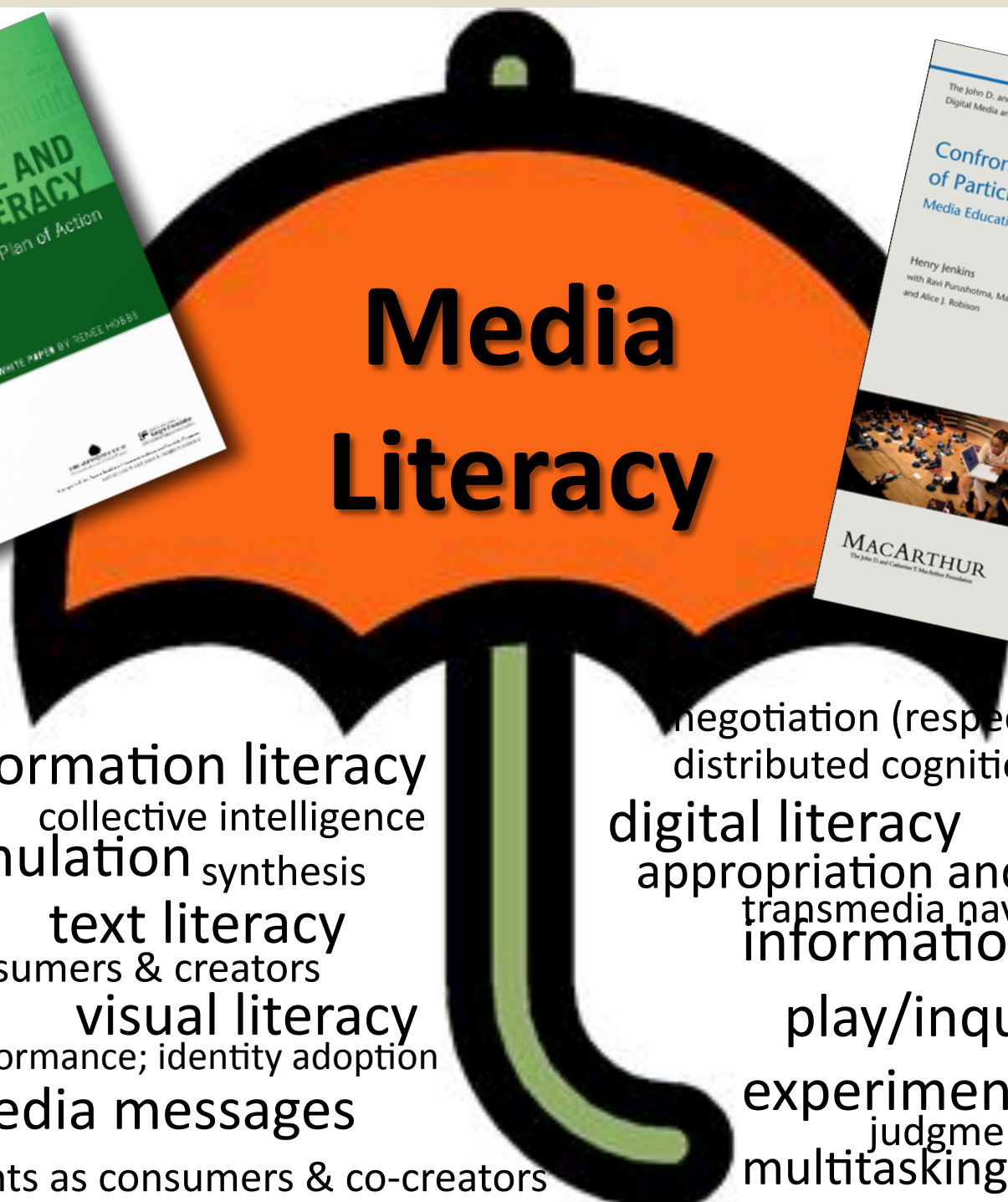
cyberliteracy

Information fluency

Figure 2: The Ecology of MIL: Notions of MIL



UNESCO: *Media and Information Literacy: A Curriculum for Teachers*, page 19. Available for free download: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0019/001929/192971e.pdf>



Media Literacy

Information literacy
 collective intelligence
 simulation synthesis
 text literacy
 consumers & creators
 visual literacy
 performance; identity adoption
 media messages

negotiation (respecting diversity)
 distributed cognition
 digital literacy
 appropriation and remixing
 transmedia navigation
 information fluency
 play/inquiry/
 experimentation
 judgment of credibility
 multitasking

Multimedia

Describes **creations** made by someone to be taken in by an audience.

Narrative path is predetermined. Even when the audience can interact, it does not change the set of predetermined outcomes.

Think about:

- *Oregon Trail*
- Television pre-2000
- Picture books

Transmedia

Describes **creations** that may move back and forth across multiple genres or formats to tell a story that cannot be told completely or comprehensively in a single format

“Audience” has more interactivity with content; their input may determine outcome

Think about:

- *Cathy’s Key*
- *39 Clues*
- *Inanimate Alice*
- *iDrakula* app/story
- *Loser/Queen*

Transliteracy

Describes a set of **skills** to “read,” create, negotiate, interact with, and understand content in many genres or formats and the ability to move between them.

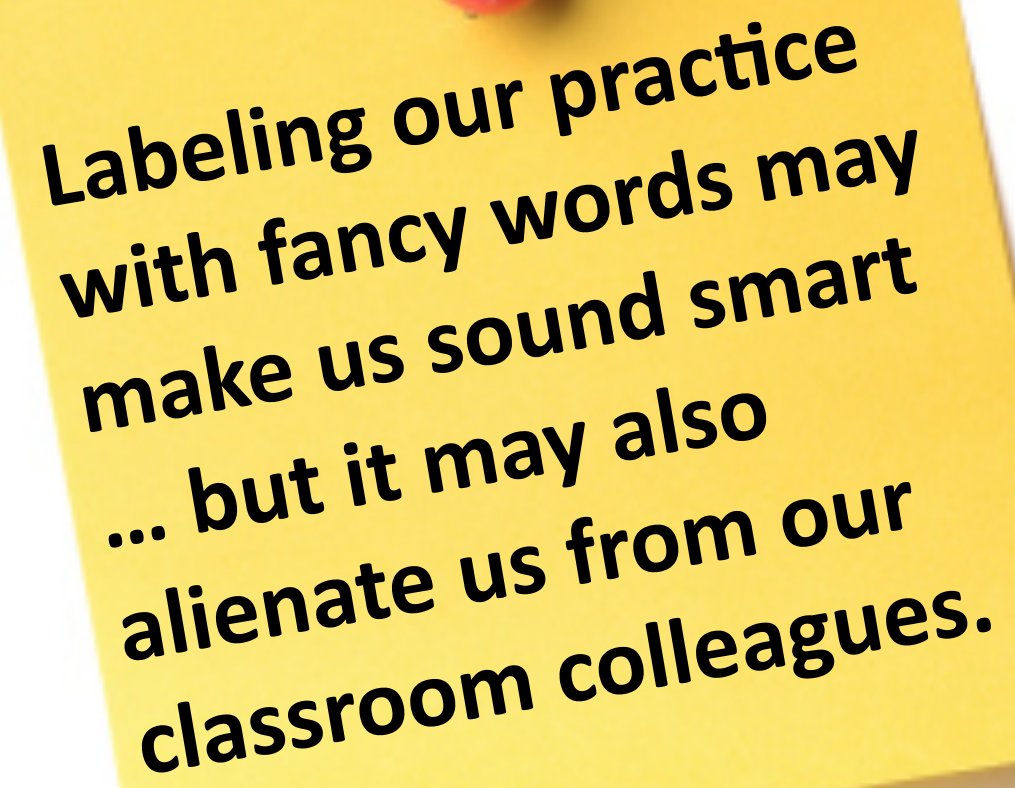
Think about:

- How do we establish equivalent experiences when moving from print to multi-/transmedia work? Measure depth of content knowledge? Relative vigor/rigor?
- Who is doing the cognitive heavy lifting when everything is swipe-able? Student? Software engineer?

Mackey, Thomas P., and Trudi Jacobson. 2011.
"Reframing Information Literacy as a Metaliteracy." *College and Research Libraries*
72:1 (Jan.), 62-78.



Image: [Microsoft](#)



**Labeling our practice
with fancy words may
make us sound smart
... but it may also
alienate us from our
classroom colleagues.**

And let's be real ...

Tossing around a term that means reading and writing and interacting with **anything** in **any** format at **any** period in human history?

That's hardly a clear call to action.



The real challenge is this:

How do we translate terms and concepts into meaningful action?

Tomorrow's goals:

- Moving toward action via:**
- Building a common vocab**
 - Defining "good work"**



Questions to Marinate On Tonight

- **How effectively are we**
 - teaching students to interpret the world beyond text?
 - teaching students to create multimedia or transmedia products that effectively convey messages and content understandings?
 - speaking in a unified voice about multimedia or transmedia work in our buildings?

Questions to Marinate On Tonight

- **How can a transmedia world be leveraged to further motivate students to engage in the kinds of deep thinking and inquiry we hope they will?**

Questions to Marinate On Tonight

- **How does all of this fit against the text-privileged environment of CCSS?**

Your Thoughts?

PS –

Please bring your laptop or Google Doc-friendly device tomorrow for some collaborative work.