

From Information to Knowledge: Charting and Measuring Changes in students' Knowledge of a Curriculum Topic

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In the context of information use, this paper reports on a recent study that sought to investigate how school students build on their existing knowledge of a curriculum topic and transform accessible and available information into personal knowledge, and how their knowledge of a topic changes.

The study involved 10 teacher-school librarian teams from 10 public schools in New Jersey working on 17 library-based curriculum projects. Data were collected from 574 students from Grades 6 – 12 at the initiation, midpoint and conclusion of the projects. In order to identify changes in knowledge, five measures were carried out in relation to substance of knowledge, structure of knowledge, amount of knowledge, estimate of extent of knowledge, and label of knowledge.

Findings identify the development of additive and integrative/transformational knowledge representations, and establish some complex patterns of knowledge change.