

This Week in Literacy

September 19th, 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

NWT Literacy Week	September 28 – October 4, 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

NWT Literacy Week

NWT Literacy Week is only one week away! Get together with others in your community and plan a literacy week event. You can find ideas on our website at www.nwt.literacy.ca. We also sent out NWT Literacy Week packages to all schools, daycares, family support programs, adult education programs, etc. These packages have the following:

- Read for 15 poster, info sheet and fax back form.
- Literacy Calendar (poster format)
- How to Kits: (feel free to photocopy and use in your community)
 1. Family Math
 2. Family Cooking
- Prizes to celebrate NWT Literacy Week
- "How did you celebrate NWT Literacy Week 2008?" fax back form
- 2008/09 training calendar

Read for 15 – Tuesday, September 30th

The NWT Literacy Council would like to encourage everyone to *Read for 15* on Tuesday, September 30th, 2008. The NWT has challenged Nunavut to see who can get the most people reading on this day. Last year the NWT won by a very small margin. This year we would like to defend our title and increase our numbers and get everyone in the NWT reading. It doesn't matter what you read – you can read email, magazines, the newspaper, a novel or comics – just as long as you read.

After reading for 15 minutes, participants in the *Read for 15* Challenge need to report to the NWT Literacy Council. You can do this as an individual or as a group – such as a division or even as an entire GNWT department! You can report your results by phoning our office at 873-9262 or 1-866-599-6758, by e-mailing nwtliteracy@nwtliteracy.ca or faxing us at (867) 873-2176.

Pihuaqtiuyugut: We are the long distance walkers (New Exhibit)

The community of Ulukhaktok, the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre, the NWT Literacy Council and Education, Culture and Employment are pleased to announce the opening of a new exhibit at the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre on Sunday, September 21st from 2:00 – 4:00 pm. Walk with Ulukhaktok elders along the trails travelled by their ancestors. Journey from the sea ice to the summer caribou calving grounds on Victoria Island. Learn about the literacy skills used to navigate the land then and now. There will be string games, printmaking and felt picture making at the opening. Refreshment will be served. The exhibit is open until February 2009.

Arts Week – September 20 – 28, 2008

To find out what is happening in the NWT art community go to this website and view their latest newsletter: <http://www.nwtartistsdatabase.com/Publication.aspx> . You will also find information on all the activities scheduled for Arts Week. For enquiries about this newsletter for the NWT Arts Community, please contact:

Camilla MacEachern
Coordinator, Arts and Fine Crafts
Department of Industry, Tourism & Investment
Phone: 867.873.7203 Fax: 867.873.0101
Check out: www.NWTarts.com

In the News

Parties can't read literacy warnings

Toronto Star, Sep 17, 2008, Carol Goar

Tonight, Canadians who care about literacy will gather to pay tribute to the man who championed their cause with heart, eloquence and an infectious sense of fun: the late Peter Gzowski. The legendary radio host, writer and fundraiser was alive when these dinners began in 1993. The last five have been held without him.

The annual gala, organized by ABC Canada Literacy Foundation, a national charity, will be a welcome night of celebration in a time of uncertainty. Publishers, authors, educators, broadcasters and business leaders will be there. Gzowski's daughter, Alison, will attend. So will the community volunteers who tutor Canadians who can't read a prescription, can't fill out a job application and can't decipher a bus schedule.

The private sector is starting to recognize the importance of dealing with the fact that 42 per cent of the working population lacks the reading, language and vocabulary skills to participate in the knowledge economy. Regrettably, the federal government is withdrawing from the field. Eight

months after taking power, the Conservatives chopped funding for adult literacy by \$17.7 million. They replaced the National Literacy Secretariat, set up Brian Mulroney 21 years ago, with their own Office of Literacy and Learning. But it deals only with national organizations. The network of provincial and local literacy organizations that linked thousands of volunteers has withered. To read more go to <http://www.thestar.com/comment/article/500407#Comments>

Happiness linked to reading skills

The Press Association, Sep 10, 2008

Adults with low literacy skills are less likely to get married or buy their own house, research suggests. A National Literacy Trust report looking at the effects of literacy on the nation's happiness found stark differences between those with good literacy skills and those without. The report, which looked in particular at men's happiness, found that only half of men with poor reading skills were satisfied with their life so far, compared with 78% of men with good reading levels. By the age of 34, just over half (52%) of men with a low reading age were married or cohabiting, compared with 68% of those with good literacy. For women, this figure was 60%, compared with 70% of their peers.

While almost eight out of 10 people (78%) with good literacy skills were likely to own their own home, the same could be said of only four in 10 (42%) of those with poor skills. Poor male readers were also more likely to live alone, with 43% leading solitary lives compared with 30% of good male readers. The report, published by the National Year of Reading, was based on analysis of figures from the last 10 years. It defined poor reading skills as the equivalent of a reading age of seven, while good reading skills are the equivalent to the reading age of an 11-year-old, or at least a grade C at GCSE. The report noted that those with poor reading skills were also likely to drink and smoke more. More than a third of those with a low reading level (36%) drink more than 40 units of alcohol per week, compared with only 17% of their peers. Poor women readers are more than twice as likely to smoke every day than those who are good readers (42% compared with 19%).

Emergent Literacy: A Comprehensive Toolkit will help adult educators assess beginning readers and writers

How do you assess beginning readers and writers? In 2005, a national survey on assessment practices involved 400 adult educators who worked in Canadian colleges, school boards, community-based programs and workplaces. The findings indicated that educators wanted an assessment tool that assessed the emergent literacy skills of adults. In fact, this was the highest ranked need among the respondents. This year, the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES) at HRSDC funded a two-year project to address this need. Pat Campbell, the project director, is producing a comprehensive toolkit for educators who work with adults beginning the process of learning how to read and write. The toolkit will contain a range of tools and manipulatives to assess adults' literacy practices, print conventions and concepts, phonemic awareness, sight word recognition, comprehension, phonics knowledge and writing. To read more go to <http://www.nald.ca/info/whatnew/headline/2008/emerglit.htm>

Resources and Websites

Elections How-to-Kit 2008

The NWT Literacy Council has revised our *Election How-to-Kit*. You will find the updated version on our website at www.nwtliteracy.ca. This *Election How to Kit 2008* includes literacy activities that you can do with adult learners around the election. There are suggestions for activities that will: inform learners, help learners realize that their voice and vote count, develop vocabulary used in elections and encourage learners to take an active role in the upcoming election.

Elections Canada

This website has lots of information for voters, young voters, Aboriginal voters, the media and information on the political parties and candidates. It is a great website for teachers to use with their students. The young voter section has activities, information and games. Check it out!

<http://www.elections.ca/home.asp>

Literacies Café: Adult Literacy Blog

Check out this blog on literacy. You can join in the conversation or just read the postings. It is updated every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. <http://literaciescafe.blogspot.com/2008/09/literacy-in-election-campaign-not.html>

ELMO - Exemplary Literacy Materials Online - Reviews is a free, interactive, online database of adult and family literacy resources and reviews. It was developed by Literacy BC to meet the ongoing need adult literacy providers and learners have for appropriate and high quality instructional and learning resources. Go to this website to review materials

<https://www.elmoreviews.ca>