

This Week in Literacy

September 3, 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
Learn at Work Week	September 21 - 25
NWT Literacy Week	September 27 – October 3
World Teachers' Day	October 5
Human Rights Day	December 10
National Family Literacy Day	January 27

Community Events and Information

Take the International Literacy Day Challenge!

September 8 is International Literacy Day. Are you up for the challenge? Started by UNESCO in 1966, the day highlights the importance of literacy to individuals, communities and societies. Expand your definition of literacy beyond reading and writing and think about the role of learning in your life – as a citizen, a student, a worker, a parent, a volunteer and a friend.

Every year on International Literacy Day, celebrations take place around the world to support literacy and learning. This year, celebrate with millions of others by taking the International Literacy Day challenge to bring literacy to life in your home, at school, in your workplace and in your community.

- Learn a new recipe
- Add to a blog, Facebook, Twitter or other social media
- Sign up for a community course
- Update your resume

Learn at Work Week – September 21 - 25

It is well documented that Canadian firms are falling behind in investing in skills development. However, it is also well documented that learning has a positive impact on key business measures such as job performance and productivity. This weeklong celebration includes a number of activities and events designed to promote the importance of workplace learning and performance to key stakeholders and the public-at-large.

Goals of the Learn @ Work Week:

- To raise awareness of the impact of workplace learning
- To celebrate the best practices of workplace learning
- To celebrate the success of the 'learning organization'

To download a fact sheet about Learn at Work Week go to

<http://www.cstd.ca/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=zP2wrjOLXD0%3d&tabid=79>.

Get Ready for NWT Literacy Week 2009 – September 27 – October 3

We encourage communities to get together to start planning for your community. The NWTLC has sent out literacy week packages to all schools, daycares, youth programs, adult learning centres, health programs and NGOs. The packages include the following:

- Read for 15 poster and fax back form
- Literacy Calendar (poster format)
- NWT Literacy Week Colouring Book (you can download from our website www.nwt.literacy.ca if you would like to hand out copies to students and families)
- How to Kits: (feel free to photocopy or download from our website)
 - TV Free from A to Z
 - Puppets
- Prizes to celebrate NWT Literacy Week
- "How did you celebrate NWT Literacy Week 2009?" fax back form
- List of NWT Literacy Council Board of Directors
- Info on who we are
- 2009/10 training calendar

You can also download all these documents from our website at

<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/whatsnew.htm>.

Program Planning and Proposal Writing Workshop

Hosted by the NWT Literacy Council

When: October 14 & 15

Where: Northern United Place

Cost: FREE

There is limited space. Register by September 20th. Download the registration form and fax it to us at 873-2176. You can download a registration form from our website at

<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/whatsnew.htm>.

Facilitation Skills Workshop

Hosted by the NWT Literacy Council

When: November 12

Where: Northern United Place

Cost: FREE

There is limited space. Register by October 20th. Download the registration form and fax it to us at 873-2176. You can download a registration form from our website at

<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/whatsnew.htm>.

NWT Literacy Council Training Calendar for 2009-10

Get our new training calendar online at <http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/whatsnew.htm> and sign up for our Program Planning and Proposal Writing workshop in October or any of our other workshops by emailing us at nwt@nwtliteracy.ca.

10th Anniversary of FASD Awareness Day - September 9, 2009

9:00 AM	Walk from the Centre for Northern Families
9:09 AM	Bell concordance at Holy Trinity Anglican Church
10:00 AM	BreakFASD at Salvation Army
12:00 PM -3:00 PM	Information booth and barbecue outside Post Office

For more information contact Candace Demone at 873-9069, Coordinator of FASD Services, Yellowknife Association for Community Living.

Are you a young adult with a deep commitment to your community?

Are you looking for a mentor who will guide you on how to make a difference in society? If so, the Governor General invites you to take part in the Order of Canada Mentorship Program! We are looking for 25 young Canadians aged 18 to 25 who will be matched with members of the Order of Canada. Participants will be guided through online mentoring. An incredible opportunity to receive advice and support from a renowned Canadian in a field you are passionate about.

Apply by September 17, 2009, at www.mentor2009.gg.ca.

Opportunity to Participate in an Artisan Village

To interested Aboriginal artists and artisans:

The Four Host First Nations (FHFN), in partnership with the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC), have set a goal of unprecedented Aboriginal participation during the Games. The FHFN, in partnership with VANOC, is seeking experienced and talented Canadian Aboriginal artists and artisans interested in participating in the Artisan Village and Business Showcase. This program will include First Nations, Inuit and Métis artists and artisans from a variety of professional levels, backgrounds and styles. If you are interested in being considered for the program, please complete the attached artist credentials application in full (including all requirements outlined in the application) and submit it **no later than September 30, 2009**.

Yellowknife Public library

TAILS (Therapy Animals Involved in Literacy Success): Ages 8 - 12 yrs

Therapy Animals Involved in Literacy Success is a very well established program organized by the St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog Program. Children can improve their literacy skills by spending one-on-one time reading stories aloud to one of the trained therapy dogs. If your child loves dogs and wants some reading practice, this is the opportunity for you. Children between the ages of eight and twelve who would like to book some read-aloud time with a specially trained and very attentive dog, can call us at 920-5642 to register. Registration begins September 21, 2009. **This fun and free program will run for 7 Saturdays from October 3rd until November 14th, 2009.**

Teen Programs and Events

You can become a member of the online Teen Reading Club. Go to www.teensrc.ca and register to submit book reviews, chat about books, and join discussions with teens across the country!

In the News

Clive Thompson on the New Literacy

As the school year begins, be ready to hear pundits fretting once again about how kids today can't write—and technology is to blame. Facebook encourages narcissistic blabbering, video and PowerPoint have replaced carefully crafted essays, and texting has dehydrated language into "bleak, bald, sad shorthand" (as [University College of London English professor John Sutherland has moaned](#)). An age of illiteracy is at hand, right? [Andrea Lunsford](#) isn't so sure. Lunsford is a professor of writing and rhetoric at Stanford University, where she has organized a mammoth project called the [Stanford Study of Writing](#) to scrutinize college students' prose. From 2001 to 2006, she collected 14,672 student writing samples—everything from in-class assignments, formal essays, and journal entries to emails, blog posts, and chat sessions. Her conclusions are stirring.

"I think we're in the midst of a literacy revolution the likes of which we haven't seen since Greek civilization," she says. For Lunsford, technology isn't killing our ability to write. It's reviving it—and pushing our literacy in bold new directions. The first thing she found is that young people today write far more than any generation before them. That's because so much socializing takes place online, and it almost always involves text. Of all the writing that the Stanford students did, a stunning 38 percent of it took place out of the classroom—life writing, as Lunsford calls it. Those Twitter updates and lists of 25 things about yourself add up. To read more go to http://www.wired.com/techbiz/people/magazine/17-09/st_thompson.

Vancouver Sun Reporters Win 2009 Peter Gzowski Literacy Award of Merit

Toronto, ON – August 31, 2009 – ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation is pleased to announce that Vancouver Sun reporters, Suzanne Ahearne, Darah Hansen, Catherine Rolfsen and Denise Ryan, are the winners of the 2009 *Peter Gzowski Literacy Award of Merit (PGLAM)*. These four writers were awarded for their five-part series, *The Face of Literacy*. *The Face of Literacy* was chosen as this year's PGLAM winner because of its in-depth analysis of the various literacy issues in Canada, including prison literacy and aboriginal literacy. The series featured the stories of five individuals as they developed their literacy skills.

The PGLAM was founded by ABC CANADA in 1993 in honour of the late veteran broadcaster and journalist Peter Gzowski – a passionate champion for literacy. For the last 15 years ABC CANADA and leaders in the media industry have selected the recipients from entries by Canadian journalists. The PGLAM is awarded to a journalist(s) whose work has enhanced public understanding, support for, and awareness of the literacy cause. A Vancouver Sun representative will be awarded with the PGLAM at a dinner ceremony in Toronto on October 7, 2009. In addition to the award, the reporters will receive \$1000 to donate to a literacy organization of their choice. For more information on the *Peter Gzowski Literacy Award of Merit*, please visit, www.abc-canada.org/pglam.

Media Literacy Week 2009: Critical thinking for the digital age

Today's young people use digital media every day in ways that were unimaginable even ten years ago to connect with friends, seek out information and entertainment, and express themselves. Digital media present enormous opportunities and tremendous challenges for this first generation of "digital natives," and they need the appropriate critical thinking skills to understand and get the most out of new media.

It's not enough to teach young Canadians how to use these technologies. If we want to ensure their well-being and healthy development, and prepare them for the knowledge-based economies of the future, we need to support children and youth in learning the media literacy skills they need for the digital age. Helping young people become media literate isn't just the responsibility of educators. Parents, librarians, Guide and Scout leaders, coaches, camp counsellors, paediatricians – anyone and everyone working with children and youth – have a role to play. To facilitate this, Media Awareness Network (MNet) and the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) are partnering to host the fourth annual **Media Literacy Week, November 2-6, 2009**. Together, MNet and CTF are encouraging Canadians across the country to get involved in media literacy activities in their communities. We encourage everyone to mark their calendars now for this year's Media Literacy Week and plan to get involved. For more information on how you can take part, visit www.medialiteracyweek.ca. To read more go to http://www.semaineducationmedias.ca/en/press_articles09_mlw09.htm.

Message from Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO on the occasion of International Literacy Day September 8, 2009

This year, International Literacy Day puts the spotlight on the empowering role of literacy and its importance for participation, citizenship and development. 'Literacy and Empowerment' is also the theme for the 2009-2010 biennium of the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003-2012). While the empowering role of literacy and its significance for development have been recognized worldwide, there are still 776 million illiterate adults in the world and 75 million children out of school whose rights and needs remain unfulfilled. Literacy, in fact, is by far the most neglected goal on the Education for All (EFA) agenda. Who are the 776 million illiterate adults? In most countries, these are the most disadvantaged and marginalized populations, with a high percentage of women and girls, indigenous people, linguistic and cultural minorities, nomads, rural dwellers, and the disabled. There is a high correlation between poverty and illiteracy. In this perspective, empowerment is the key. For all those women and men who live without access to basic reading and writing skills, literacy opens up new horizons of opportunity, improves standards of life and contributes to processes of social change and poverty eradication. To read more go to <http://www.nald.ca/info/whatnew/headline/2009/messagealph09e.pdf>.

Early intervention backed to boost literacy

Stephen Llewellyn, Canadaeast News Service Published Wednesday August 26th, 2009

If students are in the bottom 20 per cent of their class in reading by Grade 3, they're doomed to stay there for their entire school years, warns University of New Brunswick education Prof. Douglas Willms. Research also shows that holding low-literacy students back a grade won't help either, he said Tuesday. Instead, he said, these students should receive intervention in the form of 100 to 150 hours of additional instruction to boost their reading skills. To read more go to <http://telegraphjournal.canadaeast.com/search/article/771946>.

Resources and Websites

Books Brighten Life

View the 30 second PSA produced by [Outreach Productions](#) for the New Brunswick Literacy Coalition

- [English](#) (Windows Media - 1.6 MB)
- [French](#) (Windows Media - 1.7 MB)

The greatest predictor of a child's academic success is access to books at an early age. Kindergarten teachers know within the first few days of school which children will have difficulty reading. How? Children who are read to everyday from birth love books. They will go to the bookshelf, choose a favorite book and ask the teacher to read it, or they will mimic reading (in some cases they can read!) to their classmates. These children know how to hold the book; they know that the cover tells them something about the story, that there are pictures in the book as well as text, that there is a story with a beginning, middle and ending. For these children, good reading habits are engrained early on and stay with them to adulthood. It is vital, therefore, that communities work together to ensure that books get into the hands of children who need them most. To read more go to <http://www.nb.literacy.ca/famlit/kidsread.htm>.

View Our Videos on YouTube

Go to <http://www.youtube.com> and then search NWTLiteracy. All our videos will come up. We have several videos on bookmaking and reading to your child.

Participants Handbook: Making Effective Presentations and Safety Talks

<http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/awes/participants/participants.pdf>

Goodwill Community Foundation – Learn Free

This website has resources for math, computers and everyday life. Great website for adult learners or high school students. <http://www.gcflearnfree.org>

Webcast Launch of Quick Read Canada

You are invited to attend the official webcast launch of Quick Reads Canada, a new series of books written by leading Canadian authors for adult literacy learners. On September 8, 2009, find out how these books encourage reading practice, raise literacy skills and increase confidence. Guest speakers include: **Gail Anderson-Dargatz**, Quick Reads Canada author, **Joy Fielding**, Quick Reads Canada author, **Louise Penny**, Quick Reads Canada author, **The Honourable Diane Finley**, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development

To participate, please RSVP by September 4.
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