

This Week in Literacy

May 14, 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.

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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

Call for Nominations: 2009 Council of the Federation Literacy Award – Nomination Deadline – Friday, May 29, 2009

The Council of the Federation, established in 2003 by the 13 Premiers of Canada, has identified literacy as a key initiative of importance to Canadians. The 2009 Northwest Territories Council of the Federation Literacy Award will honour the achievements of a learner who has overcome obstacles and demonstrated outstanding progress in the pursuit of literacy skills in any of the NWT official languages. Nominations are open to NWT learners of all ages. The winning nominee will receive a Council of the Federation medallion and a certificate from the Premier of the Northwest Territories. Nominations require two letters of support.

Call for Nominations: 2009 Ministerial Literacy Awards – Deadline – Friday, May 29, 2009

Do you know an educator or an organization in your community that has excelled in promoting literacy and helping others to improve their literacy levels in any of the NWT's official languages? This is your chance to honour the work of that exceptional individual or organization. Nominations will be accepted in two categories:

1. Teachers, tutors or literacy facilitators who have demonstrated outstanding dedication to literacy.
2. Organizations, literacy committees or programs, which have advocated for literacy and improved literacy levels in their communities.

One nominee from each category will be selected to receive a congratulatory letter, a certificate and a plaque from the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. Nominations require two letters of support.

Nomination forms are available from Barbara Miron, Coordinator, Literacy and Adult Basic Education; Department of Education, Culture and Employment; Government of the Northwest Territories. Phone: (867) 920-3482 Fax: (867) 873-0237 Email: Barbara.Miron@gov.nt.ca.

The Super Safety Squad Activity Book

A new activity book designed to promote transportation safety to young children will be introduced this weekend in Yellowknife by the Government of the Northwest Territories' (GNWT) Department of Transportation. The book is available in both English and French. It is aimed at children aged three to nine. Minister Michael McLeod says it contains important safety messages which can save lives. The book has songs and activities which reinforce the following safety messages:

- When riding your bike, be careful so you don't get hurt.
- Wear your helmet to keep your head safe.
- A life jacket will protect you when you're around the water.
- Seat belts protect you if a crash happens.
- You cannot be too prepared when travelling.
- Let someone know when to expect you.

Parents and teachers can download a PDF version of the publications by visiting the Department of Transportation website at www.dot.gov.nt.ca. Click on the link under Quick Links. For further information contact Earl Blacklock at earl_blacklock@gov.nt.ca.

In the News

Francophone High School Grads in Minority Communities Show Strong Interest in Post-secondary Studies, but Not Necessarily in French

April 29, 2009, Moncton

A strong majority (87 percent) of Grade 12 students attending French-language schools in a minority setting intend to pursue a post-secondary education, according to a study published today by the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation. To read this article go to

<http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/en/newsevents/newsfull.asp?newsid=166>

Music and literacy

Numerous studies have suggested that music education helps children perform better in school. Now, a new study by two professors at the C.W. Post Campus of Long Island University has established a specific link between music education and literacy. The study of second-graders in New York City public schools showed students who studied piano had better test scores in vocabulary and verbal sequencing than students who did not. "Our message to educators is, 'If you're thinking about building a keyboard lab, please put it next to the library,'" said Joseph Piro, an assistant professor of education at C.W. Post who conducted the study along with Camilo Ortiz, an associate professor of clinical psychology. "There is evidence that music changes the brain, and

an involvement with music has extra-musical effects. The qualities that serve good performance in music also serve good performance in literacy.” To read more go to

http://weblogs.newsday.com/news/local/education/blog/2009/05/music_and_literacy.html.

PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy a Success!

From the Nunavut Literacy Council, May, 2009

The 2009 PGI was held in Pond Inlet from April 29th to May 1st. Celebrities who participated included Shelagh Rogers, Mike Stevens (musician), Connie Kaldor (musician), Barney Bentall (musician), Kendel Carson (musician), Russell DeCarle (musician), and Denise Donlan (Executive Director of CBC Radio Canada). Special guest Alison Gzowski attended on behalf of the Gzowski family. Northern dignitaries included Honourable Peter Taptuna, Deputy Premier, and his Worship Mayor Abraham Kublu. The event included the Premier’s Dinner, hosted by Honourable Peter Taptuna, a community celebration that included an awards ceremony, musical entertainment and a silent auction. The celebrities also delivered workshops and readings for students in both the elementary and high schools. Students from the elementary school also rehearsed, and presented a musical performance for the community with the help of musicians Connie Kaldor, Mike Stevens, Barney Bentall, Russell DeCarle, and Kendel Carson.

A concert was also held in Iqaluit before the celebrities went on to Pond Inlet. Approximately 200 people attended. The golf tournament, held on a specially designed 9-hole golf course, was played on a pond in the centre of town. Celebrities, dignitaries, adult learners, sponsors, elders and community leaders made up the golf teams. The day of the golf tournament was beautiful and the participants and spectators thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Thank you to First Air, the Government of Nunavut, the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Agnico-Eagle, Atuqtuarvik Corporation and other sponsors and volunteers!

Literacy and Today's Economy

Due to the current recession, people are downsizing their companies and unemployment continues to rise. ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation reports on what these implications mean for the literacy field in Canada. To view this report go to: <http://www.abc-canada.org/en/literacyineconomy>.

Resources and Websites

Literacy and Essential Skills Toolkit

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada has created a comprehensive Literacy and Essentials Skills Toolkit to offer support to employees/learners, employers, practitioners and community groups. The kit contains a series of free and easy-to-use tools which can be used to address various literacy and essentials skills challenges affecting desired outcomes of many Canadians in the workplace. To view the toolkit go to

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/essential_skills/general/toolkit.shtml.

Welcome to the Literacy and Technology website.

This site has been developed to assist educators by providing ideas for integrating technology in classrooms through the use of mini-lessons, explicit instruction, research and more. The goal is to enhance student literacy through the use of technology. This website will give you examples of

programs and methods to use when delivering information to your students and when having them meet curricular outcomes in your school. <http://ssrsbstaff.ednet.ns.ca/litandtech>.

Icebreakers, Warmups, Energizers, & Deinhbitizers

<http://wilderdom.com/games/Icebreakers.html>

Early Learning Prevents Youth Violence

This report pulls together what we know so far about the causes and consequences of childhood aggression, and what parents, caregivers, educators and society as a whole can do about it.

To view this report go to:

http://www.excellence-earlychildhood.ca/documents/Tremblay_AggressionReport_ANG.pdf.

Beyond Child's Play: Caring for and Educating Young Children in Canada

How we care for our children says everything about the communities we create and the kind of society in which we live, and how we can collectively make them even better. This issue of Our Schools/Our Selves takes a broad, comprehensive view of child care and early childhood education and examines it through a variety of different lenses to offer readers a number of points of entry into this nuanced and multifaceted topic. It brings together Canada's leading researchers, writers and activists who have contributed so much to the debates about, and our knowledge of, how we can best care for and educate our youngest and most vulnerable. To view this report go to:

http://www.policyalternatives.ca/osos/2009/04/ourschoolsourselves2/?pa=A5671525&r_ID=242006.

The Idea Box <http://www.theideabox.com>

Check out this great resource for craft ideas, recipes, seasonal holiday ideas, games and activities for children and families.

The Activity Idea Place <http://www.123child.com>

This site has lots of activities! There is a list a mile long of different themes and topics. Each theme has songs, rhymes, crafts, books and games about that theme. This is a great resource for early childhood or family literacy programs.

Creating Authentic Materials and Activities for the Adult Literacy Classroom

By Erik Jacobson, Sophie Degener and Victoria Purcell-Gates

This handbook is the result of a five-year study of adult literacy education in the United States entitled "The Literacy Practices of Adult Learners Study," (LPALS). It is one of many research projects conducted by the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL), a joint effort of World Education, the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Portland State University, Rutgers University, and the Center for Literacy Studies at The University of Tennessee. The LPALS focused on one of NCSALL's research priorities: the nature and impact of classroom practice in adult basic education. This introduction describes our research, presents key findings, and provides an overview of the goals and structure of this handbook. To download a copy go to

<http://www.ncsall.net/fileadmin/resources/teach/jacobson.pdf>.