

# This Week in Literacy

July 25th, 2008

The NWT Literacy Council is a non-profit, non-government agency dedicated to supporting the development of literacy in all official languages of the NWT.

## Literacy Dates for Next Year

International Literacy Day	September 8, 2008
NWT Literacy Week	September 29 – October 3, 2008
National Family Literacy Day	January 27, 2009
Aboriginal Languages Month	March 2009
International Children's Book Day	April 2, 2009
World Book Day	April 23, 2009

## Community Events and Information

### **Council of the Federation Announces Literacy Award Winners for 2008**

July 17, 2008 – Provincial and territorial Premiers today announced the recipients of the fourth annual Council of the Federation Literacy Award. The award recognizes outstanding achievement and excellence in literacy. It is presented to educators, volunteers, learners, community organizations, non-governmental organizations and businesses. [http://www.councilofthefederation.ca/pdfs/COF\\_LA\\_NR\\_July17.pdf](http://www.councilofthefederation.ca/pdfs/COF_LA_NR_July17.pdf)

### **Congratulations to Mardy Voudrach – Winner of the NWT Council of the Federation Literacy Award**

As an infant Mardy was stricken with meningitis. The disease impeded Mardy's ability to learn and left her with a partially paralyzed hand and tongue. Despite her tragic start in life, Mardy has demonstrated an exemplary level of courage and determination in advancing her literacy skills. Prior to enrolling in a one-on-one tutoring program in Tuktoyatuk, she could not read or write, and spoke very little. In the past year, she has worked very hard on her literacy studies while continuing physical training for her hand and tongue. Mardy can now speak clearly, do basic math, read and write texts, use a computer, and operate a digital camera. Since improving her literacy skills,

Mardy has started her first job. Her employer describes her as a “great asset to our workplace,” and says she has a very positive work ethic.

The NWT Literacy Council congratulates Mardy Voudrach for her determination and dedication to learning.

### **Take a quiz: What do you know about the brain?**

This Brain Quiz was created to introduce some of the basic concepts concerning early brain research in a way that challenges us to think critically and creatively about what we have heard about the research. Test yourself to see what facts and misinformation you have heard concerning infants and brain development.

[http://www.zerotothree.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ter\\_key\\_brain\\_quiz](http://www.zerotothree.org/site/PageServer?pagename=ter_key_brain_quiz)

### **National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) Conference 2008**

The National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) is pleased to announce its 2008 national conference *Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow*. It will take place at the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites on November 14-16, 2008. The conference will focus on solutions to drive change. The 2008 conference will welcome guest speakers including Steven Fletcher, Member of Parliament, and Sandi Bell, Canadian Human Rights Commissioner.

The four workshops that all delegates will participate in are titled:

1. Job Search Strategies: Competing in the Employment Market
2. Enhancing Opportunities in Science and Technology-related Fields
3. Solutions to Library/Print Material Access
4. Key Issues on Campus: Perspectives from Students with Disabilities

For more information, including an early bird rate for early registrants, the schedule, registration forms, and details on speakers, go to: [www.neads.ca/conference2008](http://www.neads.ca/conference2008).

### **Time to read, time to write? [Creative non-fiction contest with \\$500 prize](#)**

The [Malahat Review](#) (BC) invites entries for their Creative Non-Fiction Prize. First prize: \$500 and \$40 per printed page. Submissions may be personal essay, memoir, cultural criticism, nature writing, or literary journalism. International writers also welcome. Length: 2000-3000 words. Entry fee: \$35 (includes subscription).

Deadline: August 1, 2008. For a list of other current contests, visit:

<http://www.placesforwriters.com/contests/>

## In the News

### **Movie-based programme a boost for struggling readers' literacy**

Published by Communications and Development 18 July 2008

Hollywood movies, often considered a threat to reading, have now proved to be a powerful ally. Researchers from the University of Canterbury's School of Literacies and Arts in Education have just trialled a US-based reading programme in six Christchurch schools. Struggling readers who took part in the programme improved their reading age by 1.2 years in just six weeks. The patented programme, called Audio Visual Achievement in Literacy, Language and Learning (AVAILLL), is based on the use of movie subtitles to support literacy activities. Low achieving students in primary schools are enticed into books through "read-watching" of popular movies that are themselves based on books. To view the complete article go to

<http://www.comsdev.canterbury.ac.nz/news/2008/080718b.shtml>

### **CMEC: No new federal funding for official languages in education**

Through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), the ministers responsible for education across the country are pleased that federal funding for the official languages in education will continue but have expressed disappointment that the Government of Canada will not increase its funding under its new Roadmap for Linguistic Duality in Canada, announced by the Minister of Canadian Heritage on June 19, 2008. "We were happy to receive an assurance that the federal government will continue its commitment to the official languages", said Kelly Lamrock, New Brunswick Minister of Education and Chair of CMEC. "However, given inflation and the enrolment growth in many provinces and territories, maintaining the status quo basically means a considerable reduction in funding." To read the complete article go to

<http://www.nald.ca/info/whatnew/headline/2008/cmec.htm>

### **10 Steps to Becoming Fluent in a Language in 6 months or Less**

Written by Felicia Wong

Even if you don't feel linguistically-inclined, it's possible—with patience, diligence, and a sense of humor—to become fluent in a language in six months or less.

Although English is my first language, I learned Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese Chinese as a child, picked up French in high school, and have recently become conversant in Spanish as I travel through South America. Over the years, I've picked up the following tips for expediting language acquisition ... To read the tips go to

<http://matadorstudy.com/10-steps-to-becoming-fluent-in-a-language-in-6-months/>

### **New Zealand to Invest \$168 Million into Workplace Literacy**

The New Zealand government recently announced that it will invest \$168 million

dollars over four years into a national plan designed to improve workplace literacy, language and numeracy skills. According to the May 22 *New Zealand Herald*, Education Minister Pete Hodgson and Employment Minister Ruth Dyson stated that the investment is designed to provide workers with the right skills for advancement in the modern workplace. The "Skills Strategy" will establish a strategic partnership between government and businesses, trade unions and the Industry Trade Federation.

## Resources and Websites

### **Education in Canada: An overview by CMEC**

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) is the national voice for education in Canada and, through the organization, the provinces and territories work collectively on common objectives in a broad range of activities at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary education levels. This CMEC document presents a broad overview of the different education systems in Canada including adult education (adult literacy). It outlines ministerial priorities including early childhood learning and development, elementary to high school systems, post-secondary education and adult learning/ skills development.

*Education in Canada* is available in PDF format. To download this document go to <http://www.nald.ca/info/whatnew/headline/2008/cmec2.htm>

### **Everyday Ways to Support Early Learning**

Download this handout to learn more about how you can support your child's development and have fun together in the everyday moments you share.

[http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/early\\_learning\\_handout.pdf?docID=3081&AddInterest=1153](http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/early_learning_handout.pdf?docID=3081&AddInterest=1153)

### **Early Literacy Book Activity Cards**

The Early Years Literacy and Children's Mental Health in Ontario created activity cards for parents and children to share together. These activity cards go with children's books. There are 60 activity cards on this site that match up with a children's book.

These cards support families with infants and children up to six years of age. They include parenting tips to encourage early or emergent literacy skills as well as parenting suggestions to support children through the development of routines (bedtime and mealtime), toilet training, social and emotional skills (sharing, bullying, separation, childhood fears etc). You can laminate the activity card which can be packaged in a clear pouch or presentation folder with matching children's book for loan to families at home.

<http://www.familyliteracyexpertise.org/Resources/Activity%20Cards/BookActivities/activitycards.htm>

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