

This Week in Literacy

June 10, 2009

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.

We have experienced some difficulties with our email function lately. This week's enews is a combination of information and events from the last two weeks.

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Literacy Dates

International Literacy Day

September 8

NWT Literacy Week

September 27 – October 3

World Teachers' Day

October 5

Human Rights Day

December 10

Community Events and Information

NorthWords Writers Festival

When: June 11th to 14th.

Some of the exciting events and workshops are listed below. For a full schedule of events with dates and times go to <http://www.northwordsfestival.ca>.

Words in Action: Stories for Youth

- Many Visions, Many Paths Family BBQ at Yellowknife Ski Club
- Northern Climate Change: Joining the Dots Between Science and Story
- Damm Good Advice on Publishing (Workshop)
- What do Publishers/Editors Want? (Panel)
- Signings with Sizzle (Book Signings and Barbecue)
- Writing for Young People (Panel)
- Fourth Annual De Beers Canada Gala Readings
- All Up in the Kool-aid: the 411 on Writing for Teens with Anita Daher(Workshop)
- Full Circle: Poetry and Storytelling with Jim Green (Workshop)
- Science Writing: Finally, The Medium IS the Message with Jay Ingram (Workshop)

- Learning the Craft of Fiction: a Study on Developing Voice and Character with Joseph Boyden (Workshop)

World Literacy of Canada Write/Read to Read

Write/Right to Read is a national bilingual writing and drawing contest that aims to improve literacy skills and create global citizens. Using an opening paragraph written by children's author Kenneth Oppel, students in grades 4 to 6 are invited to complete a 300 word story and accompanying drawing incorporating this year's theme of tolerance and acceptance. The grand prizewinner of the Write/Right to Read contest will receive a contribution of \$1000 to a Registered Education Savings Plan, a complete collection of signed Kenneth Oppel books and a \$100 gift certificate to Amazon.ca. Visit www.worldlit.ca for more information.

In the News

Canada's score on annual learning index drops

May 28, 2009 Ottawa — For the first time Canada's overall score on the Composite Learning Index has declined, according to the latest results from the Canadian Council on Learning's annual measure of lifelong learning. The national average for 2009 is 75; a drop of two points from last year's score of 77. The first tool of its kind in the world, the Composite Learning Index (CLI) reports results for 4,700 cities and communities across Canada. Personalized CLI profiles for each community, which include scores and trends, are available at www.ccl-cca.ca/cli To read more go to <http://www.ccl-cca.ca/Newsroom/CLI2009>

A need to read: What parents can do to encourage summer reading

By Nancy Twigg, Tuesday, May 26, 2009

Summer slide. Although it sounds like some kind of toy, educators use the phrase to describe the dangerous loss in skills that occurs during the months of summer vacation - particularly reading proficiency. "Reading is a skill like anything else," says Fran Thomforde, elementary reading supervisor for Knox County Schools. "Students who continue to read continue to grow. If not, skills come to a standstill. Kids who are marginal readers lose even more ground and experience more significant loss."

How much loss? "Evidence suggests three months of learning is lost for the average student who doesn't read during the summer," says Richard Allington, professor of literacy at the University of Tennessee. "The loss can be as much as three to five months for struggling readers and students from low-income families who have little access to books." The bad news is that summer slide is virtually inevitable unless steps are taken to prevent it. The good news is that your child doesn't have to read mountains of books to keep his or her skills sharp. Allington suggests younger readers (third grade and below) aim for 15 minutes of reading a day during the summer. Older students should read five or more books during summer vacation to keep from losing ground. To read more go to <http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2009/may/26/a-need-to-read>

Connect Ohio seeks more computer literacy, Internet access

By Samantha Sommer, Wednesday, June 3, 2009

SPRINGFIELD — Barbara Deschapelles knows computers as Clark State Community College's executive director of information technology. Yet, her older sister started using computers only two years ago. A huge range of computer skills exist, she said, be it in one family or at Clark State. "We have students who have their own laptops and bring them," Deschapelles said. "And we have others who are barely computer literate." Bridging that gap, improving computer literacy and the use of broadband Internet access, is a goal of Connect Ohio. The nonprofit is working with the state to close the digital divide. It hosted an e-Community Leadership Team meeting with about 10 people, including Deschapelles, at Springview Government Center on Wednesday, June 3. To read more go to <http://www.springfieldnewssun.com/news/springfield-news/connect-ohio-seeks-more-computer-literacy-internet-access-147138.html>

Resources and Websites

Museums, Arts and Literacy Portal

The Centre for Literacy has created an online portal that links museums, arts, and literacy initiatives. To view this website go to: <http://www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca/museums.htm>

School Transition and School Readiness

Check out these resources on school transition and readiness at: <http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/en-ca/school-transition/according-to-experts.htm>

Online Learning for Adults: Factors that Contribute to Success: A Literature Review

<http://www.nald.ca/library/research/csc/litreview/cover.htm>

Written by Sue Folinsbee

Twenty Top Downloads from NALD – May 2009

<http://www.nald.ca/top20/2009/may09.htm>

What I Learned in Class Today: Aboriginal Issues in the Classroom

www.whatilearnedinclasstoday.com

Classroom discussions of Aboriginal issues often leave students feeling alienated and angry. Though troubling, these situations often go unreported and unresolved, affecting students' abilities to function in classes and in their coursework. To make these situations visible and to find ways to have more professional and productive classroom discussions, two undergraduate students in the First Nations Studies Program at the University of British Columbia, Karrmen Crey and Amy Perreault, developed *What I Learned in Class Today: Aboriginal Issues in the Classroom* website.

This project asks students, instructors, and administrators at UBC, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, to share in videotaped interviews their most memorable classroom experiences where the discussion of Aboriginal issues became difficult, and to share their reflections on the dynamics underpinning these situations. Their interviews form the basis of the materials found on the website.

In their interviews, participants identify situations and raise important issues that require attention and consideration when thinking through ways of addressing classroom climate issues. Individual interviews have been edited together to create a video based on these situations and issues, which is available for you to view privately, or screen in meetings, workshops, classes, and other venues.

To respond to this need, discussion modules have been developed to accompany edited videos. Key themes and issues emerged across interviews, which we identified to form the basis of discussion materials. These Modules are written specifically as a template for people who would like a framework for conducting discussions of the issues using the materials found in the interview archive.

Alpha Plus Tech Podcasts <http://blog.alphaplus.ca/alphaplus-tech-podcasts>

This website has several podcasts where they talk to adult literacy practitioners about how and why they are using technology and what they think about it. Too often the great work and new ways of doing things are hidden away and we only get to read about them in reports. They decided to make the podcasts so that the literacy field could hear from practitioners themselves about the innovative ways they use technology with learners and in the classroom. These podcasts were originally published one each week between April 23, 2009 and June 4, 2009.

Read more: <http://blog.alphaplus.ca/alphaplus-tech-podcasts/#ixzz0I2PHo0Ro&B>