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## from the editor

As I am wrapping up my work for this issue, the world outside is ablaze with rich, fall colour. By the time the magazine is in your hands, the leaves will have fallen and the darker days of November will be upon us. Many of my neighbours are making preparations to head south into the warmth of Mexico, but I'm looking forward to lighting the wood stove and snuggling in to watch the winter weather, and to bundling up to get outside for awhile to breathe in the cold, clean air. I hope the next few months are kind to you and that you, too, are able to enjoy the change of season.

With this issue, I am happy to announce that we have added a blog page to the Canadian Teacher Magazine website and are welcoming contributors. If you have a special interest or would like to initiate a cross-country discussion about a particular topic, our blog page may be just the place to do so. Poet and essayist, Naomi Wakan is our first blogger who will be chatting about her reading experiences in her After-School Reading blog to encourage you to explore your own reading interests in your after school hours. You can comment on Naomi's blog online and if you are interested in blogging yourself, please email me at <dmumford@canadianteachermagazine> with your blog idea.

We are also looking for cover images for Canadian Teacher Magazine. If you are handy with a camera and want to see one of your school's events, students (parental permission required), teachers, or other relevant image on the front cover, then send it to me at the above email address. Photos must be in portrait format and be at a resolution of 1800 x 2700 pixels or more. Perhaps a good project for a student photography club?

We hope you find this issue of Canadian Teacher Magazine of interest and, as always, welcome your comments and suggestions.

Best wishes for a wonderful and restful holiday season. See you in January!

*Diana*

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# GREAT HOCKEY PLAYERS MAKE GREAT TEACHERS

*I want my students to wake up and say, "Cool, I have Mr. Fiorillo's class today."*

by Dawn Ford

There is no obstacle you cannot overcome according to secondary education student Mike Fiorillo.

Fiorillo recently transferred to the U of A Faculty of Education from Grant MacEwan University where he played for the MacEwan Griffins hockey team while completing his pre-professional year of education.

Fiorillo admits he has probably worn skates more than shoes. His game accolades include playing for the Fort Saskatchewan Traders of the AJHL where he was a two-time all-star including being the north all-star team captain of the 2007 All-Star Game. He played NCAA hockey at Michigan's Adrian College where he was a two-time Midwest Collegiate All-Academic team member. And In 2009-2010 while with the MacEwan Griffins, he received the Top Scorer Award and was designated MVP.

Yet Fiorillo says his experience with the game of hockey and specifically those he met along the way make for a natural segue into the profession of teaching.

"I had some great coaches like Lee Fogolin. He instilled a lot of things in me about respect, leadership, discipline, how to present yourself personally and professionally. If you ever run into a hockey player more often than not he or she is a person very well mannered who knows how to carry himself. It's the off-ice things that are as life defining as the time spent on the ice," says Fiorillo who talks about a life altering moment during these early years when he lost a good friend.

"Lee's son Michael Fogolin was my really close friend. When he died suddenly at age 17, I learned about the heartache of a friend passing. Lee and his family put a big stamp on my life."

Born in Edmonton, Fiorillo grew up with a love of the game inspired by his upbringing and by his brother Umberto Fiorillo ('04 BEd) who is a teacher and the director of St. Edmund's Hockey Academy in Edmonton.

"Hockey was a natural thing for me. I grew up the youngest of three siblings, and my brother was already playing by the time I put on my first pair of skates at two and half. I was on my first Thom Thumb team at age five," he recalls.

"I've been fortunate to work as an instructor with the students in my brother's academy. I was helping kids both on the ice and in the classroom. Knowing I was good with them has had a real impact on me. If I can do teaching and coaching and hockey combined, that just brings all of this together."

Fiorillo says his years on and off the ice have helped him prepare to face adversity however unexpected, such as a recent change in plans for his hockey career when he was released after being invited to join the University of Alberta's Golden Bears Hockey Team.

"I had the pleasure of skating with them and being a part of their team for a month this summer. What an excellent group of guys. What a great thrill. The time I got to share with the players and coaching staff is something I'll remember for as long as I live.

I've played for three different universities around North America and then to throw on a Golden Bears' jersey for two games and to score a goal, well that's just great to have behind me."

He recalls the moment he first considered becoming an educator when his elementary school teacher surprised him one night during one of his hockey games.

"I remember when I was in grade three and told my teacher Mr. Brooks that I had a hockey game that weekend. He was very involved and very interested in everything that I was doing with athletics. I remember talking to him about a big hockey game I had in Fort Saskatchewan where he lived. I was on the ice and when I looked up, there he was," says Fiorillo.

"I remember thinking, 'wow my teacher actually came out to watch me play!'"

Raymond Brooks ('91 BEd, '89 BA), who is presently teaching at Blessed Kateri Catholic Elementary School in Edmonton, says he remembers Fiorillo well even though it's been close to two decades since they were in the same classroom.

"I can still picture Michael and also his mother who was always involved in the school. He was on my cross-country running team and was one of our top runners. He was very good in all sports, but what really stands out is his character. He was very respectful and he had everyone's respect in return. He was destined for success," says Brooks.

In addition to his studies, Fiorillo is now playing hockey with a senior AAA team and coaching bantam hockey. He says he's ready for the next steps in his career.

"Hockey has been such a big part of my life that I know it's time to give back. I know I can share my lessons with adolescents who are in the midst of facing their own barriers."

"Everything I've done is about overcoming obstacles. I want to bring a sense of fun into a classroom, and I want my students to know that they don't have to listen to those who say it cannot be done. I don't want them to wake up and not want to go to school.

I want them to get up in the morning and say, "Cool, I have Mr. Fiorillo's class today."

Dawn Ford is the Director of Communications at the University of Alberta, Faculty of Education. [www.education.ualberta.ca](http://www.education.ualberta.ca)



**We welcome your reaction to the ideas presented in Canadian Teacher Magazine and your thoughts about education today. Share your thoughts with your colleagues across Canada.**

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# IT'S TIME

## Why ALL Learners Need Universally Designed Classrooms

by Kerri Steel

Let me start out by saying that I'm biased. This article is about ways to incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into any learning space. I'll describe how to get started with implementing a UDL framework without touching a computer, mp3 player or any other digital tool. But I'll also explain why we're doing all of our learners a disservice if we try.

UDL is all about access and opportunity. It's about framing each and every learning experience in a way that the greatest number of learners is able to engage in a meaningful way. It's about creating a flexible framework that invites everyone in the room to participate, regardless of learning or physical challenges. King-Sears argues that "UDL is not defined by or confined to technology. The technology must be combined with effective pedagogy, which can either stand alone as UDL or stand with the technology" (p. 201). At the same time, Dave Edyburn argues that "the reason why UDL is possible today as opposed to in the 1950s or 1970s is that digital technology provides a high degree of flexibility. Paper-based instructional technologies (e.g., worksheets, textbooks) commit information to fixed formats and cannot match the array and flexibility of supports provided in a digital environment" (p.38). What they're both saying is that UDL isn't about how often students are allowed to go to the computer lab to type up a story. It's about knowing how and where to provide access to tools that deepen engagement and understanding, targeted at specific goals and learning outcomes.

UDL mixes a learner-centred framework that is supported by clear learning objectives and goals, with a few structures that have been deliberately chosen to put students in the driver's seat. Given a chance to explore options, our learners quickly discover how they learn best; they just need their teachers to get out of the way. But before that, effective educators begin with explicit, sincere conversations about goals and objectives. The teacher clearly states, and often displays, a learning intention for the lesson or activity. The learners then come up with their own questions that will help them to find a way to achieve that learning intention. Some call this an inquiry question. Once everyone knows the end point, the group has a conversation about the critical criteria that they will need to meet. Developing a rubric together is a great way to make it crystal clear for everyone. This part is easy to do without technology. It's the conversation that creates the engagement.

Once the rubric is in place, students have a road map. This is the point where choice and flexibility step in, and the teacher steps out of the role of "instructor," and into the role of "mentor." As long as the students make reasonable choices that help them to achieve the defined learning intention, these choices are available to them. For example, if the learning intention is to "compare the structures and behaviours of local animals and plants in different habitats and communities," (BC Min. of Ed., p.30), and students have a rubric which stipulates which information to include, they may choose to write a report, do a detailed poster, create an advertisement with a friend, or to make

a labeled diorama. If we really want to include everyone, we'll also offer the options of PowerPoint, Microsoft Moviemaker, Microsoft Word, Kidspiration or Kurzweil. The project will be marked against the criteria, so it doesn't matter if everyone uses a different format to complete it. Classroom teachers don't need to be experts in all of these technologies; if we create opportunities for kids to use skills they already have, and collaborate with others who can help to troubleshoot, some amazing results emerge.

Let me illustrate by describing a project completed by a group of grade three and four students in my school last year. Colleen, their teacher, really wanted to know if the students knew how to focus on the "big ideas" when pulling facts out of their reading, and wanted them to celebrate their learning by presenting it to parents and grandparents. After creating a rubric, they did some print-based reading in information circles, to learn how to "Dig for Potatoes," (a graphic organizer focused on collecting key facts). They followed this learning with the creation of some dioramas and writing about their animals. This was a great start, but Colleen really wanted to see what her students could produce independently, and with over half the class receiving support services for reading and writing, she needed a flexible, inclusive framework to help them to finish their exploration.



Colleen knew there were some terrific websites with information on Canadian Wild Animals, so she began collaboration with the Information Communication Technology (ICT) teacher to support the students with gathering facts on the



Internet. Because she is just beginning to explore digital research tools, the students worked on this part of the project during their “computer” blocks. Some students cut and pasted, some read and typed their discoveries, and others used digital hi-lighters to categorize information that they listened to while using Click, Speak! (a free add-on program for Mozilla Firefox). When finished, students worked with both Colleen and the ICT teacher to create PowerPoint projects, synthesizing their learning. To facilitate the use of some other tools that she had not used previously, Colleen also collaborated with the Support Services teacher as the kids worked through their final projects. On the day they shared with their families, the adults stood to the side as the students used the SMART Board to present their projects. Some students simply showed their presentations and read the captions, others used a dollar-store microphone to record what they had typed and then played the voice threads during their presentations, and a couple of students chose PowerTalk (another free program), to have the computer read their writing for them. Students sat with rubrics to offer peer evaluations on the presentations, and spoke articulately about what they had accomplished. In reflecting on their work, Colleen excitedly recalled the high level of engagement that her students demonstrated throughout the project, and was astounded by both the depth of their understanding of the content, and their level of expertise with the technology.

By the end of the project, Colleen recognized what we all need to acknowledge; that UDL is all about purposeful pedagogy, combined with the flexibility and choice afforded by the integration of technology into the fabric of the learning space. It is achieved by first establishing a clear goal and specific criteria that are explored through a variety of choices that reflect students’ preferences and learning needs. It is possible to provide options without technology. Of course, if we do, then we ignore the growing body of research that tells us that our students learn better when they have access to these tools, and we create barriers simply by limiting opportunity. Can UDL work without technology? You can make a start. Should we be trying? Only if we truly want to foster innovative, dynamic, and collaborative learning environments that will fully prepare our students for the challenges that lay ahead. It’s time.

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Kerri Steel is the vice principal and student support services teacher at Errington Elementary School in BC. She has a Master of Arts Degree with a focus in Universal Design for Learning, and has presented on this topic in several school districts.



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# CLASSROOM COLLISIONS

## *Children on the Wrong Side of History*

by Manfred J. von Vulte

The way of the world has a unique manner in which it enters an elementary school and classroom. Children are sensitive to the affairs of society and culture. They are not oblivious to larger events that their parents and older siblings discuss. They will ask questions, debate and formulate exaggerations and opinions. Elementary school children will also begin to form a sense of temporal history in relation to who they are as individuals and how they fit into the grand scheme of culture and time. The notion of self-discovery is both an internal and external dynamic. It operates through an ongoing reciprocating paradigm that grows with maturity and the ability to inference meaning from external influences that are ultimately reconciled and given validity in the child's mind. Children feel the spirit of the age and its relationship to them.

While they may not be able to explain and surmise the deep questions and challenges of an era in which they exist, children do have a sense of the major developments of a period and the importance given to them through explicit images and the process of formulation and retelling. As an example, the 1980s were a time of nuclear angst and a positioning of the world in two camps. Young students excel at comparison and they value judgments. In essence, they would ask who the "good guys" and the "bad guys" were. Depending on their culture, and how the world is framed for them by home and school, they would arrive at an answer. This is a critical insight into the thought processes of an elementary school child. There is a significant tenet missing in this equation: analysis and synthesis. An ability to identify, discern, and reconcile the "grey areas" of meaning and interpretation are not part of a child's cognitive process; they are guided by their own connection of meaning through the framing of faith, culture, society and education.

Teachers will tell you that true learning is taking place when a child can retain knowledge over a long period of time by attaching what has been learned to experience and memory. Learning, unlike the linear progression of the school year and worldly events, occurs in a metaphysical paradigm that ebbs and flows in the mind of the child from the past to the present and the future, adding context and significance. It is knowledge becoming wisdom being modified by experience and constantly reapplied and reorganized. At this point, a symbiosis of the knowledge is connected to an aspect of their emotions and experiences. This becomes problematic when an issue, already framed by media and society, enters the realm of classroom. The simple dynamic chosen by children to discern their own meaning on a given topic becomes skewed when they have some identification with a group that society has deemed "the other" or, perhaps even worse, "the enemy." For many educators, this may or may not be a new factor in the classroom. Certainly, Canadian History tells us during the Pre-

Confederation and Post-Confederation eras, Canada welcomed people representing nations Canadians had fought against in either an ideological or direct manner. This speaks to the tolerance, acceptance, and the greatness of Canada. This Canadian attitude has shaped the world view of many of its students through the ages.

The sheer growth of Canada's diversity through multiculturalism makes the aforementioned process quite relevant. A text-based approach to learning the history of this country is a good start, but relying solely on text and pen-to-paper assignments and evaluations is insufficient. Teachers must always be cognisant of potential collision situations. The instruction of history, modern or ancient, can be fraught with peril for the teacher. History can be an emotionally difficult subject for children because of the following factors:

- Nationalities retain the same names and countries. (Identification)
- The echo of history is much louder for those children who are closer to recent events and have relatives who have participated in conflict-ridden times.
- The proximity to actual experience varies in the classroom. Students may have direct involvement or salient memories of events.
- In multi-generational families, old attitudes and prejudice colour the objectivity of the student and introduce a toxic dynamic that the culture of the home, while legitimately preferred, is also far superior to others. (Ranking)
- The power of the eyewitness account supersedes text. A child or a family member might have "been there" and will contradict the "big picture" analysis found in course books.

Aside from a direct censorship of history and current events, can teachers avoid classroom collisions? Not really. Educators can utilize a set of mechanisms in order to "keep the peace" and present an equitable portrayal of events: historical and current. We must avoid the scourge of politically correct language because of its emptiness of spirit and numbing of truth, which does history and its students no measurable good. A discussion on the nature of truth and the selection of facts as a means to writing history are excellent beginnings. If children can observe how history is written, their understanding of its presentation in oral or written form will provide them with one of their first critical tools in understanding. It is obvious that the teacher must couch any personal bias or opinions on a historical matter in order to preserve the purity of the teaching. If teachers do engage in personal opinion, it is their professional and moral obligation to clearly indicate the moment that they speak with the voice of opinion, rather than that of teacher. As an example, if students know a teacher is an Afghan, they



will enquire as to that person's opinion on the situation in Afghanistan. The quality of the response from the teacher will dictate the behavioural expectations on any other personal intersections with history and current events in that classroom.

The mechanisms that would achieve a desired neutral investigation of history would include the following:

### Pre-emptive Measures

Celebrate the distinctive cultures of the class. Have the students choose a grandparent from their family and create a project that honours him/her. Bring in food from the various ethnicities, and share.

### We all are Canadians

While countries will be discussed, and some students will identify themselves with those nations, distinguish the role of the regime vs. the individual. Always make the case for Canada. "We all are Canadians, and this is a nation of immigrants." This creates a natural equality and also reflects the uniqueness of the First Nations people. Give numerous examples of conflicted groups who are able to live and work side by side in Canada, regardless of what may be happening elsewhere. A central theme of Canadian society is this remarkable ability of its people.

### Recognize Injustice through Universal Truths

Religious-based schools might have an easier time with this, because they would have an existing doctrine, like the Ten Commandments, to define boundaries and laws. However, the influx of character education to mould the culture of schools would suffice. Both approaches generate empathy.

### Recognize the Role of the Individual

Racism and other forms of social injustice and aggression come from the creation of people as "the other" and the fear of them. Teach that personal connections lift the veil of fear and ignorance. Suggest that while the students may be of a particular ethnicity, they themselves had nothing to do with the genesis or prosecution of a historical injustice.

### Introduce the Idea of Unfair Comment

Classroom rules should always be displayed, but also spoken of frequently and enforced. Rules regarding the use of slurs and putdowns relating to things a person cannot change, such as their culture, ethnicity, traditions, and faith, are deemed unfair comments.

### Create Your Own Iconography

It is no secret that nations unify their people by creating myths, legends and symbols that every citizen can identify with. All of your students belong to the school and to your class. The school team logo is a good start.

### The Personal Touch

Observe the tone of the lessons that might touch off a collision. Present both or multiple sides in a manner that is neutral and perceived as fair. Talk and listen to your students. Ask the questions that you know your students may not want to broach. Referee, if a conflict occurs, and do not hesitate to involve the parents: first, through communication, then, if necessary, set up a group to resolve the issue.

### The Universality of "The Villain"

Every ethnic, cultural, or national group has at least one villain. And sometimes one is all that is needed to turn history into a violent blood bath. The purpose of this mechanism is to have the conflicted parties look into their collective mirror and decide that their background is as imperfect as the next person's. This exercise will demonstrate the futility in painting one group with the same brush stroke. All Italians are not in the Mafia, and all Germans are not Nazis, are two such examples.

To deny that emotion and learning are separate from each other is folly, and makes the case for the use of political correctness. Teachers and schools undertake every effort to encourage belonging. History, whether it is current or ancient, can be mishandled or misinterpreted, and result in severe classroom collisions, because it is inextricably bound to culture, ethnicity, and religion. Unlike any other discipline taught, history's conflicts can leap off the page and cause havoc for the teacher who has underestimated its power or failed to realize the impact on students who have a connection to the content depicted. Can collisions over history be eliminated? No, but they can be tempered to a fair academic discussion, if the aforementioned mechanisms are utilized. If History is truly the crucible of how we define ourselves as a people, then we, as teachers, must ensure that the explosiveness of the elements have been concentrated enough to spark intelligent debate, rather than conflict.

Manfred J. von Vulte is the Deputy Headmaster of Northmount School in Toronto, Ontario. He has been teaching for twelve years and is the author of a history and children's book.



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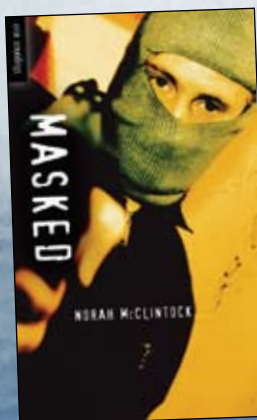
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# GROWING GREEN CAREERS

by Wayne Doyle

If you ask a child, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" it's pretty likely that he or she might come up with one of the old standbys: firefighter, ballerina or astronaut. But if you ask that same child, "What do you want to DO when you grow up?" there's a good chance that he or she might say something about wanting to help the environment.

From junior kindergarten, children are taught about the environment and what can be done to help our planet, but most children don't often think about the possibilities of turning this desire to be green into a career.

With the environment top of mind among global and local leaders, the number and types of environmental science and sustainability-focused careers is rapidly expanding. In addition, many organizations are also realizing the importance of investing in young minds to create a well-equipped workforce that's prepared to handle the environmental movement of tomorrow.

Educators are also being proactive and getting involved in various programs, like the Canon Envirothon, North America's largest environmental competition, to encourage Canadian teens to pursue environmental studies and subsequent career paths, and reach young people who may not have understood what a rich and rewarding field environmental sciences could be.

In 2011, more than 500,000 teens from across North America will participate in the Envirothon. Preparing months in advance by completing tests, doing research, and conducting experiments, these green teens will demonstrate that they're capable of understanding, as well as solving, some of today's most complex environmental issues.

One of the most rewarding aspects of these types of programs is how they affect the lives of young people like David Lawless. As a 14-year-old, David began participating in the Ontario Envirothon. He learned about the program through his grade nine environmental science teacher who suggested he join the school's team. An Envirothon participant for four consecutive years, David discovered it was an opportunity to analyze and decipher key environmental problems with his peers, teachers and natural resource professionals. Now a university student, David remains active in the program as a valued volunteer at the Ontario Envirothon.

"The Envirothon has meant a great deal to me because it not only opened doors to a number of career and educational opportunities and exchanges, but it kick-started my interest in making a difference," he said. "I firmly believe that education and raising awareness play a fundamental role in environmental sustainability."

Currently, David is an ecology student at Guelph University, and has already founded the Global Changemakers Community Action Project, a program designed to help mitigate the effects of a changing climate on water ecosystems in local communities. David has worked with the Ministry of Natural Resources where he's undertaken habitat restoration projects and conducted important research on climate change across Canada, and last summer, he worked at Parks Canada as a bilingual nature interpreter and biosphere researcher, leading hikes and doing studies on the ecology of the Niagara Escarpment. On top of this, in August 2009 David was also selected as one of only five international youth delegates to the United Nations World Climate Conference in Geneva where he worked with scientists, policy makers and ministers to formulate recommendations regarding the effects of climate change on biodiversity and natural resource management.

Hopefully with ambassadors like David telling their stories, it won't be long before children add ecologist, bio-researcher and other environmental-focused careers to their list of future aspirations.

### About the Envirothon

Ranging from grades 9 to 12, participants spend several months preparing for the regional, provincial and North American competitions, which test students' knowledge of four primary environmental themes: aquatic ecology, soil, wildlife and forestry. As well, teens explore one topical issue each year—for the 2011 competition, students are examining Salt and Fresh Water Estuaries. From the provincial competitions, the winning school will move on and represent its province or territory at the Canon Envirothon, to be held next at Mt. Allison University in Sackville, NB from July 24 – 29, 2011. Competing for Canon scholarships, prizes and awards worth more than \$125,000 USD, teams prepare and deliver oral presentations to panels of judges made up of foresters, soil scientists and wildlife experts. Each team is evaluated on their problem-solving capabilities, presentation skills and recommendations to help solve the specific environmental challenge presented during the competition.

Teachers interested in this program and looking for details on how to get involved can visit the website [www.envirothon.org](http://www.envirothon.org).

As Senior Manager of Corporate Communications for Canon Canada, Wayne Doyle has been involved with the Envirothon since 2001.



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## EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL

### Yes, It CAN Be Both Educational AND Safe

by Ron Jeffery

Educational travel is still one of the most effective means of taking your classroom instruction outside of the four walls to compliment theory with life experience. We know that students have varying learning styles and there has been increasing pressure at all levels to adapt how we teach to meet these needs. Integrating the community and world at large into our curriculum through direct contact and travel is both effective and motivating to both students and staff.

Educational travel does have its challenges, requiring staff willing to take the time to organize a tour program that is realistic and accessible to as many students as possible. It is also important to address the issue of safety and security of educational travel and to be able to reassure school administration, parents and school boards.

Using educational travel companies that can provide the resources necessary to ensure curriculum linkage is a must for schools. Also important is finding an experienced travel operator with the ability to assist teachers in organizing safe and cost-efficient programs that their students can afford. Despite a more turbulent post 9/11 world, student travel is in many respects safer today than ten years ago. Insurance is available that will permit schools or boards to cancel a tour if there are legitimate concerns over safety or security of a planned tour going beyond government travel advisories. Night security in hotels is also available in most countries to assist staff in monitoring student safety and behaviour. Industry standards for school travel safety—including bus and hotels, restaurant and venues as well as tour leaders—are both monitored and promoted through independent organizations such as the Student Youth Travel Association ([www.syta.org](http://www.syta.org)), the Association of Canadian Travel Agencies ([www.acta.ca](http://www.acta.ca)) and tour agencies that adhere to these standards.

The important thing is to not abandon educational travel as a viable educational asset to classroom instruction. Travel is a natural motivator for your students and provides significant learning outcomes from the direct experience. Your educational travel specialists can help select a relevant destination and can fully customize your tour to meet your school objectives and curriculum.

Ron Jeffery has been the coordinator of high school academic group travel with Innovative Group Travel ([www.innovativegrouptravel.com](http://www.innovativegrouptravel.com)) since retiring from a 30-year teaching career in 2006.



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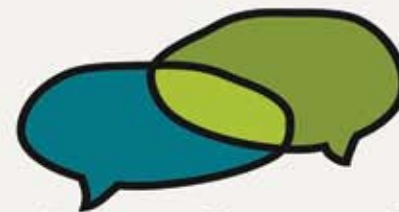
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# INTO THE GOBI DESERT WITH BOOKS



by Margriet Ruurs

As a writer of children's books, I often conduct author visits to International Schools. Earlier this year I spent a week each in South Korea, Malaysia and Singapore, followed by a visit to the International School of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. Students there had knitted warm scarves for nomad children living in the Gobi Desert. I took these, along with many books, on my adventure into the Gobi.

Many years ago I had "met" Dashdondog, a Mongolian children's author. He helped me with the research for my book *My Librarian is a Camel*, an account of how children around the world get library books if they don't have access to library buildings. Dashdondog shared stories and photos with me of his mobile library in the Gobi. He visits nomad families in gers (pronounced as in "Gar-y"; yurt is the Russian word for these nomadic tents) as well as schools in remote villages. He performs his poems, sings songs, reads books and leaves behind many volumes for the children. Until I arrived in Mongolia I had no idea of how famous he is in his country. Take Robert Munsch, Pierre Berton and Raffi and roll them into one. Then you will get close to the popularity of Dashdondog. I discovered that every child, and indeed every adult, in Mongolia can instantly recite his poetry and sing the songs he composed. Many of them don't even realize that these are texts that he wrote, they know them as their own national treasures. I don't speak a word of Mongolian and Dashdondog does not speak much English. But when he performed a poem about horses galloping across the steppe, I knew what he was saying. I could imagine their hooves and the dust.

Dashdondog graciously invited my husband and me to stay with him in Ulaanbaatar, the capital city of Mongolia. The walls of his living room are hung with photos of IBBY (International Board of Books for Young People) friends from around the world: Astrid Lindgren, Katherine Paterson, Uri Orlev and many

others. Dashdondog also arranged for a trip into the Gobi to bring books to children. For twelve hours we traveled by train and then continued for twelve more hours in a van, following sand tracks with no visible landmarks, deep into the desert. Occasionally we came upon a lonely white ger. We would stop to hand out scarves, books and candy for the children who lived here. In return they served us tea with camel milk, fed us dried camel milk cheese curds and let us ride their camels.

When we reached our destination, Khovsgols Soum, a forlorn windblown town bobbing on a sand ocean, we visited the local school and shared books with children. They were incredibly keen. Mongolia may not be wealthy by western standards but has a 95% literacy rate. From Kindergartners to high school students, they all were polite, attentive and eager to hear stories. I always bring Emma along, a chicken puppet based on my Emma's Eggs books. Here too, children loved the chicken and were delighted to chant "tok-tok-tok!" wondering if she might be a real chicken!

We left books with children in schools, in tents and on trains. Most of these books are paid for by Dashdondog. Through grants from Japan and thanks to being awarded the 2006 Asahi Reading Award for his innovative mobile library, this Mongolian Hans Christian Andersen is able to, single-handedly, put books in the hands of many appreciative children. As we left the Gobi to return to a more populated world, I listened to the haunting sounds of our new Mongolian friends as they sang folk songs. Seated on bags of camel wool, we drove back across the bumpy desert, secure in the knowledge that stories and books make the best of friends.

<http://www.ibby-canada.org>

Margriet Ruurs is a Canadian children's book author, who conducts school visits across the country. [www.margietruurs.com](http://www.margietruurs.com)



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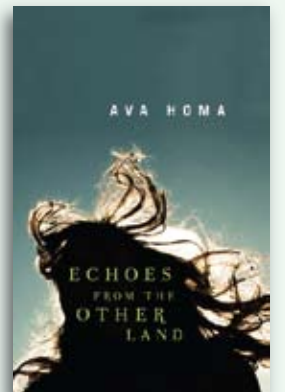
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# Building Resiliency Through Intergenerational Connections

by Sharon MacKenzie

How often these days do children and youth spend quality time with older adults within their community, listening to stories of the good old days, playing games, or explaining how their new ipod works? Visiting with grandparents every week, common in decades past, is no longer the norm. Now, more than ever, there appears to be a visible disconnect of children and youth from older adults in society. Along with the physical and social separation of generations, attitudes about stereotyping, ageism and a lack of empathy towards the issues of growing older are generating critical misunderstandings that foster societal rifts.

Could this breakdown be turned around to become instrumental in building community resiliency?

The Canadian demographic is shifting to include a growing number of older adults (by 2035, 25% of Canadians will be over 65 years of age). Immigration has brought many children to Canada without the support of their extended families, and has left many grandparents alone while their grown families move across the country or around the world. Intergenerational (IG) activities can offer rich opportunities for our youth to benefit from the experience and maturity of these older adults. Generational bridging helps our older population remain active and involved and creates a climate for both generations to forge meaningful relationships within community.

As social issues arise from dis-connection of generations, our provincial and federal governments and the UN are becoming increasingly aware of the value of IG initiatives. In July 2010, the Canadian government moved to make Intergenerational Relations a top priority for the next year. The seed for such development lies in education.

Seeking to assist in bridging the generational gap, the i2i Intergenerational Society of Canada (helping generations see “eye to eye”) is a not-for-profit society

that strives to promote and support sustainable IG activities between schools, communities and health care facilities. One of the many goals of i2i is to demonstrate to teachers how intergenerational learning is not just another subject to be taught, but rather can be easily integrated to enrich what is already being done in the mandated curriculum. A complete list of curriculum connections for IG learning, grades 4 – 12 (all provinces and territories), will soon be available on the i2i website.

Recent government funding facilitated i2i’s involvement in the creation of a National Intergenerational Curriculum. “Across the Generations – Respect All Ages” focuses on connecting 9 – 13 year olds respectfully to older adults. It includes twenty-one classroom-tested lessons, leading from the example included in this article, to plans for full intergenerational immersion. The second resource, a grade 9 – 12 Teen Kit on “Elder Abuse Awareness,” was developed this spring for the International Federation on Aging, and the International Network for Prevention of Elder Abuse. This project-based learning kit fits well with Social Justice Studies, Behavioural Psychology, Conflict Resolution, English, Health, Home Economics and Arts courses in Middle and High Schools.

The i2i website [www.intergenerational.ca](http://www.intergenerational.ca) will be hosting these two downloadable curriculums commencing this month. As well, this website offers lesson ideas, networking opportunities and a community IG calendar, an IG “Community Toolkit” developed for BC by i2i, a blog, photo galleries and IG activity suggestions. For any teachers interested in beginning an intergenerational immersion project, i2i is eager to assist in planning, development and implementation. As well, for school-based teachers, or teacher conferences, the society provides workshops on IG education, elder abuse awareness and community resiliency-building.

Get on the i2i Intergenerational Society mailing list

([www.intergenerational.ca](http://www.intergenerational.ca)) and be the first to access these exciting resources as they come online. Also, share on the website any intergenerational projects you have done or are involved in now. Together we are better!

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE OLD?

**Time required:** 30 – 60 minutes

**Intent:** Guiding questions

- What does it mean to be old? (investigation of stereotyping)
- What characteristics do we generally connect to something old?
- Do these same characteristics apply to all things? to all people?
- Are all older adults the same? How might they be different?
- How can we change our views of older adults?

Participants will be given opportunities to reflect on how they personally view “old,” and through discussion they will list characteristics of things they believe to be old. They will be invited to reflect on differences they perceive between “old” and “new,” “young” and “aged” (Why were some ideas included on their list and others not?) There will be a discussion regarding perceived values attached to “old” and “young” as they pertain to people (as opposed to objects).

**Design:** Discussion

- using comparison and contrast of old/new/young/aged
- reflection on previously held views—possible stereotyping

After opening discussion, participants will collect photographs from media that they perceive to represent “old” and “young,” with reflective guided discussion to follow.

## ACTIVITY

### Requirements

- whiteboard, chart paper, black board or smart board
- 11X17 paper, one per child
- felt pens, glue sticks
- stopwatch (optional)
- magazines and newspapers, scissors for each child

### Process

- What do participants know about "old"? What is their perception of "old"?
- (Hint: use K and W of Know - Want to Know - Learned - Want to Enquire Further)
- "K" - Start discussion of what it means to be "old" by recording participants' opinions.
- "W" - Define and investigate "What is a stereotype?"
- Have participants inquire into perceptions of "What does 'old' look like, and act like?" Consider how some comments might be based on stereotyping.
- From magazines and newspapers, have participants cut out photos of things that I would consider to be "old" and things that I would consider to be "new/young."
- Have participants share within groups why they selected these representative photos.
- What do participants characterize as "old"? (Identify stereotypical thinking.)
- The adult lead may guide participants in understanding "What does it mean to be an older adult?" by brainstorming a list or mind map of various aspects of "old" (e.g., young at heart, some retirees participate in their professions as volunteers, some continue or begin participation in hobbies and competitive sports, some have mobility issues, are unwell and require care, some travel, some must leave their homes for care, etc.).
- Post this information on a wall for future reference.

### Evaluation

- Adult lead can request that individual and pairs of participants show this broader definition of "old" and "older adults" by: writing a poem, rap, song, creating a poster showing all aspects of "Being an older adult is...", making a chart showing pictures of older adults doing a variety of things (selected cut-out images from beginning of activity), making a collage that un masks stereotypical thinking about older adults.
- Present these in a shared public space.
- At the completion of this activity, have all the guiding questions been addressed?

Sharon MacKenzie, BC Premier's Award for Teaching Excellence recipient in 2009, is the Executive Director, i2i Intergenerational Society, Canada. [www.intergenerational.ca](http://www.intergenerational.ca)



# Write and Be Published

by Michael Ernest Sweet

*"They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel."*

Carl Buechner

In the more than eight years that I have been teaching, nothing has been more satisfying than seeing the look on children's faces when they pick up a copy of their own book. As an author myself, I know that feeling—it's amazing. You see, for the past five years I have been building the non-profit student press that I founded in 2004. Learning for a Cause, as it is called, has made nearly two thousand students authors, and has published more than a dozen anthologies. This week the press comes to a turning point. I am stepping down as the publisher and handing the press over to the Quebec-based educational non-profit Youth Fusion ([youthfusionquebec.org](http://youthfusionquebec.org)). Youth Fusion works to counter high school drop out rates in the province and will make the Learning for a Cause publishing program a central project in its repertoire of high school projects. I am sad and I am happy. One thing is for sure—publishing kids and their work has made the last five years of my teaching practice a complete pleasure. More teachers should be getting their kids' work out to the world. Here is how you can do just that!

There are many websites that can help you publish from the classroom. Many want money and a few do not. Of those few that don't, there are three that rise to the top as tested and true. Although I am not officially endorsing any of these sites, trust me that in publishing more than a dozen titles I have come to know which ones are the best overall. All of these sites will allow you to publish a real book, get it into distribution and pay only when you order actual copies of the title. In other words, no set up fees!

If you plan to publish a novel or anthology (primarily text-based) then you will want to head over to Lulu. Lulu will give you many options. Their online easy-to-use interface will walk you through uploading a PDF of your book interior, designing your cover and assigning your ISBN number. They will even provide you with options to place your book on Amazon.com and more.



Michael Ernest Sweet is a writer, educator and social activist. He founded the Learning for a Cause Initiative in 2004 and was a recipient of the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence in 2009. Michael divides his time between Montreal and New York City. [www.LearningforaCause.org](http://www.LearningforaCause.org)

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What began as simply a publishing project in my classroom five years ago became an internationally award-winning student press. My students have won book awards, entrepreneurial awards and have had their work shelved in more than one hundred libraries around the globe including Library of Canada and the Library of Congress. We have worked with Martin Sheen, Candy Spelling and David Suzuki to name but three. We have traveled to Atlanta, San Francisco, St. Louis, Toronto, New York, Rome, London and Paris as part of this fascinating project. You don't have to take it so far or you can take it further. Teaching is what you make of it. One thing is for sure though, in English language arts it all starts with a pencil, a piece of paper and a touch of imagination. What are you waiting for? Make your students feel like the brilliant writers they are. They will never forget the fact that you believed in them, that you took their work and put it into print. Go ahead, write and be published!







Brenda has been teaching for over 30 years. She uses literature based themes in her classroom and is actively involved in her school and district literacy committees.

# NON-FICTION READING AND WRITING

## Writing Like a Reporter

by Brenda Boreham

### Constructing Meaning from Non-fiction Text

The primary goal of reading is to understand the text. Although explicit reading instruction may include a focus on decoding skills, phonics, etc., the objective of reading text is always to construct meaning. Adrienne Gear talks about the difficulties students have in accessing the meaning in non-fiction text in her book *Nonfiction Reading Power* (2008).

*A Grade 8 class is given comprehension assessment based on a passage of nonfiction text. This passage includes several nonfiction features such as charts, captions, and diagrams. Most of the questions the students are asked are based on the features in the text, rather than the main body of the text. The result: a majority of students failed to answer the questions correctly.*

Sound familiar? My experience in my own classroom, as well as what I have found as I travel around the school assisting with reading assessment, is similar. Students tend to focus on the main body of the text and skip over the text features. With the same results.

*Nonfiction texts vary in many ways from fiction, but most significantly in the structure of the text and the way the information is presented. Information is found in many places on the page of a nonfiction text, and is presented in a variety of ways: on a graph or in a chart, highlighted in a fact box or featured as a caption under a photograph. These features can help readers navigate through the text, summarize key points, highlight important information, and provide a variety of ways a reader can access the information. In this technological age, young readers are experienced with navigating through a web page by clicking on icons to access more information. The printed page, however, is not as interactive as a web page, and readers need to learn to use their eyes the way they use their mouse, focusing on the features to access information.*

Being aware that non-fiction text is a powerful tool to “hook” reluctant and/or delayed readers, I usually start the school year by teaching the students to recognize the purpose of the various features of non-fiction text. Throughout the year we then explore many of the wonderful non-fiction books that are available to us—usually linking them to our current classroom or school-wide theme.

After attending one of Adrienne Gear's summer 2009 workshops and reading her two books (*Reading Power* and *Nonfiction Reading Power*), I realized that although this was a good start, I had to take the work a little deeper. So I chose five reading comprehension strategies and made non-fiction text a focus for the upcoming school year (one strategy every two months seemed manageable). We started off with the “zooming-in” (taking a closer look) strategy. The plan was to zoom-in on pages of text and to teach the students to recognize, and to take a closer look at, the text features instead of skipping over them.

### The Sequence of Lessons

1. The first few lessons focussed on teaching the students to distinguish the features of fiction and non-fiction books. (I wrote an article on this topic for the Winter 2008 issue of this magazine. The article is available online at [www.CanadianTeacherMagazine.com](http://www.CanadianTeacherMagazine.com). See Back Issues.)
2. Once the students were familiar with the two genres, we established a definition for the term “zoom-in” (taking a closer look). Three books that worked well to introduce the concept of “zooming-in” are *Looking Closely Along the Shore* and *Looking Closely Through the Forest* by Frank Serafini and *Looking Down* by Steve Jenkins.

3. Several weeks were spent learning about the most common text features found in non-fiction books. (I outlined several activities and a word sorting game that could be useful in teaching non-fiction text features for the Spring 2008 issue. This article is also available under Back Issues at [www.CanadianTeacherMagazine.com](http://www.CanadianTeacherMagazine.com).)

### Common Text Features of Non-fiction Books

bold word	chart	speech bubble	table of contents
italics	section headings	graph	index
bullet	cutaway	symbol	title
caption	sidebar	illustration	
map	glossary	photograph	

4. For the rest of the year students engaged in guided and independent reading and writing activities that demonstrated their understanding of the use of non-fiction text features.

### WRITING LIKE A REPORTER: A ZOOM-IN WRITING ACTIVITY

#### Goals

Students will:

- Demonstrate the use of some features of non-fiction text.
- Zoom in on the details of a field trip.

#### Process

As part of a study of the seashore ecosystem, the students went on a field trip to an exhibit by the University Women's Club that included an oral presentation, tanks of live specimens, dry specimens and a slide show (any field trip, guest speaker, assembly performance, etc., would work as well).

Students were familiarized with the writing assignment that would follow the presentation. They were coached to think like a reporter and to notice as many details as possible. The students were asked to zoom-in on one live specimen to draw and label as part of the assignment.

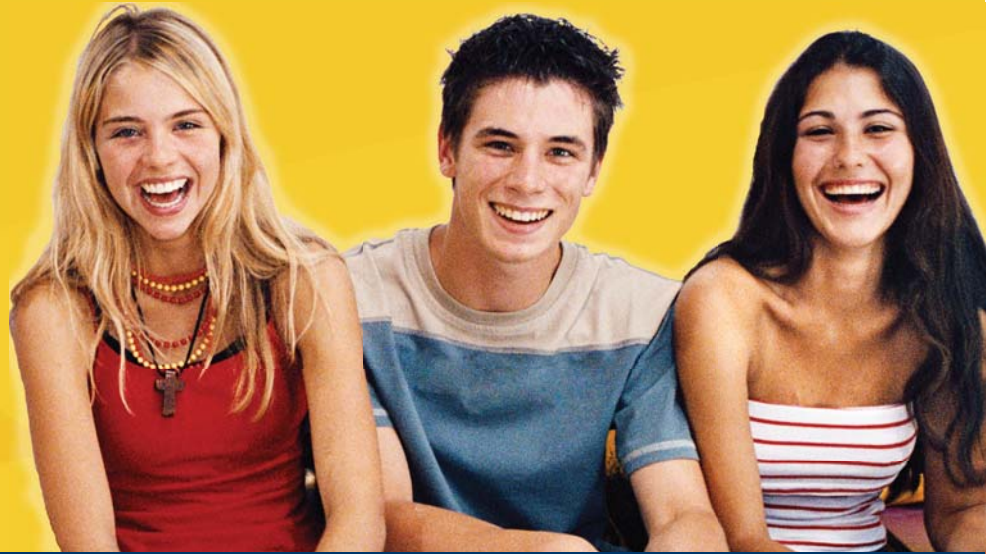
After the field trip the students brainstormed words that might be useful in their reports as well as partner talking about their chosen creature.

The students worked independently to write their reports.

#### Reflection

Students shared their writing with a partner and talked about the details in their pictures.





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# THE ART OF HOPE

## A Postcard Project



by Donalyn Heise and Bryna Bobick

Are you looking for an appealing project that integrates art and writing, and fosters a relationship with the community? Then this postcard project may work for your classroom and the community.

The goal of the project is for middle grade students to develop an understanding of themselves and their community. In addition, the students will discover the similarities or differences between individual and collective interpretations of the theme of "hope," and will gain a greater understanding of the role art can play in their lives. It allows students to design one-of-a-kind postcards and exchange them with a community organization. For example, the postcard swap could occur with art education majors at a local university or seniors at a nearby assisted living facility.

It is important to establish a timeline with the organization that your students are partnering with, and to establish when and how the postcard swap will occur. Everyone who creates a postcard should receive one.

### THE PROJECT

This postcard project was based on the idea that participation in the arts can strengthen community and build human capacity, and was guided by the essential question: What is your vision of hope for yourself and your community?

We began by asking the question: What does the word "hope" mean? The students were given a few minutes to reflect and write down their thoughts and ideas about "hope." Other prompts included: What do you hope for yourself? What hope do you have for our community?

Next, the students folded a sheet of paper in half and wrote a list of things they hoped for themselves and the community. On the other half, they illustrated what they had written. This brainstorming activity was called "list it/sketch it." After completing the list it/sketch it sheet, the students were asked to share their thoughts and sketches with others in the class.

Following the list it/sketch it sheet, the students viewed works of art that depict a vision of hope. These included Thomas Moran's Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, and Jacob Lawrence's Migration Series,

depicting African American migration to the north and their vision of hope for a better life. The works of art provided additional ideas for the students' postcards.

Often postcards contain symbols that represent different locations, feelings, ideas and meanings. Some artists also use symbols in their works of art. This project provided the opportunity for the students to learn how artists communicate using symbols. For symbol examples, we introduced the students to First Nations symbols, hieroglyphs of ancient Egypt and contemporary artists, such as Keith Haring. The students were asked to think of ways in which they could create their vision of hope in a work of art. They were asked: What symbols can effectively communicate your ideas? The students brainstormed symbols on a piece of paper before beginning their postcards.

After the students discussed their symbols, we distributed a postcard size piece of blank cardstock to each student. The students used a variety of art materials and expressed their ideas of hope for themselves and/or for the community. In addition, the students wrote a message on the back of their postcard, which explained their images of hope.

### THE SWAP

Once the postcards were completed, we collected and packaged them to be sent to the participating site to decrease the chance of a postcard being misplaced. The corresponding project partners' postcards were given out, one to each student.

The teacher should prep the students to be respectful of everyone's interpretation of hope. It is important to allow time to reflect on the message communicated through the postcard. The teacher may ask the following guiding questions: "What is their vision of hope?" and "What do you see that makes you think that?" Also, the students can discuss if the postcards they received communicated similar or different visions of hope, and different ways we might be able to achieve our visions of hope.

### CLOSURE

Prior to the end of the postcard project, the students discussed if they felt art is a good way to communicate

thoughts, feelings and visions. The students talked about what they learned from sharing their visions of hope and if/how the artwork of others helped them to understand and articulate their own vision of hope. We closed the project by asking the students: Did this collaborative art project help you feel connected to your community?

### Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Share their own thoughts about hope with their classmates and the community.
- Write and illustrate an original postcard.
- Have a greater understanding of how visual artists communicate the idea of hope through works of art.

### National Standards

(from the National Art Education Association, based in the US, with members including art educators from Canada and around the world)

- Students select media, techniques, and processes; analyze what makes them effective or not effective in communicating ideas; and reflect upon the effectiveness of their choices.

### Materials

- Sketch paper
- Pencils
- Crayons
- Coloured pencils
- Fine black markers
- 5 1/2" x 4 1/4" cardstock for postcards
- Prints of art depicting hope
- Variety of postcards

Donalyn Heise, Ed.D is an associate professor of art education at the University of Memphis in Tennessee. Prior to teaching in higher education, Dr. Heise taught art at the elementary and secondary levels. [dheise2@memphis.edu](mailto:dheise2@memphis.edu)

Bryna Bobick, Ed.D is an assistant professor of art education at the University of Memphis in Tennessee. Prior to teaching in higher education, Dr. Bobick taught at the elementary level. [bbobick@memphis.edu](mailto:bbobick@memphis.edu)







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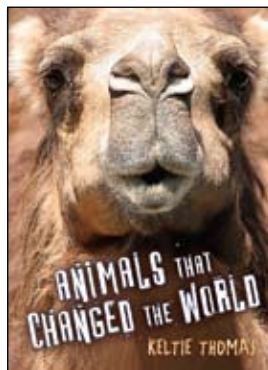
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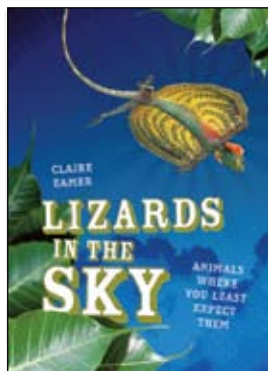
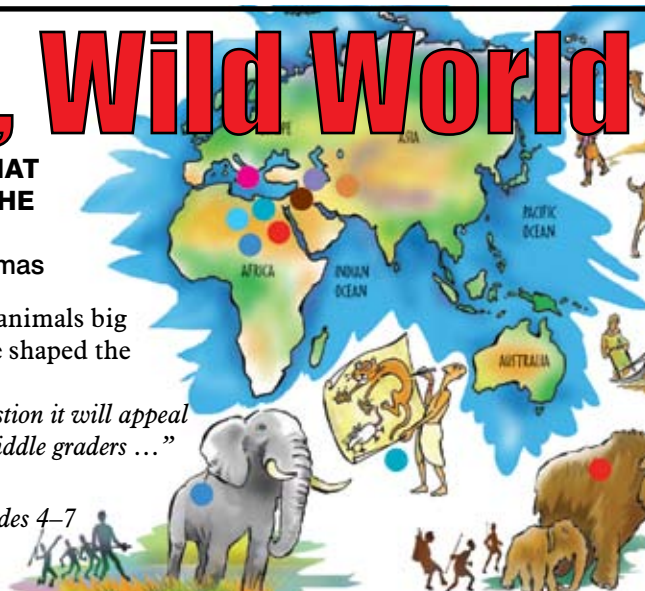
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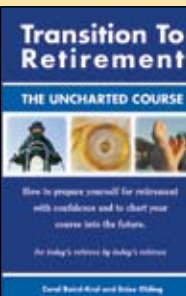
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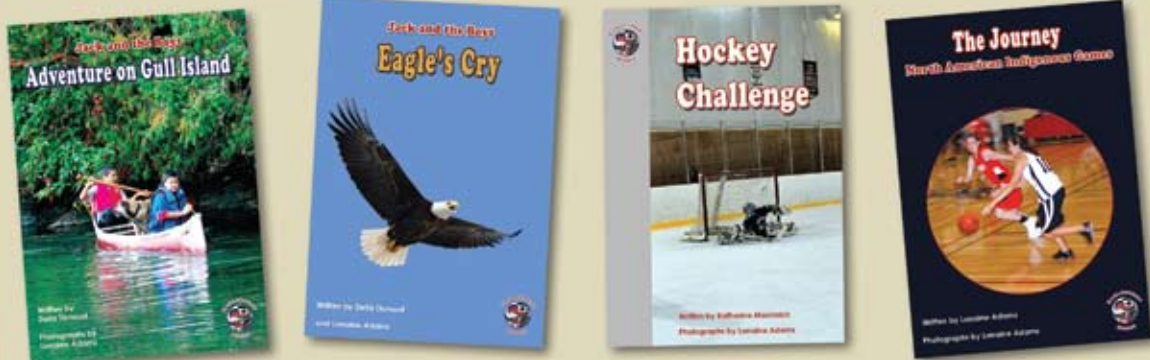
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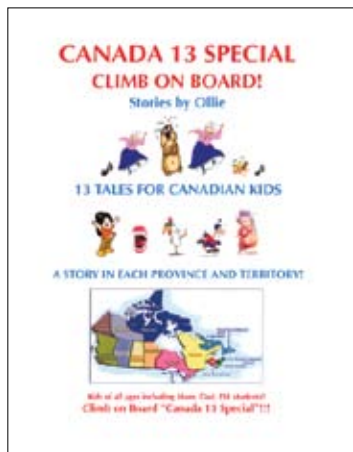


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## • FICTION •

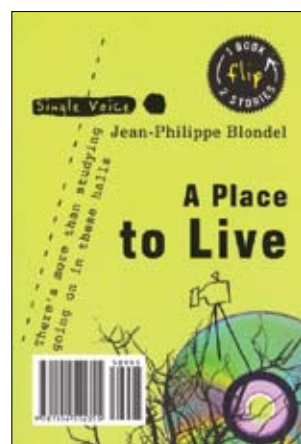


### Canada 13 Special - Climb on Board 13 Tales for Canadian Kids

by Olive Strand  
Self published, 2009  
ISBN 978-0-981310-50-3  
\$29.95, 338 pp, ages 8 – 11  
ollie5@sympatico.ca

This anthology comprises thirteen stories, one set in each of Canada's provinces and territories. Each story is illustrated with photographs and clipart, including the provincial/territorial flower and flag, notable landmarks and a map. As well as telling an imaginative story, the author has incorporated facts about the setting into each narrative, and included a

set of questions for teacher use at the back of the volume. Also included is a list of websites where additional factual information about Canada can be found. The stories could be read aloud and discussed in a middle grade elementary school classroom, or used for independent reading by students.



### A Place to Live

by Jean-Philippe Blondel

### Descent into Paradise

by Vincent Karle

Annick Press, 2009 (Single Voice Series)  
ISBN 978-1-55451-235-5 (pb)  
\$9.95, 181 pp, ages 14+  
[www.annickpress.com](http://www.annickpress.com)

In this volume, two stories are presented in a flip-book format. Each novella has a single narrator, hence the name "Single Voice Series." The stories are linked thematically and deal with profound moments in an adolescent's life in which he is required to have the courage to take a stand.

In *A Place to Live*, the narrator, a sixteen-year-old boy, remains nameless throughout the story. With a new principal in his school, there are new rules to follow. The principal believes that school is a place for "hard work, discipline, and consequences." The students seem to acquiesce so the narrator decides to rebel on his own. With his camcorder he begins to film people at school kissing. This is done with their permission, and once the students catch on to why he is doing the filming the narrator has no lack of volunteers. The filming soon turns into a project about life at school in all its forms: kissing, fighting, laughter, friendship and tranquil moments. There are consequences when the principal finds out, but they mean little to the narrator. During the process he has discovered something important about himself. As he waits in the principal's office he looks out the window to the courtyard below and realizes that standing up for what he believes was the right thing to do, and that he is not alone.

On the flip side is Martin Leduc, who likes to take pictures, and likes to smoke dope. Who he doesn't like is the new student, Zaher Arash, from Afghanistan, but after a rocky start they become good friends. While living in Afghanistan, Zaher's grandfather was killed by the Taliban. Zaher's father wrote articles against the Taliban, and for that his office was burned down. The family had to flee and finally managed to escape. One day, at Martin's school, the police suddenly barge into Martin's class. This brings back horrible memories for Zaher. Martin and Zaher are arrested on drug charges, even though they find nothing on Zaher. Both boys are treated with extreme force and brutality by some of the officers. Considering Martin's father is the Chief of Police, one wonders at the choice of action by these officers. Martin's camera has been confiscated but he mentally "clicks" pictures of everything that is happening to Zaher and himself. The whole episode is a cover-up for something even more frightening. While the consequences for Martin are bad, they are devastating for Zaher and his family. Martin does his best to stand up for his friend, but doing the right thing doesn't always get the desired results.

### Reviewers

**Diana Mumford** worked as a teacher and teacher-librarian for twenty years before switching to her present career as an editor.

**Julie Rank** teaches grade nine in Corner Brook, NL. She is always on the lookout for books that will appeal to her 14-year-old students.

Interested in reviewing? Contact: [dmumford@CanadianTeacherMagazine.com](mailto:dmumford@CanadianTeacherMagazine.com)

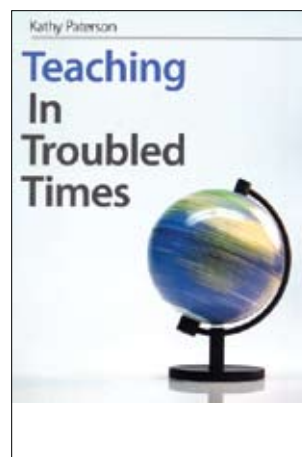
## • PROFESSIONAL BOOKS •



### Teaching Art A Complete Guide for the Classroom

by Rhian Brynjolson  
Portage & Main Press, 2009  
ISBN 978-1-55379-195-9  
\$48.50, 336 pp, index, all grade levels  
[www.portageandmainpress.com](http://www.portageandmainpress.com)

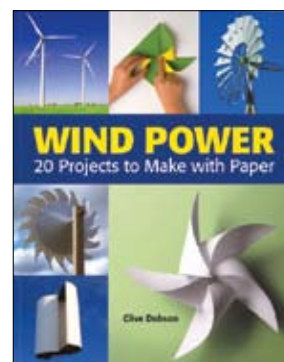
In this resource, the author (also teacher, artist and illustrator) offers a practical and comprehensive discussion of visual art education for classroom teachers. Part One deals with why art education is important and what an effective art program and art-friendly classroom will look like, the needs of both developing and proficient artists, and suggestions for adapting activities for gifted students and students with special needs. There are also chapters on assessment and displaying students' work. In the following sections, ideas for teaching art are outlined (e.g., drawing, working with colour, collage, sculpture, multimedia) with activities building on previous lessons and experiences. This resource is well illustrated with samples of students' artwork and there are many tips and suggestions for integrating art into other curriculum areas. Useful websites and resources are listed in appendices. This excellent resource will help you plan a year's worth of quality art education that will nurture your students' abilities and creativity, whether or not art is your specialty.



### Teaching in Troubled Times

by Kathy Paterson  
Pembroke Publishers, 2010  
ISBN 978-1-55138-254-8  
\$24.95, 128 pp, index, all grade levels  
[www.pembrokepublishers.com](http://www.pembrokepublishers.com)

Even naturally optimistic people can have a hard time keeping a positive outlook in this era of a shrinking global community and ubiquitous mass communication. We can hardly help being increasingly aware of social and environmental troubles both close to home and far away. And even young students are not immune from the pressure of awareness, which can lead to fear, anger and a feeling of helplessness. This resource was written to help teachers deal with their own issues around the problems of the modern world, and to help them help their students express their worries and find hope. We can't make things all better, but we can provide an atmosphere in which children feel safe and understood, and in which positive thinking and actions can have an impact on our students' mental health and behaviour. Providing motivators and practical activities in each chapter, the author discusses such topics as reasonable and unreasonable fears, violence both domestic and international, Internet use, self awareness and socializing, bullying, family dynamics and grief. Book lists (Good Reads) offer suggestions of relevant titles that can be used in the classroom.



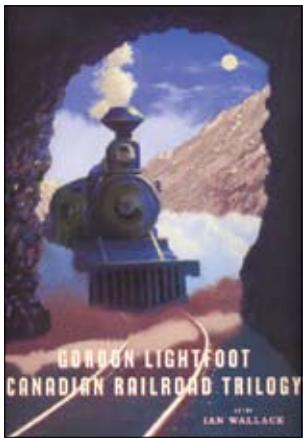
### Wind Power 20 Projects to Make with Paper

by Clive Dobson  
Firefly Books, 2010  
ISBN 978-1-55407-749-6  
\$12.95, 96 pp, colour illustrations and photos  
glossary, index, ages 10+  
[www.fireflybooks.com](http://www.fireflybooks.com)

This book was written for kids, but teachers will find it a valuable resource for science projects and units about wind and wind power. It begins with an introduction to the science of wind and a short history of wind power—including sailboats, windmills and turbines—and a discussion about the basic principles of using wind to do work. The rest of the book describes how to build pinwheels, windmills and turbines using paper and a few other basic materials. A "What You Need" list and step-by-step instructions with sequential diagrams are provided for 20 different projects, beginning with simple pinwheels and progressing to more complex turbines. Students will have fun while they gain understanding of how wind can be harnessed with these hands-on projects. The range of complexity of projects will allow teachers to plan or assign different activities according to the abilities of their students. Younger students will need help with the more complicated turbines. With the increasing interest in wind power today, this is a timely resource to educate and inspire future scientists to find ways to meet our energy needs.



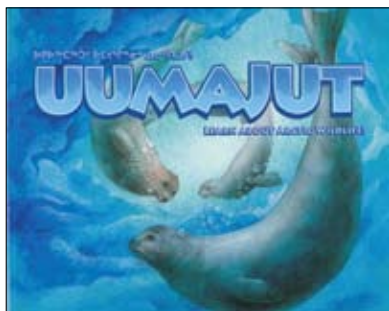
## • PICTURE BOOKS •



### Canadian Railroad Trilogy

words by Gordon Lightfoot  
illustrated by Ian Wallace  
Groundwood Books, 2010  
ISBN 978-0-88899-953-5  
\$24.95 (hc), 56 pp, ages 7+  
www.groundwoodbooks.com

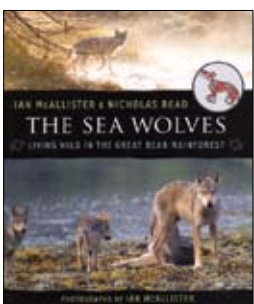
Canadian Railroad Trilogy, the song immortalized by Gordon Lightfoot, was commissioned by the CBC for Canada's centennial year in 1967. Groundwood Books has just released a picture book version, which juxtaposes the lyrics and evocative illustrations by Ian Wallace, who is well known for his work in Canadian children's literature. This volume would be a perfect addition to a unit on Canadian history or the building of the railway for any age group. Of course, you will need a recording of the song when you introduce the book to your students. The hard cover, large format (25 cm x 32 cm) and illustrations that fill the pages will work well with a group of students as a recording is playing, and the lyrics will be an effective lead-in to discussion about several aspects of this period in Canadian history. Well worthwhile for all Canadian school libraries!



### Uumajut Learn About Arctic Wildlife

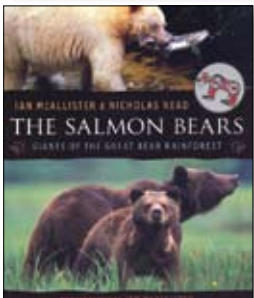
by Simon Awa, Anna Ziegler and  
Stephanie McDonald  
illustrated by Romi Caron  
Inhabit Media, 2010  
ISBN 978-1-926569-08-6  
\$14.95, 40 pp, ages 4 – 8  
www.inhabitmedia.com

Beautiful full-page illustrations enhance this non-fiction book about animals of the north. The content is divided into two sections—Animals of the Tundra (Lemming, Barren-ground Caribou, Peary Caribou, Arctic Fox, Wolverine) and Animals of the Sea and Ice (Amphipods, Arctic Char, Bearded Seal, Beluga, Bowhead Whale)—preceded by an introduction that stresses the importance of wildlife for the people of Nunavut. Each double-page spread is devoted to one animal, with text written in Inuktitut and English and an illustration depicting the animal in its natural habitat. Information includes the animal's appearance, what it eats, common behaviours and traditional Inuit uses. Uumajut was designed to be an introduction to northern wildlife for young readers (or listeners) and would also serve as a springboard to more advanced research for older students.



### The Sea Wolves The Salmon Bears

by Ian McAllister and Nicholas Read  
photographs by Ian McAllister  
Orca Book Publishers, 2010  
ISBN 978-1-55469-206-4 (Sea Wolves)  
ISBN 978-1-55469-205-7 (Salmon Bears)  
\$19.95 / \$18.95, 128 pp / 96 pp, index, ages 8+  
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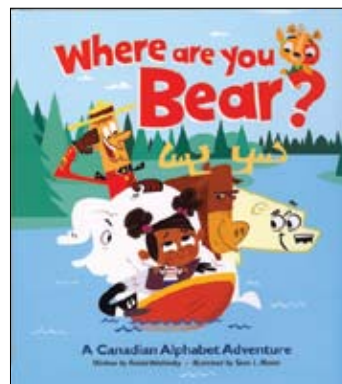
These two non-fiction books are illustrated with stunning photographs of the wolves and bears that live in the Great Bear Rainforest on the western edge of Canada. The animals and their habitat, ranging from the top of Vancouver Island to the Alaskan border, exist in a delicate ecological balance that is interwoven with other animals (notably, salmon) and plants in a web of life that has developed over thousands of years. Writing to introduce young readers to this rare and unique ecosystem, the authors are passionate about the beauty of the Great Bear Forest and the importance of protecting this region from harmful human encroachment. They provide much information presented clearly and simply in running text organized in chapters, supplemented with sidebars (Wolf Bites / Just the Bear Facts) and informative captions with the photographs. These books would be useful for classroom units on animals, ecology, wilderness conservation, research skills (gathering facts from non-fiction text) and Canada, and to have on hand to satisfy the personal interests of young people who love to read about animals.



### Viola Desmond Won't Be Bugged!

by Jody Nyasha Warner  
illustrated by Richard Rudnicki  
Groundwood Books, 2010  
ISBN 978-0-88899-779-1  
\$18.95 (hc), 32 pp, ages 7 – 10  
www.groundwoodbooks.com

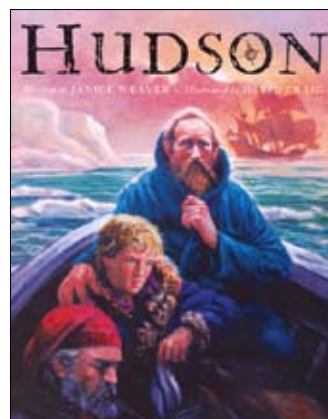
*Viola Desmond was one brave woman! Now come on here, listen in close and I'll tell you why.* These are the opening lines of this Canadian history lesson in picture book format. It tells the story of a woman who lived in Nova Scotia and who stood up for her rights and against racial discrimination in 1946. Asked to move to the balcony of a movie theatre, where all the other black people were sitting, she refused to budge and was arrested and fined for not paying the proper ticket price. She appealed the decision, but the court, not willing to tackle the issue of racism, cancelled the appeal. Although Viola Desmond's particular case against discrimination was not successful, she inspired many others to take up the fight, and eventually (in the 1950s) segregation was outlawed. The story is told in language reminiscent of the African oral tradition, and vibrant illustrations that fill each two-page spread do much to bring the social context of 1940s Nova Scotia alive. An author's note entitled *A Glimpse of African Canadian History* is included on the last page.



### Where are you Bear? A Canadian Alphabet Adventure

by Frieda Wishinsky  
illustrated by Sean L. Moore  
Owlkids Books, 2010  
ISBN 978-1-897349-91-5  
\$18.95, 32 pp, ages 4 – 6  
www.owlkids.com

When it's time for Sophie to leave on a big adventure to visit her grandmother in Vancouver, she can't find her beloved stuffed bear and must leave without him. Bear, however, follows the family and eventually catches up with them at journey's end. This alphabet book for young readers takes Sophie and her bear on their separate trips from Newfoundland and Labrador to every province and territory in Canada, reuniting them in British Columbia. The words chosen to illustrate the letters of the alphabet have strong connections to regions of the country (e.g., beluga whale for Bb) and are explained in notes on the endpapers alongside a map of Canada. A plane trailing a banner announces the names of the provinces and territories as Sophie and bear cross the country. The thoughtful attention to detail and strong Canadian content make this book useful as part of a Canadian geography unit as well as reinforcing the alphabet. Colourful and playful illustrations complete the package.



### Hudson

by Janice Weaver  
illustrated by David Craig  
Tundra Books, 2010  
ISBN 978-0-88776-814-9  
\$24.99 (hc), 48 pp, index, ages 8 – 12  
www.tundrabooks.com

This fascinating look at the life and four voyages of Henry Hudson into northern waters is an excellent introduction to the explorer for whom the Hudson River and Hudson Bay are named. Written for upper elementary school aged children, the book is well illustrated with full-page paintings that add to the text pictorially, and contains informative sidebars alongside the narrative. The hardships that early explorers endured are graphically depicted, and the political climate of the day is outlined. The author acknowledges that not a lot is known about Henry Hudson, especially his early years, and that he is often depicted in a unflattering way, but Weaver paints a portrait of a brave and determined man, whose dream it is to discover a northwest passage to China, and she encourages the reader to learn more about Henry Hudson with a note about other sources of information.



# Technology in the Classroom

## Enhancing the School Experience for Students with Hearing Disabilities

by Cheryl Rivait

Language in all its forms can be complex and puzzling; this is especially true for students who hear imperfectly, or not at all. Parents of deaf or hard of hearing children quickly learn how to effectively communicate with their children at home. They know what strategies to employ to maximize their child's understanding of what is being said. With early intervention and assistive technology such as hearing aids, many children with hearing disabilities enter into mainstream schools with strong communication and listening skills.

Even with advanced skills and technology, numerous factors remain that affect a student's ability to listen, learn and keep up with their peers in a classroom setting. Things like background noise, vocal volume and listening distance need to be considered when teaching students with hearing loss. When a hard of hearing student tries to learn in a noisy, unaccommodating classroom environment, they often become frustrated, learn to feign comprehension, and quickly fall behind in their educational efforts. Listening to a lesson in this type of setting would be similar to trying to put together a puzzle with half the pieces missing.

As an itinerant hearing resource teacher, I work daily with deaf and hard of hearing students and witness the difficulty these students face first-hand. In an effort to assist my students' hearing needs, I have incorporated assistive technology in the form of a multimedia projector into my lesson plans. (I chose an Epson PowerLite 83+ because of its ease of use and most importantly its built-in closed captioning functionality, which accommodates viewers with hearing impairments.) Incorporating technology, such as a projector, in the classroom engages students and is an efficient and effective teaching tool for an instructor. This addition to my education toolkit has helped me deliver the curriculum more effectively and engage my students in unexpected ways.

Most significantly, the projector has helped my students compensate for what they cannot hear. Students with hearing loss rely more heavily on visuals and the projector assists with this approach to learning. Using the projector I'm able to create bright PowerPoint presentations with advance image quality to convey key ideas, present reinforcing images and instructions to accompany oral lessons. The visuals on the screen have the same vibrancy, colours and contrast as my computer screen and provide the visual context for the students as well as the repetition we all need to learn.

As part of the elementary science curriculum, students in Ontario learn about major systems in the human body. This provided a great opportunity for my deaf and hard of hearing students to teach their classmates about the nervous system and how the auditory nerve works. I helped the students investigate websites and prepare a short presentation for their classmates about the ear, how it works, and what happens when it doesn't work as it should. Using the projector, my students were able to share the information with their classmates, which they were thrilled to be able to do. This was much more compelling than a traditional written report and gave my students the added benefit of teaching their peers about what makes them different. Using the projector to visually share their findings gave them confidence and it helped their peers better understand what it means to be hard of hearing.

Prior to using the projector I relied on traditional tools and aids such as a chalkboard, printed handouts or printed pictures. With the projector I'm able to bring the curriculum and information to life on a big screen using video, vibrant colours and images. As a result, students are more attentive and engaged in my lessons. I also appreciate that the demonstrations, videos and images I use in my lessons are much easier to update and tailor in comparison to handouts, allowing me to constantly upgrade my materials as new information is found.

My lesson plans are now adaptable and/or designed for the class as a whole rather than one-on-one or huddled around a small computer screen. The projector brings the students together, resulting in greater collaboration and discussion amongst students and increased individual participation. Incorporating technology into the classroom has enhanced learning and motivated the students to share their work with classmates.

The rewarding part of being a teacher is enhancing the learning experience for your students. After all, establishing good communication patterns fosters a student's social, emotional, communicative and educational development.

Cheryl Rivait is an Itinerant Hearing Resource Teacher in the Lambton Kent District School Board in Ontario. She works with deaf and hard of hearing students from senior kindergarten to grade 12 at 19 different schools within the Board. She is also a liaison between the schools and the families of her students.



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# RETIREMENTS THAT WORK



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Carol and Enise are the creators of a series of pre-retirement and post-retirement planning workshops: *Transition to Retirement: The Uncharted Course*®, *Recently Retired: Charting a New Course*® and *Ideas ... Enhanced and Advanced*®, and authors of *Transition to Retirement: The Uncharted Course*. Previous articles on retirement may be viewed in back issues at [www.CanadianTeacherMagazine.com](http://www.CanadianTeacherMagazine.com).

by Enise Olding and Carol Baird-Krul

In this second of five columns we continue to consider how to prepare for retirement based on the book *Transition to Retirement: The Uncharted Course*. This time we will look at how things might be once you've been retired for a while and have enjoyed the Fair Winds and Clear Skies of those early retirement days that we referred to in the previous issue. Remember, that lovely time when you feel as though you're on a long holiday—a feeling similar to when summer holidays are beginning and the weeks ahead are your own? Only this time, there will be no new term starting in the future and those Fair Winds and Clear Skies can suddenly turn into Stormy Weather without much warning.

Consider this, as summer comes to a close, your mind will probably return to the classroom, lesson plans, classroom setup, curriculum, supplies, class management and prospective students. Renewed and ready, your colleagues head back to the world of education, but you won't; you're retired, remember? Perhaps you will you breathe a sigh of relief, or maybe you'll experience a pang when you realize you are on the outside of that going back to school scene. More likely it will be a bit of both. Many retirees report that they are happy to be retired, but nevertheless miss the routine and purpose of their employment in the field of education.

Noticing that you are feeling somewhat unsettled at the thought of not being a part of it anymore isn't at all surprising because you've spent years honing your skills, educating yourself and sharing your expertise with numerous students and colleagues. Now, what are you going to do with it? Will it all just sit there unused, unwanted, neglected and worthless? Unsettling thoughts, for sure; but you will also bask in the freedom and time that retirement has brought you. Freedom and time to indulge your passion, be it golf, painting, reading, travelling, exercising or any number of things that may be a familiar activity or something brand new that you've chosen to explore. Then, and there is no specific timeline, one day you realize that such indulgence is slowly but definitely becoming a bit tedious, ordinary or boring and not everything you now want. More unsettling moments and doubts may follow as you begin to question what it is you want to do, what you should do, to add some colour or substance to your life.

You are not alone, and in *Transition to Retirement* this period is called Stormy Weather; a time in which

you'll discover the unexpected, and yourself. Unsettling, turbulent, worrying, fearsome and uncomfortable, such moments come into your newly retired life now and then, not all in one great storm; but in niggling thoughts or observations that indicate to you that all is not exactly calm in your new life.

What to do? Hang on, get a grip, and be aware that this time is providing you with a great opportunity to start thinking carefully and with insight into who you are now and what your long range retirement and life plan might, could be. Encouraging also is that the next segment in everyone's transition to retirement is Safe Harbour, and you will be heading there in our next column. But for now, here are some Stormy Weather questions and aids to navigation as you continue on the transition journey.

### Questions and Ponderings

- What is your all consuming passion and why does it give you joy?
- When you're retired will you consider yourself a senior?
- Which of your former work colleagues will be your friends when you retire?
- How will you introduce yourself to others once you retire?
- What if you can't do all the things you wanted to do when you retire?
- Would going back to work seem like a failure to you?

### Aids to Navigation

- Be aware, notice everything, be curious about all aspects of life.
- Acknowledge and honour your past working life, personal life, and yourself.
- Take time to explore each inner qualm.
- Consider what is valuable and important to you now as a retired person.
- Think of people who have, in your opinion, successful and fulfilling retirements.
- List your accomplishments, abilities and skills as a professional and a person.
- Imagine the type of lifestyle you want when you first retire, then consider if this vision is short term or long term.



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# Volunteering In Havana



by Philip Theriault

A musician sitting on the seawall at the Malecon, Havana.

After I retired from my career as a teacher in the public school system in Nova Scotia, I decided to find something worthwhile to ease my transition into retirement. So in February of 2008, I went to Havana as part of a group of volunteers to work with students studying English. The volunteers had the opportunity to divide their time between two locations: La Casa del Nino y la Nina (an after school program for elementary students) and FLEX (Facultad de Lengua Extranjeros—the language school of the University of Havana).

I chose to spend the vast majority of my volunteering time working with students at FLEX in the first

year of their language program. As one might imagine, I was a bit nervous when I first entered a classroom in the FLEX building. What I found was a group of students who were universally enthusiastic in their outlook and eager to do anything asked of them to help them improve their English language skills. The students were extremely interested in everything about Canada and were very open about sharing their thoughts—both pro and con—on the Cuban method of doing things.

While I was in Havana, a significant historical event occurred—Fidel Castro stepped down as leader and handed the reins of power to his brother Raoul. This made for many interesting and, at least for me, enlightening discussions in the classroom with the students—a true teachable moment of which I took full advantage.

Many things impressed me during my first year volunteering in Havana: the enthusiasm of the students, their eagerness to improve their English language skills, the dedication of the teachers, the mutual respect and affection between the teachers and students to name but a few. It did not take me long, however to pinpoint a few areas where improvements could be made.

Two in particular stand out: although the students at FLEX all had a good grasp of English and could carry on a conversation, it soon became evident that they had learned English from teachers whose first language

was Spanish, as their pronunciation of English words was heavily influenced by Spanish and needed to be worked on. Also, they had no background in common English idioms. As an example I would often use “six of one, half a dozen of another.” This was just confusing to the students and I realized that this was an area in which I could help.

Another feature which must be mentioned was the utter lack of supplies and tools with which everyone works. The teachers carry what we came to call “Havana Briefcases”—basically a Canadian plastic grocery bag in which they keep a few pieces of chalk, a pen or two, a blackboard eraser and, if they are lucky, some paper. The students on their part have almost exclusively sup-



The Facultad de Lenguas Extranjeras (FLEX - Foreign Language School) - Universidad de la Habana.



A Cuban family at the Terry Fox Run in Havana.



plies donated by Canadians—Hilroy notebooks and Bic pens.

After returning to Halifax, I decided to develop my own volunteer program at FLEX and, to that end, formed Compay Education Tours. It took the better part of a year to get all the details in place and obtain all the proper authorization from the Cuban authorities. Cuban bureaucracy is slow at the best of times, but with the help of a Canadian living in Havana with whom I contracted to represent me, the T's were crossed, the I's were eventually dotted, and the program was set.

Using 2009 as a learning experience, I was able to fine-tune many aspects of the program and redesign it for a return in March 2010. In addition to the volunteering element, the program also includes an orientation tour of Havana organized by Amistur, the tour agency arm of ICAP—the Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples), the organization in Havana with whom I work.

Included in the orientation is a private guided tour of Havana giving the volunteers an overview of the city that will be their home for the duration of the program. It includes visits to the main tourist sites and an elementary school, a lunch with a representative of ICAP to discuss what life is like in Cuba, and the opportunity to attend a meeting of a local Committee for the Defense of the Revolution, a sort of local community council found in every neighbourhood in Cuba which meets regularly to discuss matters of local concerns.

We attend a reception at the Canadian Embassy, watch a Sunday afternoon neighbourhood Rhumba demonstration celebrating the Santaria religion and, most moving of all, participate in the annual Havana Terry Fox Run, which in 2010 was hosted by the family of Terry Fox who attended to acknowledge the tremendous support that Cubans have shown the Marathon of Hope over the years. It is important to note that Cuba, with its limited resources has raised more money for cancer research per capita than almost any country other than Canada; this is all the more significant when you realize that the average monthly salary for a Cuban is about \$25 Cdn per month.

In the end, though, it is about the volunteering and the students. Lasting friendships are formed, educational experiences are shared and cultural barriers are broken. Volunteering at FLEX is a truly rewarding experience and one that will stay with the volunteers and the students at FLEX for many years.

For more information, please contact Philip Theriault at [phil@staff.ednet.ns.ca](mailto:phil@staff.ednet.ns.ca) or visit us on Facebook. Search for Compay Education Tours.

After retiring from 32 years as a teacher in the public schools of Nova Scotia, Philip accepted a contract to be Volunteer Manager for JazzEast, one of the major arts organizations in Eastern Canada. In 2008, Philip volunteered for the first time at the Facultad de Lenguas Extranjeras (FLEX) in Havana and, in 2009 and 2010, he organized his own group of volunteers who spent time in March and April volunteering in the English Department at Flex. He is now finalizing details for the 2011 program.



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### Canada Year Book

The 2010 edition of the Canada Year Book (CYB) was released recently. First published in 1867, CYB is an annual almanac that provides its readers with insight into the story behind the numbers that Statistics Canada collects and analyzes. Teachers use Canada Year Book regularly to plan course material and to stay up-to-date with current trends and major issues in key areas such as health, environment, transportation and the economy. Students find it useful as a one-stop resource for projects and papers. You can order online at [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca). Educational institutions receive a 30% discount.

### The Four Green Steps School Program

The Four Green Steps School Program is celebrating its second year of providing schools worldwide with a free environmental curriculum. The program was launched in October 2009 with the goal of providing educators with a fun green curriculum designed to teach their students about the environment in an exciting manner. In the first year of the program over 40 schools in 15 countries have enrolled in the program.

There are four competitions included among the nine projects of the curriculum. These competitions have proved an effective way to stir up classroom excitement and motivate students to get involved. Jemma King of the Australian International School of Malaysia is the winner of the 1st annual Four Green Steps Global Science Fair. Jemma won a wind generator kit as a prize for her school with her award-winning project on green roof insulation. To learn more about the program, download the free green curriculum, or enroll your school, go to [www.fourgreensteps.com/school-program](http://www.fourgreensteps.com/school-program) or contact Four Green Steps President Jaye Yarrow at [jyarrow@fourgreensteps.com](mailto:jyarrow@fourgreensteps.com)

### Write To Give

Write To Give is a program that provides students the chance to become published authors, while at the same time giving back to those who are less fortunate in developing countries. In this program, students work with other students from around the world collaborating to write a fiction or non-fiction book. Once the books are complete, they are printed and sold with profits going towards World Teacher Aid's educational programs in Africa ([www.WorldTeacherAid.org](http://www.WorldTeacherAid.org)). World Teacher Aid is a recognized Canadian charity. Write To Give uses an easy and interactive website where teachers are able to access a Member's Area containing resources, tools and materials for the program. It also serves to facilitate the delivery of the class content for each of the books. To get involved with this program, go to: [www.WriteToGive.com](http://www.WriteToGive.com). When visiting the site, check out the Gift Shop to see a selection of books that were printed last year, as well as the latest videos from past Write to Give Days. For further information, contact Amy McLaren at [amy@worldteacheraid.org](mailto:amy@worldteacheraid.org)

### Sogo Active

Schools can access funding through Sogo Active, a national teen physical activity program presented by Coca-Cola Canada in collaboration with ParticipACTION and its partners. Sogo Active is a program that empowers youth, aged 13 – 19, to challenge themselves to solve the physical inactivity crisis in Canada. It gives young Canadians the support and resources they need to get active in their own commu-

nities and encourages them to incorporate activity into their daily lives. Why do we need Sogo Active? The facts are scary: obesity has tripled since 1980 and one in four kids under 17 are overweight; one in five 15-year-olds has high blood pressure or high cholesterol; every day, Canadian youth spend an average of six hours in front of a TV or computer screen; only 12% of youth under 19 are meeting Canada's physical activity guidelines; only 5% of adolescent girls are meeting Canada's physical activity guidelines.

What can you do to get involved in Sogo Active, and how will you benefit? Young Canadians who join Sogo Active need support, equipment, facilities and resources. That's where principals, physical education teachers and coaches can come in—your school, team or club can become a Community Host organization. Membership is free. Community Hosts reach out to youth, promote Sogo Active, and can create and post their own physical activity Challenges for youth. Sogo Challenges can be activities or events you already offer to students, or something new. Community Hosts also work with youth to receive micro grants of up to \$500 for ongoing Challenges, or up to \$250 for one-time events. It's easy to apply—just register for Sogo Active as a Community Host, create a Challenge and you can request funding directly. Find out more at [www.sogoactive.com](http://www.sogoactive.com)

### National Student Banner Contest

Students in Grades 5 through 8 are invited to create and submit a unique banner design to the "Raise Your Voices!" banner contest. The design should represent an issue or topic of importance to Canadian youth. The winning banners will be professionally produced and flown in Major's Hill Park in Ottawa from May to October 2011. Deadline: February 18, 2011. For more information about how your class can participate in the contest, and to read the contest rules, visit the website: [www.canadascapital.gc.ca/bannercontest](http://www.canadascapital.gc.ca/bannercontest)

### Orca Books Now in French

English has been the mainstay for Orca Book Publishers for some time and they added Spanish a few years ago. Now they are offering French translations of books in the Orca Currents and Orca Soundings series. [www.orcabook.com](http://www.orcabook.com)

### Exhibition Explores the Culture of the Haida

The remarkable sophistication and complexity of the vibrant Haida culture is explored in a special exhibition presented at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Quebec until January 23, 2011. *Haida: Life. Spirit. Art.* features more than 80 masterpieces from the outstanding Haida collection of the McCord Museum in Montréal. Most of the objects date from the 18th and 19th centuries and reflect the great skill of Haida artists and the richness of their ancient culture. The artifacts range from intricate bentwood boxes to a beautifully painted woven hat; from carved fish-hooks to model totem poles. They provide fascinating insights into a culture that took root thousands of years ago in Haida Gwaii (formerly the Queen Charlotte Islands) and remains vibrant today along Canada's Northwest Coast. The exhibition was developed with the guidance of renowned Haida artist Robert Davidson, and also features his art and insight. Davidson has described art as the Haida's only written language, preserving ancient customs and beliefs and keeping the Haida spirit alive. [www.civilization.ca](http://www.civilization.ca)

### New Master's Degree Targets Environment

The Canadian Centre for Environmental Education (CCEE) is launching a master's degree in environmental practice, a three-year program targeting people seeking leadership roles in the environmental sector.

The program is being offered entirely through distance-based education and offers students looking for career-related graduate education the opportunity to gain leadership and management skills applicable to the environmental sector.

Students have the choice of two streams within the Master of Environmental Practice—the social-science-based Master of Arts, or the science-based Master of Science. Students can further concentrate their studies in three areas: environmental protection (MSc), environmental sustainability (MA), and natural resource management and conservation (MA or MSc), which were all developed in consultation with industry. Upon graduating, students are expected to have strategic knowledge and a critical skill set needed to become a leader in their chosen field of expertise.

The core courses and many of the electives for the specializations are offered through Royal Roads University. Students also have the option to take electives from the online master's degree program in environmental policy and management offered by University College at Denver University. Students can also choose between completing either an employment or organization-based practicum or a research paper in an area of particular interest. The deadline for applications for the January intake is December 20, 2010. [www.ccee.ca](http://www.ccee.ca)

### Family Literacy Day

Family Literacy Day™ is an annual initiative taking place on January 27, 2011 to encourage families to learn together to improve their literacy skills. This year the theme is "Play for Literacy." For more information on how to participate in Play for Literacy, visit [www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca](http://www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca)

## events

**November 13 -14, Making Connections - People for Education Conference 2010.** Toronto, ON. Connect with the ideas, people and organizations that are shaping education in Ontario. Topics range from what makes a good principal to whether teachers should friend students on Facebook. [www.peopleforeducation.com](http://www.peopleforeducation.com)

**November 18 - 20, Odyssey Conference 2010: Inclusive Leadership - Engaging Your School Community.** Toronto, ON. [www.principals.ca](http://www.principals.ca)

**January 28 - 31, Toronto International Recruitment Fair.** Toronto, ON. [www.searchassociates.com](http://www.searchassociates.com)

**February 17 - 18, Aboriginal Circle of Educators 8th Annual "Hearing Our Voices" Conference.** Winnipeg, MB. [www.aboriginalcircleofeducators.ca](http://www.aboriginalcircleofeducators.ca)

**April 4 - 7, Canada International Conference on Education.** Toronto, ON. [www.ciceducation.org](http://www.ciceducation.org)

**May 2 - 3, Body Image and Self Esteem: Shades of Grey.** Toronto, ON. [www.nedic.ca](http://www.nedic.ca)

**August 15 - 18, International Confederation of Principals World Convention: Leading Student Achievement: An International Odyssey.** Toronto, ON. [www.icp2011.ca/](http://www.icp2011.ca/)



## • events •

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