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Notes From the Margin

Welcome to the actual beginning of the new millennium. For those of you who thought it was last year, you were mistaken. Well, that is now settled and we can move on and look forward to the next thousand years. In a time of new beginnings, we at TEACH Magazine are also pleased to make our own contribution. For the first time in our eight year history, we shall be regularly running French language content in three issues of TEACH, that is, September, January and March each year. In this way, we are truly a national publication that is serving the needs of its readership from coast-to-coast regardless of which official language is spoken or employed. At the same time, we are significantly increasing our coverage of technology and the use of the Internet as a classroom-based tool and resource within the pages of those same issues. So, again, we are pleased to provide you with this expanded coverage in both languages.

Our resident futurist, Richard Worzel writes persuasively about information technology in the classroom and how important it is for the proper implementation. He argues, as well, that technology on its own is useless. Without knowledgeable teachers, information technology may actually be detrimental to a student's progress in school. Featured in this issue too, is a look at the French version of the Canadian Encyclopedia Plus 2000 Version. Is this reference tool useful and easy-to-use for Francophone educators? Read the review and find out. We also take a look at an online initiative that is intended to bring together Canadians of all ages in Generations CanConnect. This is a SchoolNet initiative and one that is employing the Internet as a cross-generational tool.

Notes en marge

Ceux d'entre vous qui avez cru que le nouveau millénaire commençait l'année dernière, détrompez-vous ! Il commence cette année. Maintenant que nous avons tiré cette affaire au clair, tournons-nous résolument vers les mille prochaines années. En ce temps de renouveau, nous au magazine TEACH sommes heureux d'apporter notre contribution. Pour la première fois en huit ans d'histoire, nous allons publier des articles en français dans les trois éditions annuelles du magazine, soit septembre, janvier et mars. TEACH devient donc un véritable magazine national répondant aux besoins de ses lecteurs d'un océan à l'autre qu'elle que soit la langue officielle parlée ou employée. D'autre part, nous allons accroître de façon significative nos reportages sur la technologie et l'usage de l'Internet en tant qu'outil d'enseignement. Nous sommes heureux de vous offrir cette couverture dans les deux langues.

Notre chroniqueur futuriste, Richard Worzel, saura vous convaincre des bienfaits de la technologie de l'information dans la salle de classe et de l'importance de bien l'accueillir. Il soutient par contre que la technologie seule est inutile. Sans l'intervention d'enseignants bien préparés, la technologie de l'information peut avoir un impact négatif sur la réussite scolaire. Dans ce numéro nous jetons également un coup d'oeil sur l'édition française de *l'Encyclopédie canadienne Plus 2000*. Cet outil de référence est-il utile et facile à utiliser pour les éducateurs francophones ? Lisez notre compte rendu. Puis nous examinons le projet ConnectAction des Générations. Il s'agit d'un projet du réseau Rescol qui utilise l'Internet pour rapprocher les gens de tous les âges.

TEACH
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Publisher / Editor

WILI LIBERMAN

Editorial Assistant

JENNIFER KAVUR

Contributing Writers

Kirstan Gagnon, Alison Girling, Carol Martin, Lyse Ward, Richard Worzel,

Advertising Manager

MICHELE NEWTON BENSON

Art Direction

VINICIO SCARCI

Production

JENNIFER ROBERTS

Circulation

SUSAN HOLDEN

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Ralph Ingleton

Environmental Educational Consultant

Jack MacFadden

Teacher, W. H. Day Elementary School

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IT in the Classroom

By Richard Worzel



Technology is coming to your classroom, partly because it offers benefits that can't be delivered any other way, but even more so because we desperately need it. Some see IT (Information Technology, the combination of computers and communications) as a threat in a human vs. machine conflict. But the real issue is not "teachers versus IT," but "IT assisting teachers." This issue is going to be vitally important because we're rapidly running short of teachers. We will need ways to extend our human resources and allow fewer teachers to effectively teach more children, not because we want it to be that way, but because demographics say it's inevitable. But what can we do?

I have two suggestions. First, we need to start using computer-based resources to allow for more self-directed learning in the higher grades. The commercial training industry has shown that compared to classroom presentation, Interactive Multimedia (IMM) is cost-effective, produces better retention in shorter periods of time, and gives students a higher sense of achievement and self-esteem. School boards need to investigate how to transfer this technology to public schools, freeing teachers to work one-on-one with struggling students.

However, customized education is a future possibility, and would require a major change in the way we view education. We need something immediately applicable, and

less controversial, which is where my second suggestion comes in: stretch resources by making extensive use of the Internet.

This is already being done, and with success. Take, for instance, Holy Trinity School, a grade 8-12 school in Richmond Hill, Ontario, just outside of Toronto. Teacher Art Lightstone, of whom I've written before, has this to say about his Internet site, <www.newlearner.com>:

"I know it seems like a lot of work to set up these online infrastructures, but in the end, I couldn't imagine how I would manage without them. You see, teachers do a pile of administrative work in addition to the more obvious tasks of curriculum development, planning, teaching, and marking. We have to be our own managers, secretaries, publishers, and public-relations officers. So, in fact, I benefit from IT in the same way that businesses and government agencies do...."

"For the most part, parents and students can interface with me, without ever having to actually speak with me. If I answer one student's question on the FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) board, I answer the same question for everybody else. Course policies are presented to parents over the web. Tutorials, guidance with respect to assignments, and review exercises are all provided to students over the web. Frantically photocopying before class is a thing of the past – all my handouts are obtained from the web site and brought to class by the stu-

dents themselves. Students no longer need to see me for missed work due to illness, or to obtain work in advance due to an expected absence."

"Quite simply, digital technology allows teachers to retain the fruits of their efforts for future use and future refinement. My web site allows me to prepare every detail of every class in advance for the entire year! Believe me, my web site works its butt off! I take care of it, and it takes care of me."

This is not some ivory-tower theorist, but a fellow teacher in the trenches. Solutions can be found – if we are willing to find them.

We really don't have a choice. Without enough teachers, we're going to have to find other ways of doing things. IT can provide tools that at least allow us to come up with partial solutions. If educators fight a reactive rear-guard action, IT will be forced down our throats – and warnings about its failure will be self-fulfilling. That may give some satisfaction to those who don't appreciate computers, but it will be a Pyrrhic victory, and students will suffer.

Richard Worzel is a Toronto futurist who volunteers his time to speak to high school students. Contact him care of TEACH Magazine, or at <futurist@futuresearch.com>.



La technologie de l'information en classe

Par Richard Worzel



La technologie a déjà commencé à faire son apparition dans vos salles de classe. De prime abord, c'est parce qu'elle offre des avantages qui ne s'obtiennent pas autrement, mais dans un tableau d'ensemble il faut reconnaître que c'est parce qu'il y a un important vide à combler. Certains perçoivent la technologie de l'information (l'application de l'ordinateur aux communications) comme une menace s'inscrivant dans un conflit qui oppose l'être humain à la machine. En réalité, la technologie de l'information est là pour seconder l'enseignant. Il faudra tôt ou tard lui accorder son importance, surtout lorsqu'on sait que nous serons de plus en plus à court d'enseignants dans les années à venir (voir « Teacher Shortage : The Coming Crisis » dans l'édition mai-juin du magazine TEACH). Nous allons devoir faire plus avec nos ressources humaines de sorte que chaque enseignante ou enseignant puisse répondre aux besoins d'un plus grand nombre d'étudiants. Ce n'est peut-être pas ce que nous aurions souhaité, mais les tendances démographiques étant ce qu'elles sont, nous devons réagir. Mais comment ?

J'ai deux suggestions. D'abord, nous devons commencer à utiliser plus fréquemment les ressources qui s'obtiennent par l'ordinateur pour encourager chez nos étudiants un apprentissage plus autonome qui pourra leur servir aux niveaux supérieurs. L'industrie commerciale de la formation a démontré que,

comparée à la présentation en salle de classe, le multimédia interactif est moins coûteux, il permet d'emmagasiner mieux plus rapidement et il donne à l'étudiant un meilleur sens de réalisation personnelle et de confiance en soi. Les commissions scolaires doivent trouver les moyens d'introduire cette technologie dans les écoles publiques de manière à libérer les enseignants pour qu'ils puissent consacrer plus de temps aux étudiants qui ont plus de difficulté.

Un autre avantage qu'offre le multimédia interactif est qu'il nous permet d'adapter l'enseignement aux capacités et intérêts personnels de l'étudiant. Non seulement l'étudiant recevrait-il une formation plus susceptible de lui être utile dans la vie, mais cela mettrait fin au débat sur la répartition des étudiants en « groupes faibles » et « groupes avancés » et à l'étiquetage dénigrant selon qu'un étudiant est parmi les premiers ou les derniers de classe, comme on l'entend couramment aujourd'hui. Quand chaque étudiant peut suivre sa voie, il n'y a pas de premiers ou de derniers de classe.

Cependant, l'éducation adaptée est une possibilité future qui exigera une transformation majeure de notre façon de voir les choses. Elle transformera la façon dont nous concevons, arrangeons et payons pour l'éducation. Il faudra beaucoup de temps avant d'atteindre cette étape mais je suis convaincu qu'elle est inévitable. D'ici là, nous avons besoin de solutions plus immédiates

et moins controversées, d'où ma deuxième suggestion : faire un usage maximal de nos ressources humaines en recourant à l'Internet le plus possible.

Cela se fait déjà, et avec un certain degré de réussite. Prenez, par exemple, l'école secondaire Holy Trinity de Richmond Hill, en Ontario, tout près de Toronto. Voici ce que dit Art Lightstone, un enseignant dont je parlais dans un autre article, au sujet de son site Internet <www.newlerner.com> :

« Je sais que c'est beaucoup de travail que d'installer toute cette infrastructure branchée à l'Internet, mais maintenant que je l'ai, je ne sais pas comment je me débrouillerais sans elle. Vous savez, en plus des tâches évidentes comme le développement du programme scolaire, la planification, l'enseignement et les corrections, les enseignants doivent accomplir un tas de fonctions administratives. Nous devons être à la fois gérants, secrétaires, éditeurs et agents de relations publiques. J'utilise donc la technologie de l'information de la même manière qu'une entreprise ou qu'un organisme gouvernemental... »

« La plupart des parents et étudiants peuvent communiquer avec moi sans devoir me rencontrer en personne. Lorsque je réponds à une question d'un étudiant dans ma

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Foire aux questions, je réponds à tout le monde à la fois. Les parents peuvent consulter les guides de cours sur mon site Web. Les étudiants y consultent les travaux guidés, les consignes pour les devoirs et leçons et les exercices de récapitulation. Je n'ai plus besoin de courir faire des photocopies à la dernière minute avant les classes puisque mes feuilles de cours sont affichées sur le site Web et les étudiants les impriment à la maison. Les étudiants n'ont plus besoin de venir me voir pour les travaux et leçons qu'ils ont manqués ou qu'ils prévoient manquer à cause d'une absence motivée; ils n'ont qu'à les télécharger du site Web.

<< D'autre part, la technologie numérisée permet aux enseignants de conserver les fruits de leurs efforts pour un usage ultérieur. Ils peuvent également l'améliorer au fil des années. Étant donné le temps limité dont nous disposons, nous ne pouvons passer trop de temps à des tâches qui seront perdues une fois complétées. Je plains l'enseignant qui passe son temps à retranscrire ses notes au tableau. Je ne crois pas qu'il puisse survivre bien longtemps. Plus un enseignant a la possibilité de se préparer à l'avance, moins le reste de la journée lui semblera un défi insurmontable. Mon site Web me permet de préparer à l'avance dans le menu détail chaque classe pour le reste de l'année ! Croyez-moi, je le fais travailler mon ordinateur. Je m'occupe de lui et il s'occupe de moi. >>

Ces commentaires ne viennent pas d'un penseur enfermé dans sa tour d'ivoire, mais d'un enseignant comme vous bien submergé dans son milieu. Aujourd'hui la plupart des écoles qui bénéficient de la technologie de l'information sont des établissements privés, mais l'expérience peut aussi s'appliquer au réseau public. Évidemment, l'avantage de l'école privée est que les parents sont requis d'avoir un ordinateur à la maison pour chaque étudiant. Les éducateurs du réseau public qui se cherchent des raisons pour contourner la technologie de l'information parce qu'ils ne s'y sentent pas à l'aise auront là un argument de taille en leur faveur. Mais puisque nous devons trouver les moyens de faire un meilleur usage des ressources humaines et que nous devons y consacrer des ressources financières importantes, << Ça ne m'en dit pas >> n'est pas une réponse acceptable. Par exemple, nous pourrions revenir aux laboratoires informatiques qui restent ouverts après les heures de classe et qui sont munis de nombreux ordinateurs sur lesquels les étudiants peuvent faire leurs travaux. Nous trouverons les solutions si le cœur y est.

D'ailleurs, nous n'avons pas le choix. Nous allons devoir trouver le moyen de faire les choses autrement parce qu'il n'y a pas suffisamment d'enseignants. La

technologie de l'information est un outil qui permet de solutionner le problème, du moins en partie. Si les éducateurs mènent un combat d'arrière-garde contre la technologie de l'information, ils risquent de se la faire imposer de force. Ce sera alors l'échec pour plusieurs et d'autres pourront marmonner : Je l'avais bien dit. Une bien piètre consolation quand on sait le prix qu'il en coûtera aux étudiants.

Richard Worzel est un futuriste torontois qui donne des conférences aux étudiants du secondaire sur une base bénévole. Il peut être contacté par l'entremise du magazine TEACH ou par courrier électronique à <futurist@futuresearch.com>.

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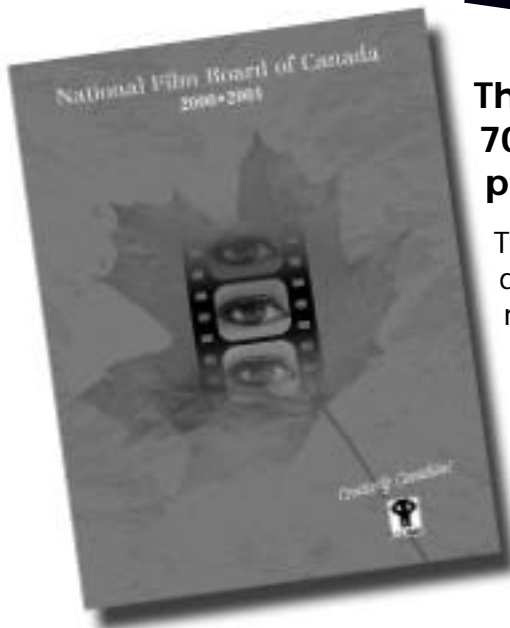
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The Endangered Species Project

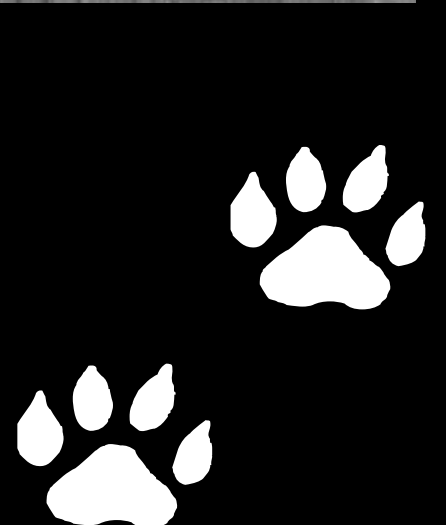
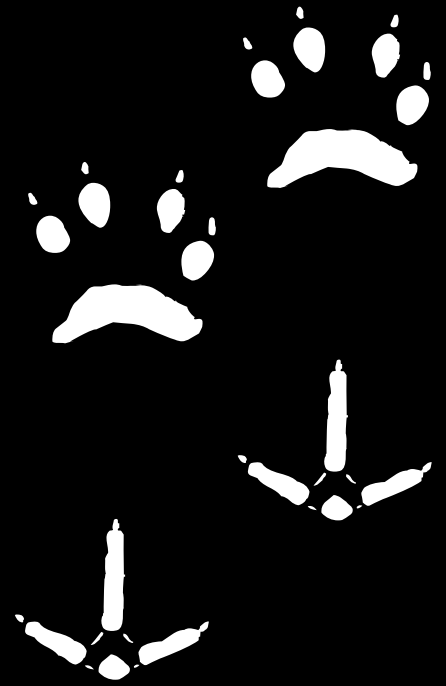


Why should we care about endangered species? What is the significance if categories of plants and animals disappear? After all, isn't it part of the natural evolutionary process? Survival of the fittest? For those of us who live primarily in cities, what does it matter if the existence of the peregrine falcon, the spotted owl, the African elephant, or the water-pennywort is threatened or endangered?

There is a natural balance inherent in the physical world. When external factors or elements that disrupt this balance are introduced, such as rampant development or toxins, then we experience a world that

is off-kilter. The physical world is so tightly interconnected that even the slightest jarring can place an animal or plant species in danger. The delicate dance of nature is suddenly out of step.

When a species is endangered, its existence is threatened. For example, there have been an alarming number of species that have become extirpated in Canada, which means their existence and all evidence of their existence has been expunged from Canada but may exist elsewhere. The Atlantic Walrus and the Gray Whale are two examples of species that have been extirpated. We are custodians of the planet





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and the natural environment. As such, we need to ask ourselves how and why these things happen and if the causes are natural or man-made? Barring the occasion where a meteor slams into the Earth's surface (this purportedly led to the demise of the dinosaurs), it is relatively safe to assume that in a majority of cases, species that are threatened, endangered, extinct, or extirpated may blame humankind for their dilemma.

Does this mean that we are simply evil and there is no hope for the natural world? This isn't the message that we intend to pass on to your students. Yes, we want students to critically assess the issues and make up their own minds, but we also want them to focus on solutions and how they can have a positive influence in terms of real change. We know that some governments are implementing programs that preserve natural habitats and wetlands. We know that threatened species are being re-introduced in some areas. That commercial activities endangering species are being curtailed and even legislated. That some dangerous practices have been banned and that educating the public delivers significant benefits. That there exists a global movement of individuals and organizations dedicated to protecting the environment and all species within it. There exists strong evidence that such developments make sound economic and environmental sense, and that governments are beginning to listen to those concerned about the environment, with a view to protecting the natural world.

Throughout this teaching unit, we hope that you and your students will explore all of these vital issues and focus on practical strategies for improvement. Much can be accomplished through exposure to the challenges that need to be overcome and publicly funded schools form a dynamic arena where students can learn about these terribly serious problems and act on what they have learned. It is vital for students to understand that once the existence of an animal or plant species is threat-

ened, we humans may be next on the list.

The following curriculum areas are applicable: Geography, Environmental Science, Language Arts, Visual Arts, Social Studies, Media. This teaching unit is most appropriate for grades 5-12. Research tools: Encyclopedias (hardcopy and CD-ROM), Library Resources, Books, the Internet.

Learning Outcomes

Students will:

- a. Discover why species become endangered.
- b. Explore the conditions in the environment that threaten wildlife and vegetation.
- c. Understand the political context that affects how governments respond to environmental challenges.
- d. Clarify society's responsibility in dealing with these issues positively.
- e. Think critically and work in teams.
- f. Develop organizational and presentation skills.
- g. Practically apply what has been learned in a real-world context.

Brainstorm

Begin by defining the terms used and the conditions that apply to those terms of use.

That is:

- a. Endangered—wild animals and plants that are in peril
- b. Extirpated—species are no longer found in the wild of Canada although they exist elsewhere
- c. Extinct—species that no longer exist anywhere
- d. Threatened—species that are likely to become endangered if pressures from human or natural causes that make them vulnerable are not reversed

Begin a class discussion with students by having them make a list of species that they think, know, or have heard are threatened or endangered. For example, an historical case is that of the beaver. Hundreds of years ago, beaver pelts, out of which hats were

made were highly prized by Europeans. So many beaver were trapped that their numbers dropped drastically to the point where the existence of the beaver was seriously threatened. Since awareness of the environment was not as wide-spread as it is today, there were no effective controls in place to curb back the voracious appetite for beaver pelts. However, the free market saved their hides, literally. Beaver hats fell out of fashion in Europe. Trappers curtailed the killing of beaver and the population was restored. Thus, it was more happenstance than good planning that prevailed. Can students think of any modern day examples where species in Canada have been threatened or endangered due to human consumption and trade? (Hint: the fishing industries on both coasts including shrimp and lobster may further the discussion.)

What other species can students think of that have been threatened, are endangered, or are extinct? Make a list. Is it then possible for students to point out the reasons for these conditions? What has caused these situations to occur? Ask students if they feel it is important to maintain these species and why they feel this way. Or do they think it is a natural part of the evolutionary cycle, and that something just as good or useful will take its place? For example, has the world suffered noticeably because the passenger pigeon is no longer around? After some of these views have been aired, find out where students get their information. Do they read about this in books, newspapers, hear it on the radio, see it on television, or surf the Internet? Where would they go as their primary source of information if they were to research this topic? For one week have students follow stories in the media that relate to the environment and endangered species in particular. Have them gather the information and present their findings to the class.

Research Activities:

Students will select at least one of the following:

① Begin an investigation in your municipality or region. Find out if there are any species that are on the endangered list. (Note: Information should be available from the Canadian Endangered Species Coalition, 1 Nicholas Street, Ste. 520, Ottawa, On K1N 7B7, Ph: 800-267-4088, 613-562-3447, or Fax: 613-562-3371). Make a list of the species you have found to be endangered. Select one and look at the conditions that have led to its endangerment. Write an explanation citing the specific reasons as to why the species is now endangered.

② Conduct a poll in your school and community. You want to find out attitudes toward passing federal legislation that determines guidelines for protecting endangered species. Today, there are between 200-300 endangered species in Canada and they have no real protection. Ask your poll respondents if they are in favour of such legislation, and rank their responses on a scale of 1-5, where 1 is strongly opposed to such legislation and 5 is strongly in favour of it. Analyze the results of your poll and present them to your class. You may wish to send these results to your provincial and federal Ministers of the Environment. See if these government officials respond. You may also wish to send the results of your poll to the local media who may provide some broader exposure. These might include local radio and television stations, daily and community papers, and cable/specialty channels.

③ Recently in the city of Toronto, a man was ordered to remove a wild garden he had planted because it was considered to be a hazard by city officials. The man had planted the garden as a memorial to his mother who had died. The wild garden contains bushes and shrubbery that have grown to the edge of the road and have become quite tall. The city officials claim that the height of the grass and shrubbery obstructs the view of vehicles on the road. The man says that his garden is beautiful and



Grizzly bear



Beluga whale



Leopard



Aerial view of Chernobyl



Chernobyl



Chernobyl

now has become home to a number of species such as birds and butterflies. He says it is now a natural habitat and should be left alone. There are those who support the man's position and those who don't. Debate the issue in class. Should anyone be allowed to let their lawn become wild and overgrown for the reasons the man has stated? Or are the city officials right when they say that not only is the garden a hazard, it is also unattractive? Choose sides and form a team to debate both sides of the issue. Let the remaining class members judge who has won the debate. Afterward, have a discussion about the role of government and the environment. What is government's role and how should it be implemented?

④ On occasion, man-made disasters have a huge impact on the environment. Who can forget the massive oil spill from the Exxon Valdez tanker that saw millions of gallons of oil spewed into the coastal waters near Alaska? The clean-up took years, cost billions of dollars, and had a significant impact on the plant, bird, and wildlife in the area. In 1986, there was a fire and explosion in a nuclear reactor at a power plant in Chernobyl, Ukraine, then part of the Soviet Union. This is an extreme example of how people have changed the physical environment. You will research this disaster and describe its impact on the environment and the species within it. This question is divided into two parts.

- a. Research the disaster in Chernobyl.—Articles include: "Ten Years of the Chernobyl Era," *Scientific American*, April 1996; "Living with the Monster—Chernobyl," *National Geographic*, August 1994; "Chernobyl—One Year After," *National Geographic*, May 1987; "More Fallout From Chernobyl", *Time*, May 19, 1986. Research the topic online. Summarize the findings of your research with emphasis on species and what happened to them.
- b. Draw a map of Europe and shade in the areas that have been affected by Chernobyl. Label each place mentioned in your research. Make a key for the

map where symbols represent the effects i.e., human effects (deaths, evacuations, sickness), livestock (reindeer, sheep, cattle, contaminated grazing land and water), plant, vegetable, and fruit contamination. Based on the map findings, analyze how each area was affected and the severity of the impact. For example, were major bodies of water affected? Was daily life changed in any way? How far did the radiation travel? What is the condition of the environment immediately surrounding Chernobyl, and farther away? How long will it take for the environment around Chernobyl to return to normal?

⑤ Take a look at your own community. Have there been any environmental disasters/problems? If so, describe what happened and the impact it had on the environment and the species that lived there. If not, take a look and see what might happen. Do you live near a nuclear facility, a landfill site, a sewage treatment plant, a large commercial farm, an abandoned warehouse, heavy industry such as a steel mill? Has the land been eaten up by new developments and roads? If a serious incident were to take place, what do you think would happen to the environment? Work in teams to do your investigative work and write up your analysis of the situation.

⑥ Make up an environmental checklist of Do's and Don'ts that may help some species from becoming endangered. For example, you might visit a provincial/territorial park or nature preserve and take a guided walk or volunteer to help park officials in their conservation work, join a group that looks after local wetlands or nature preserves, plant native plants in your garden, sort garbage into recyclable categories whether at home or school, or get a composter and use it to get rid of biodegradable waste. Now add to this checklist and explain how each point might help a native species.

Creative Activities

Students will complete at least one of the following:

❶ You and your team have decided to adopt an endangered species. Put together a poster campaign that will publicize the plight of the species you have selected. Design the poster and decide what the message about the species will be. How will you use the poster to make a difference? Write an explanation.

❷ Generally, the Earth's population is increasing and in some areas it is becoming unsustainable. For example, India will be the most populous country on the planet, and will shortly surpass China for the first time. Its population will number well over one billion people. Imagine a finite geographic area. It could be a town or a city or some farmland. Now imagine that the population in that area is doubling every ten years. What do you think the effect would be on all of the area's resources such as water, land, air, grassland, trees, etc? You will write a one-act play called "Where Have All the Animals Gone?". The play will explore this idea of diminishing resources due to a fast-growing population. You will script this play, then work with a team to perform it for class members. This means, you will cast the parts, rehearse, and then perform the play for an audience.

❸ You are a reporter for your local newspaper. It is now two years after the Chernobyl disaster. You have been invited back to take a look at the nuclear facility and write about the impact of the fire and explosion on the area and the effect on humans, wildlife, and plantlife. Describe in detail what you see. File your story with your editor.

❹ Referring back to creative activity #1, Adopt an Endangered Species, use the same species selected, or another of your choice, and create a television commercial that depicts the plight of the species be it plant, bird, or animal. The commercial may conform to the following formats: storyboard, animation, video, digital slide show with an audio track. Your team should work out the process by devising the concept,

writing the script, and choosing what format you will use. Once the commercial has been completed, share it with your class and schoolmates. Perhaps the class could hold a festival of commercials for endangered species and invite members of the community and environmental associations to attend.

❺ Share your stories online. Write a story about an endangered species of your choice and share it online with students around the world. Teachers may preview the following web site: www.tesan.vuurwerk.nl, a site that features student stories related to animals from around the world. There is an easy fill-in registration form (For teachers only) and a list of organizations that believe in the importance of saving animals from extinction. This is a school-based project that comes from the Netherlands and is slated to continue through the 2000-2001 academic year. Students can share their stories and view the stories that have been posted by others.

❻ Your community lives by the shores of a large lake. The lake contains many plant species and many types of fish. It is a popular spot for tourists who come to enjoy the natural environment and scenery. Tourist resorts dot the shoreline and tourism is an important part of the economic development in the area. Around the lake are many cottages inhabited by those who also appreciate the area. Many kinds of birds nest in the trees and bushes nearby, and the area is also famous for its waterfowl. In addition, your community is a natural habitat for beaver, otter, and muskrat. One day, a tanker full of oil runs aground and its cargo begins to leak into the lake. You are in charge of an environmental team to deal with the crisis. Make a detailed list of your plan of action in combination with your team. What resources do you need? How much will the rescue plan cost? How long will it take? Is it possible to spare the wildlife and plant life according to your plan? Lay out your plan with your team step by step. You may wish to use photos, video, a storyboard, web site, etc. to illustrate this plan. Present the plan to the rest of the class.



Lynx



Monarch Butterfly



Swift Fox

Final Project

One reason that plant and animal species are endangered has to do with development and the impact of sprawling, urban areas that take over natural habitats. If plants are removed from their natural environment, they may not survive. If animals are removed, then it is likely the same thing will happen because the intricate system of natural support on which they rely for survival is no longer there. You are part of a team that is planning to build a new city, with one exception. This new city will be The Environmentally Safe City and it is your task to ensure that this new development has zero impact on the plant and wildlife in the area. How will you make certain that this happens? Plan out your new city very carefully and at the end of this exercise, you should have a detailed description of the city and a set of laws that set the standard for its citizens. Decide what the city's source of power will be and how it will be generated. Choose a method of waste disposal and allow for industry to thrive. Provide homes for the citizens of this new city. Why will this city (give it a name) be attractive to people? How will it survive economically? How will it pay for services (decide what services will be provided)? Finally, prepare a manifesto for the new city and design the city from the ground up. Where is it situated? Is it near water or inland? Create a physical plan for the city and, if feasible, build a scale model. The model may consist of a digital design using a drawing or CAD-type program on computer, or may be created physically. Present your new city to the rest of the class and relate how the city will function and why it is a superior approach to urban planning that will not negatively affect the plant and wildlife in the area.

Resources

- a. McClelland & Stewart Encyclopedia
Plus on CD-ROM, 2000 version
- b. www.gov.ns.ca/natr/wildlife/conserva/14-02-2.htm
- c. www.ncpa.org
- d. reseau.chebucto.ns.ca/environment
- e. www.greenpeace.org
- f. www.magma.nationalgeographic.com/education/lesson_plans/k4-environ.cfm
- g. www.nationalgeographic.com
- h. www2.ucsc.edu/%7escpbrg
- i. www.tnc.org
- j. www.freshwaters.org

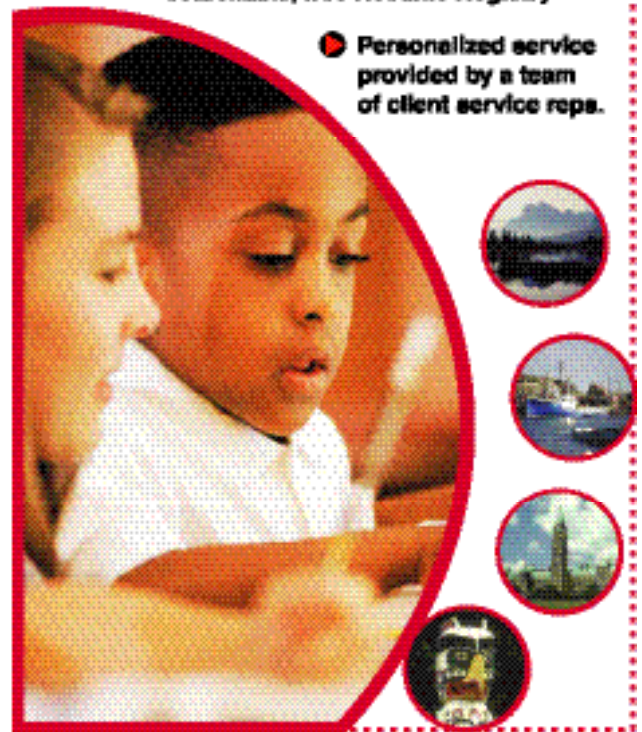


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- k. ericir.syr.edu/virtual/lessons/science/biological
- l. www.tenan.vuurwerk.nl
- m. www.biodiversity.environment.gov.au/threaten/education/kids.htm

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La ConnectAction des générations: un pont entre la salle de classe et la collectivité

par Kirstan Gagnon

« Son souvenir date de la seconde guerre mondiale. C'est un événement qui s'est passé en Algérie, à Notre-Dame d'Afrique. À cette époque, ma grand-mère montait avec son père sur la terrasse de la maison, où elle habitait, pour voir les bombardements des Allemands sur les positions françaises. Elle habitait sur une colline très près de la mer. Le port d'Alger, une des cibles de l'aviation allemande, était très proche... Baya et son père pouvaient facilement voir les bombardements... »

Ce court extrait de l'histoire de Baya Sifaoui, a été rédigé par un élève de l'école Séraphin-Marion à Gloucester (Ontario) dans le cadre d'un projet de la ConnectAction des générations (CAG) un programme qui réunit les jeunes et les aînés en utilisant la technologie. Cette histoire s'ajoute aux nombreuses autres que l'on retrouve dans le site Web de la CAG, (<http://connectaction-generations.ic.gc.ca>) et qui sont disponibles à tous grâce à Internet. Le programme permet aux jeunes de 10 à 18 ans d'interviewer des aînés pour découvrir des éléments intéressants touchant leurs expériences de vie. Ensuite, les jeunes créent des profils (texte et photos) à l'aide de gabarits déjà fournis sur le site Web CAG. Pour chaque projet que vous complétez comportant une page d'accueil, une introduction et au minimum 15 profils, vous obtenez un financement de 300 \$ en guise de remerciement. Grâce à ce partenariat, les jeunes et les aînés peuvent profiter d'un enrichissement historique et culturel tout en se sensibilisant à la technologie de l'information.

Martine Charbonneau, enseignante de la technologie à l'école Séraphin-Marion de Gloucester (Ontario), a lancé un site CAG au printemps dernier. Elle croit que l'enseignement axé sur les projets favorise la collaboration entre l'enseignant et ses élèves. « Les programmes comme La ConnectAction des générations aident les enseignants à ouvrir la classe sur le monde qui l'entoure. Je suis heureuse que mes élèves du programme enrichi de 7^e année aient eu l'occasion unique de rencontrer des aînés et de recueillir leurs propos. » Lors du petit-déjeuner du lancement, les aînés ont pu se servir d'Internet pour créer leur propre adresse de courriel afin de pouvoir continuer à communiquer avec les jeunes.

L'école Bridgeport à Glace Bay à Terre Neuve a conçu un projet sur la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. Les élèves de la 7^e à la 9^e année ont interviewé 25 vétérans de différentes filiales de la Légion royale canadienne. Les jeunes se sont servis des gabarits fournis par La ConnectAction des générations pour rédiger une série de récits sur leurs expériences de guerre. À l'occasion du lancement récent du site, l'école a invité les

vétérans ayant participé au projet, les enseignants et des représentants de la commission scolaire à se joindre aux élèves pour célébrer la création du site Web. Selon Reg Johnston, directeur de l'école, « La ConnectAction des générations nous a fourni une excellente occasion de rendre hommage aux hommes et aux femmes extraordinaires qui se sont sacrifiés durant la guerre. Le projet a uni l'école et la collectivité, et nous a permis de publier les récits sur Internet pour les rendre accessibles à tous les Canadiens. » Lors du lancement, un des vétérans a souligné que La ConnectAction des générations aidera à enseigner l'histoire aux enfants.

L'école Pavillon Wilbrod Dufour d'Alma (Québec) participe aussi au programme La ConnectAction des générations. Martha Richards, enseignante d'anglais dans le cadre du programme Langues et société, crée présentement un projet CAG qui met l'accent sur des thèmes tels que les voyages, les objets précieux et les grandes réalisations des aînés. Mme Richards croit que le projet permet aux élèves d'interagir avec la communauté tout en approfondissant leur qualité de langue tant à l'écrit qu'à l'oral.

Madame Richards explique que lorsque les aînés sont venus à l'école pour les entrevues, les élèves leur ont enseigné quelques mots d'espagnol et les ont invités à travailler à l'ordinateur afin de s'initier à Internet. Elle raconte : « Une des aînées de 75 ans ne voulait même pas s'arrêter pour prendre un café. Elle était fascinée par Internet et enchantée de pouvoir s'initier à la technologie. Le projet sera bientôt terminé et nous avons

hâte de pouvoir le présenter aux aînés et aux médias locaux. »

Les aînés canadiens ont des histoires importantes à raconter. Permettez à vos élèves d'acquérir des compétences et des connaissances dans le domaine de l'inforoute tout en communiquant avec une autre génération. La ConnectAction des générations est aussi un excellent moyen de participer à l'Année internationale des volontaires en 2001... Visitez les centres d'accueil et les organisations d'aînés de votre communauté!

Pour participer à un projet de La ConnectAction des générations, visitez le site [<http://connectaction-generations.ic.gc.ca>]. Pour obtenir plus d'information, communiquez avec l'équipe du programme CAG par courriel à l'adresse [connectaction.generations@ic.gc.ca] ou par téléphone au numéro sans frais 1-800-575-9200.

Kirstan Gagnon est agente de communications au programme La ConnectAction des générations.



Photo du Cape Breton Post.

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Kids Mensa

**Platforms: Windows 3.1/ Win 95/
Win 98, Macintosh 7.01 or later**

by Alison Girling

If you go to the Mensa Canada Society's home page, you will find (in the section that is open to non-Mensa members) a puzzle of the month:

How many birthdays does the average person have?

Hint: this is a very typical kind of Mensa puzzle.

The Mensa Society was formed as a club for highly intelligent people to meet, socialize, match wits, and travel together.

Kids Mensa is a CD-ROM that was created by the British branch of Mensa. It is a particularly nice piece of software because it is not didactic. Instead, kids are presented with a series of puzzles that are really pretty challenging. There are 100 Numbers puzzles with 10 levels of difficulty, 120 Mind Trails, 40 Secret Codes to crack, and a series of off-beat Fun Facts. The CD-ROM really is meant for kids who like a challenge and like to test themselves. It would help students sharpen their wits for the "Pythagorus Math" competition; it would also be a good program to promote critical thinking skills. If you are looking for computer programs for kids to play in pairs, this might be a good one to keep in mind. Children could approach the problems as a team and explain to each other how and why they found the answer. The math presented in Kids Mensa would be especially appropriate for children in grades 6 through 8.

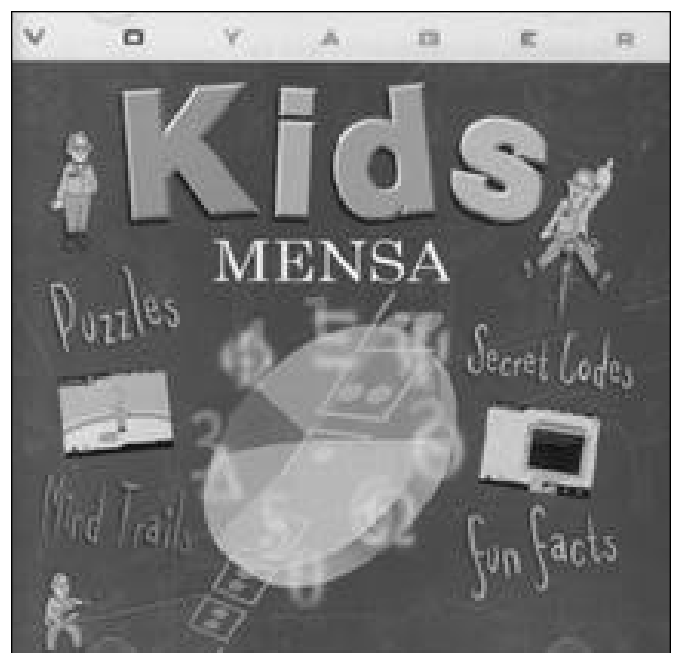
Kids Mensa has an easy-to-use interface. Players sign in, pick an activity and level of difficulty, and start straight in on a question. If children have selected an activity that they have already played, they will find that the answers are left on the screen from a previous game. The problems that were not correctly solved in the previous session will not have the answers awaiting them; so although this program does not have online tutorials, there are some built-

in revision opportunities. Each unit presents a range of quizzes. In the "Numbers" section there are puzzles that involve circles divided into sectors with numbers in each corner of each sector. The challenge is to figure out the missing number. There are tables with letter patterns, and pyramids with number patterns. I was impressed by the range of questions. In one example, the odd letter out could only be identified by the fact that its shape was round as opposed to straight! In Mind Maze, the challenge can be either mathematical or verbal. Generally, children are asked to identify the missing link of a set or to distinguish the odd item in a series. If the answer is a stumper, it is possible to ask for a hint. This is an excellent programme to help students prepare for multiple choice tests.

Certain kids thrive on trivia, pieces of erudite information. Those kids can treat themselves to Fun Facts. The final section is the Secret Codes, where players are presented with a fact situation and a coded message. There is a decoder book that can be accessed to make out a sentence.

Kids Mensa provides opportunities for teachers to provide supplementary mathematical enrichment to their students.

Alison Girling is a freelance writer and librarian based in Toronto. She may be contacted at agirling@library.utoronto.ca.



Reaching Out to Your Classroom



Following are descriptions of four special programs provided to your school by Classroom Connections. Classroom Connections is a non-profit organization whose mandate is to support publicly funded education. These programs are part of the Fall Resource Kit that is appearing in classrooms across the country. If you have not received your kit or are interested in finding out more information, please contact: Classroom Connections at (416) 462-1242 or 1-888-882-8865 or on to www.classroom-connections.com

THE GIFT OF LIFE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Are you looking for an exciting, new program to assist you in teaching students about the human body?

The *Gift of Life* Educational Program is a unique and innovative program designed to introduce grade 5 - 8 students to the topic of organ donation and the technology of transplantation. The program will assist teachers in implementing the expectations of the Life Sciences Strand in the grade 5 Science and Technology Curriculum, and may also be adapted for use in grade 6 - 8 Science and/or Health programs.

The development of this program was spearheaded by Nancy Lee Doige of the York Region District School Board after the sudden death of her 10-year old son Ryan in May, 1997. Although Ryan was only 10, he already had an understanding of the concept of organ donation and transplantation, and had recently campaigned to have family members and friends sign organ donor cards. Upon his death, Ryan's organs were donated for transplantation, and helped to save or improve the lives of more than seven people.

Did you know that transplantation is now considered the standard and highly successful treatment for individuals suffering from end-stage organ failure? And that Canada has one of the lowest donor rates in the western world at only 14 donors/million population? As a result, people are dying everyday while waiting for organs.

This program provides a unique opportunity to make a positive contribution to the lives of students, their families, and society. After all, today's students will be our future doctors, nurses, molecular biologists, researchers, lab technologists, organ recipients, and organ donors.

The *Gift of Life* Program provides current, engaging, and easy-to-use classroom ready resource materials that may be photocopied. The program includes:

- a) Resource book - contains comprehensive instructional strategies, quiz, facts and figures, information on the structure and function of major organs and reasons for organ failure, information on transplants, diagrams, a culminating activity, a unit test.
- b) Story booklet - a collection of stories based on the lives of real people, that introduce students to the subject of transplants.
- c) Video - "Inquiring Minds" on Organ Donation and Transplantation, developed by T.V. Ontario.
- d) Internet component (www.classroom-connections.com) - complete program, plus additional information, related fun activities, i.e. word scramble, crosswords, word search, and links to other web-sites such as Organ Donation Ontario (www.transplant-ontario.org) and Canadian Transplant Association (www.organ-donation-works.org). Teachers are encouraged to contact these organizations to request guest

speakers such as organ recipients to come and speak to the class.

Today's students are exposed to stories about transplants and organ donation through a wide variety of media and they are naturally curious about what they have seen and heard. Students are very interested in learning information that is current and relevant to their lives. The *Gift of Life* Program provides an opportunity for children to extend their learning to higher levels of understanding, including relating the Human Body Unit to real life situations that could potentially affect themselves or people they know. This program helps teachers to go beyond the traditional lessons on where, what, and how the organs work, to what happens if organs don't work.



Strangers Becoming Us

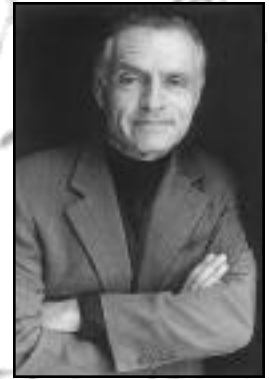
Every year, Canada admits 200,000 immigrants and refugees, most of whom eventually become Canadian citizens. On a per capita basis, our immigration rate is about twice as high as the United States' and much higher than that of many countries in Europe. Is the rate too high? Too low? Just about right? Why do we have immigration in the first place? How successful are immigrants at integrating into Canadian society? What helps them integrate, and what hinders them? These are questions all Canadians should be debating, and we should be doing it with the best information possible.

To help deal with these questions, Dr. Morton Beiser developed a series for the radio station CJRT called *Strangers Becoming Us*. Dr. Beiser is the David Crombie Professor of Cultural Pluralism and Health at the University of Toronto, and Director of the Toronto Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Settlement (CERIS). *Strangers Becoming Us*, broadcast in Ontario and in Alberta in 1998, was so well received that the project has been expanded to an in-class curriculum for grades four through eight, and it will soon be further developed for high school.

Released in November, 2000, the elementary school version of *Strangers Becoming Us* is a 10-part audio series developed by Dr. Beiser in collaboration with David Carroll, producer, and May Maskow, project coordinator. In collaboration with Classroom Connections, the course has been delivered to schools across the country. The series is packaged as a radio show with an accompanying teacher's guide designed to inform children about the challenges faced by immigrants and refugees when they come to Canada, and about the impact they have on the country. Information is woven into a fun format, like the

"Who Wants to be a Canadian?" game show, in which quizmaster Beiser "tests" prospective immigrants on their eligibility according to criteria set out in the point system encoded in the 1967 Immigration Legislation Act. The series tackles delicate issues in Canada's past, such as the notorious Asian head tax, and the anti-Semitic practices in effect during the Second World War. Immigrant and native-born children are given air time, and their questions about immigration and settlement are explored.

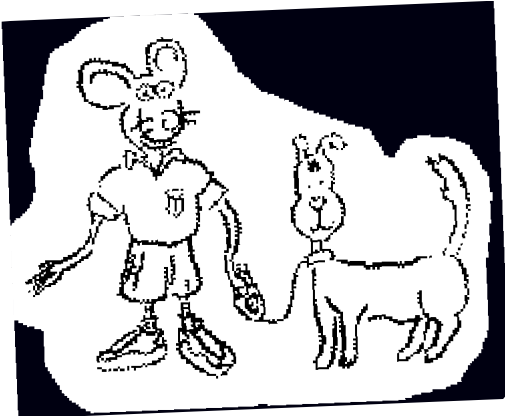
Strangers Becoming Us focuses on a different topic in each "show." Episode five, for example, looks at where immigrants live, while the ninth installment covers family life. Dr. Beiser points out that our current policies are shaping the world in which the children of today are growing up. For that reason, he says, "It's none too soon for children in school to learn why we have immigration, and why we choose to protect refugees. Furthermore, it won't be long before they'll be deciding our immigration policies."



Dr. Morton Beiser



Dogbite Prevention



- a) Identifying safe and unsafe situations and understanding the need for safety rules
- b) Learning where to seek assistance
- c) Identifying the rights and responsibilities of themselves and others
- d) Recognizing the consequences of events and actions
- e) Identifying how people in the community are responsible for ensuring safety

The Dogbite Prevention program, sponsored by Ralston Purina Inc., not only teaches children how to act safely around dogs, it also explains to children the reasons why dogs may growl, bite, or attack them. There are three resources included in the program - a pull-out story, a teacher's guide, and an online resource list.

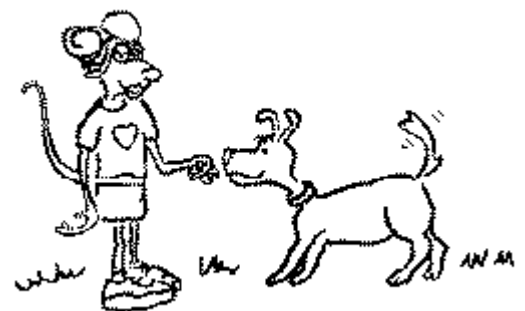
In the pull-out story, *Scratch the Dog Lends a Paw*, Scratch the dog goes for a walk in the park with his owner, Mo. Situations arise that involve Scratch and Mo with other dogs and children. These situations provide examples of what children should and should not do around dogs, what the most probable consequences of certain actions would be, and why. Scratch's point of view is given for children to sympathize and identify with. The idea conveyed to children is that dogs are not purposefully mean or intend to harm them, but are often scared, uncertain, seemingly threatened, or surprised by them. Children are encouraged to keep in mind certain precautions, such as staying away from dogs that are "strangers," not looking dogs directly in the eye, and letting a dog smell your hand underneath his chin before you pet him. This program stresses honest communication and understanding between animals and children, to promote safety for both.

The program follows these steps:

- 1) Read, or have students read, the pull-out story.
- 2) Choose some of the "Ideas for Group Discussion."
- 3) Have students do the exercises on Worksheets 1 & 2, which are included in the program booklet. The exercises include a word list, fill in the blanks, and true/false questions.
- 4) Depending on the students' grade level, choose an activity from "Worksheet Extensions."

Dog Bite Prevention is suited for the following curriculum:

- 1) Language
 - a) Listening to stories for information
 - b) Oral communication
 - c) Making connections between their own experiences and those of storybook characters
 - d) Predicting outcomes
- 2) Personal and Social Development



National Post Business Studies



The Business Studies Program, presented by the National Post, is a newspaper-based teaching guide for secondary school business studies curriculum. A 36-page, 3-hole punched, loose-leaf booklet includes structures and ideas, exercises, worksheets, workbook templates, discussion topics, and further suggestions for active business studies courses. The booklet is divided into six topic sections, which are subdivided into various topic activities. Each activity includes an assignment that requires students to research the newspaper.

Sections and Activities:

- 1) Personal Finance & Investment
 - Spotlight on Investment - Build and manage your own stock portfolio
 - The Search - Understand personal finance and investment terms
 - How to Read the Stock Tables - Assist investors in following stock activity
 - Stock Markets - The events and trends that influence investments
 - Hot Stock - What makes a company a hot stock pick
- 2) Entrepreneurship
 - The Entrepreneurial Gallery - The characteristics and qualities that entrepreneurs possess
 - Opportunity in Disguise - Problem? Opportunity? Get into the entrepreneurial spirit

- It's an eWorld - Profiles of emerging entrepreneurial ventures in the digital economy
- 3) Marketing & Advertising
 - Armchair Critic - Connect with the latest in advertising
 - Celebrity Marketing - Testimonial marketing and endorsements in the news
 - Controversy in Advertising - Recent and potentially controversial ads
 - Vital Signs - Demographic and psychographic trends in today's marketplace
 - 4) Management
 - Leaders & Managers - What does it take to succeed?
 - National Post Case Study - Analyze organizational life and problem solve
 - 5) The Working World
 - Job Scan - Jobs and careers in daily news
 - Employer's Wish List - What do employers want from employees?
 - Working World - Understand work trends and changes
 - 6) International Business & Economy
 - Bottom Line - Canada's position in the world
 - Foreign-Controlled Companies - Look at the many Canadian examples
 - Emerging Capitalism - Free trade and enterprise shaping global markets

- Entrepreneurship (Grade 11/12)
- Accounting (Grade 11/12)
- Marketing (Grade 11/12)
- Organizational Studies (Grade 12)
- International Business and Economics (Grade 11/12)
- Business Mathematics (Grade 11/12)
- Career Education (Grade 9-12)

Look for this program in your secondary school Classroom Connections kits. Ask your principal or librarian for further information, contact Classroom Connections at (416) 462-1242, or 1-888-882-8865, or visit www.classroomconnections.com. You may also contact the National Post, 1450 Don Mills Road, Don Mills, Ontario M3B 3R5, Tel: 416-383-2500, www.nationalpost.com, for additional information.



The National Post recommends that certain sections and activities of the program be directed to specific grades and courses.

Recommended Streams:

- General / Introduction to Business (Grade 9/10)



Bringing the REAL WORLD into the Classroom

by Carol martin



Art Lightstone, teaches business studies, accounting, economics, and law at Holy Trinity School in Richmond Hill, Ontario.

“ I got the bug! I got the fever!” No, this isn’t some rabid World Cup fan speaking. It’s Art Lightstone, a seemingly sober-sided teacher of business studies, talking about how his passion for computers evolved from a fascination with media to a full-fledged commitment to the use of information technology in his courses.

Lightstone is not alone. Teachers around the country are eagerly finding ways to bring technology into their classrooms. Not so long ago, when computers first crossed school thresholds, they were mainly used to teach the technology. Now, to no small extent, they have become an integral part of the learning environment. From British Columbia to Newfoundland, students are using satellite, the Internet, and all kinds of visual and audio media to increase their knowledge of subjects as diverse as science and poetry and to gain some “real-world” experience.

There are so many different applications of technology in Canadian classrooms that it would be nigh impossible to catalogue them. SchoolNet’s Network of Innovative Schools program (www.schoolnet.ca/nis-rei/e/) presents numerous examples of educational practices that incorporate information and communication technology into the curriculum. In Nova Scotia, for instance, students from Port Hastings Secondary School, with some help from the community, can learn broadcasting through a communication technology program that gives them three-week modules in Web, radio, TV news, and video editing, as well as hands-on experience. At Kwalikum Secondary School in British Columbia, senior technology students learn real-life experience by maintaining the school’s computers, developing applications, providing technical assistance to students, teachers, and members of the community, and teaching the area’s seniors population. One of the earliest schools to experiment with integrating information and communication technology into the classroom, L’École polyvalente Saint-Jérôme, has forged a good working relationship with private firms in the Ottawa area. In exchange for computer hardware and software, students develop company Web sites. Some 20 multimedia companies in the area hire co-op students from Saint-Jérôme, which enables students to experience a variety of technology-related occupations. Students at St. Paul’s Intermediate School in Gander, Newfoundland, have initiated a project to commemorate the many Allied airmen who are buried in Gander — designing a Web page, doing research, locating photographs, and conducting e-mail interviews with relatives and friends.

Obviously, not all teachers are enamoured with technology, some perhaps seeing it as a threat to their role in the classroom, others reluctant to take on what they see as more work. As Art Lightstone points out, “The time demands on teachers are already so great it’s difficult for teachers if they’re not naturally inclined to integrate IT into their courses.” Lightstone teaches business studies, accounting, economics, and law at Holy Trinity School in Richmond Hill, Ontario. He does all his “housekeeping work” outside the classroom. Term outlines, lesson plans, handouts, review sheets, and assignments are distributed to

students over the Net. “When we meet in the classroom,” he says, “ideally, there’s more teaching and learning and less busy work. I’m able to instruct students to work more efficiently as well.” Using the Internet, resources are easier to find and are more sophisticated. In law, for example, Lightstone can direct students to the exact law they’re studying and do the same depth of analysis as university students would. “We study the law, we study the cases, we study the judge’s ruling, and we can read reviews and critiques on the rulings. It’s just a world away from the old days of reading a textbook, reading a case that was five years old.”

Lightstone thinks that information technology has changed the nature of what teachers teach — it has brought the real world into the classroom. “It allows us to teach a more activity-based curriculum, as opposed to an information-based curriculum, having the students actually do activities similar to ones they would do in the real world if they were working.” He also points out that teachers do not want to feel they’re teaching obsolete information. “Five years ago, we accepted the idea that a recent resource was anything that was ten years old. Now we think of information as being old if it’s a day old or a week old.” Lightstone sees time management as another benefit of technology. While it initially took him a long time to set up his Web-based courses, his investment is now paying dividends.

Elizabeth Tumblin agrees with Art Lightstone that for some teachers, time is a barrier to using technology — that and the fact that they often see computers simply as a subject. She suggests that other inhibitors may be fear of change, reliance on tradition and, in the North, where she worked until recently, lack of technical support. Tumblin says that technology has affected what and how she teaches. “I can’t imagine teaching without it. It has totally changed my approach



CTF Resolutions

In a speech at the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (CTF) Annual General Meeting in July, president Marilies Rettig said, “Currently in Canada there is no educational policy or curriculum at the provincial, territorial, or national levels to help children develop critical thinking skills when dealing with on-line content. The educational approach towards the Internet varies from school to school and from school board to school board.” Rettig went on to say that a poll conducted for CTF shows that 83 percent of Canadians would like to see an overall policy on student access to the Internet, while 76 percent would like a study of the long-term effects on children of prolonged use of computers and new technology. As a consequence, CTF resolved to ask the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) to initiate a longitudinal study to determine the value of computer education in elementary schools and its prolonged impact on students.



Clarica Scholars Program

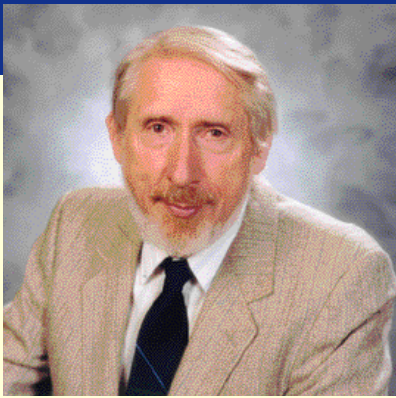
Clarica Life Insurance, in partnership with Acadia University and the University of Waterloo, is establishing the Clarica Scholars Program to enhance the integration of information technology in secondary schools across Canada and to better prepare students for opportunities and challenges in the workplace. In his announcement, senior vice president Hubert Saint-Onge said, “This is the first nation-wide program in Canada that will help teachers and students to work in new ways by bringing tools used in the workplace into the classroom.”

to education.” Last year, Tumblin was involved in a five-month project at Joamie School in Iqaluit. Her class of grade 4-5 students were linked over the Internet to students at Harry Camsell School in Hay River, NWT. Using Knowledge Forum® software, the students studied space exploration and astronomy together, creating and sharing a database. Knowledge Forum® allows students to create text, graphic, video, audio, and animation notes. They can read and build on each others’ notes, and any number of groups can carry on discussions and debates. Such is the nature of the software that even language was no obstacle — most of Tumblin’s students spoke Inuktitut, learning English for the first time in the grade 4-5 transition year, while the Hay River children were of mixed backgrounds and spoke English in class.

Tumblin used Knowledge Forum® in several other projects too. She and her students took part in the Canadian Community Atlas project, which had students of all ages in different communities build a Web site around their communities, which was then linked to the national Web site. Through Industry Canada, Tumblin’s students also did a video conference with students in Argentina, posting their questions and answers in the database for other classes to read.

Tumblin can’t praise Knowledge Forum® highly enough, and is especially impressed with its adaptability. “I’ve used it with top-ability students,” she states. “I’ve used it with special-needs students. I’ve used it in Inuktitut and in English, and I know it’s used in French and Spanish. They’re starting to use it in Japan.” With Knowledge Forum®, she says, students have a voice in their own learning. They get to see what everyone else is learning, and they see that what they say and do is valued. Furthermore, the teacher is part of the team. “There’s not someone from on high handing it to me and saying ‘here it is, use it.’ This is me, as a classroom teacher, using it with my students and our staff. We can put forward suggestions and they’re tested out, tried, and incorporated. That’s what is so unique.”

Researchers at the TeleLearning Network of Centres of Excellence (NCE), who are responsible for the development of Knowledge Forum®, have something more radical in mind than simply integrating technology into the existing curriculum.



Dr. Carl Bereiter, TeleLearning-NCE research theme leader and professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto.

Their work is based on the belief that we are moving away from a traditional, industrial society and towards a society organized around creating and working with knowledge. Mary Lamon, a Tele-

Learning-NCE researcher at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/

University of Toronto, says, "It is our theory that

to help children develop into individuals who can contribute fully to a knowledge-based society, we need to restructure school activities and discourse so that they resemble the workings of research groups or learning organizations — where real questions are being investigated and students are trying to contribute to progress on those questions."

Richard Reeve has been involved in the classroom research related to Knowledge Forum® from the beginning. He works with the nine classrooms in the two Toronto schools that are linked to it — the Institute of Child Study (the laboratory school for the project), and Rose Avenue Public School, a school with a very high ESL population. In the second year of a three-year, NCE-funded project, Reeve and the other researchers are interested in "symmetrical knowledge advance." They are also looking at what social issues may arise from the project, as well as opportunities for knowledge sharing that will come out of it.

Reeve regards science as a natural subject for this type of knowledge-building software. He describes a typical class in which students, rather than working on the computer, may choose to write in their lab books, do experiments, or go to the library. Questions they can't answer are entered into the database for the group to work on. Says Reeve, "When you open up the classroom to the world of ideas, you find the kids start to ask questions that aren't limited by the curriculum, so you need to be able to resource those questions." Students also build portfolios during the year. Portfolios have a section for learning, which allows students to see how their thinking about a topic has changed over the course of the year; a section for personal growth, where students talk about themselves as knowledge builders; and a section on pride, which contains "notes I'm proud of" from the database. Reeve says that the portfolios are a way students can participate in assessing how they're doing. "This knowledge-building approach has children very engaged because it works from their questions and what they don't understand about the world. It's a lot of work to resource the classroom, to let the kids be agents of their own learning, but it's exciting work because the teacher becomes a learner," he states.

At the TeleLearning-NCE's fifth annual conference in November, Marlene Scardamalia, leader of the research team investigating K-12 education, and students in grades 1 to 6

from the Institute of Child Study, presented the keynote speech. Scardamalia discussed how her research led to the development and testing of a new learning model that motivates students to take responsibility for their own learning advances. "The research," she said, "clearly shows that students succeed when allowed to pose their own questions, test ideas, explain their theories, and collaborate on solutions." The students used Knowledge Forum® to demonstrate their accomplishments.

Carl Bereiter of OISE/UT and one of the TeleLearning-NCE founders led a discussion on knowledge-based innovation in education and Canada's future in a knowledge economy. He argued that knowledge-based innovation is the key to success in the highly competitive global economy and that this will also prove true in education. The problem, he pointed out, is that the concept of knowledge-based innovation — innovation that grows out of the creation and use of new knowledge — is within our grasp, yet is virtually unknown in educational ministries. While not arguing in favour of federal control over education, Bereiter suggested that a re-examination of Canada's decentralized approach is needed if we wish to



Knowledge Forum®

Knowledge Forum® has been available for two years and is based on the CSILE (Computer Supported Intentional Learning) software. It was developed by TeleLearning-NCE researchers at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto. There are approximately 50 Canadian schools — in Newfoundland, Ontario, Québec, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut — and ten countries — Canada, the United States, Australia, Belgium, Finland, Greece, the Netherlands, China, Spain, and Japan — using Knowledge Forum®.

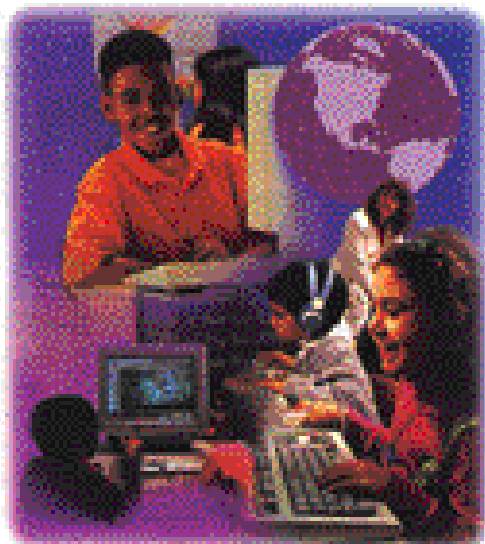
Teachers can find out more about Knowledge Forum® by visiting www.learn.motion.com/lim/kf/KFO.html

educate students to become high-level knowledge workers and remain competitive in a knowledge economy.

So, our education system seems to be facing quite a challenge. On the one hand, the federal, provincial, and territorial governments are pushing the use of technology in the classroom for all it's worth. On the other hand, according to Carl Bereiter, profiled as one of the "100 Great Thinkers on Education," a new kind of education is needed to meet the new realities of a global knowledge-based economy. He suggests that integrating learning technology into the typical school curriculum isn't a solution. In fact, he says there is growing evidence that the effect of new technologies is often to distract students from ideas and focus their attention on fact-gathering and media production.

Carol Martin is a freelance writer based in Toronto. She may be contacted by email at bailholm@idirect.com.

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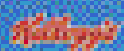
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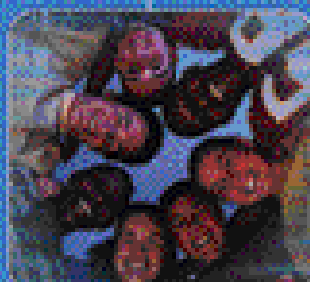
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McClelland & Stewart

L'encyclopédie canadienne – Édition bilingue 2000

par Lyse Ward

Dans le Guide de l'utilisateur de la nouvelle édition « bilingue » de l'Encyclopédie canadienne, on peut lire : « L'interface, le contenu canadien, une chronologie d'événements historiques complète, le multimédia et le jeu-questionnaire interactif existent tous en français. » Ce qui est vrai. Mais l'acheteur francophone sera déçu de découvrir que plusieurs autres parties du produit, qui lui est présenté comme étant bilingue, sont disponibles en anglais seulement ou ont été traduites de façon inacceptable.

L'Encyclopédie se présente sous forme de coffret comprenant quatre CD-ROM. Le quatrième disque n'est toutefois pas nécessaire à l'installation. Il s'intitule *Lives & Times of the Prime Ministers* et n'est disponible qu'en anglais. Encyclopédie bilingue, certes, mais non pas à parts égales.

L'installation de l'encyclopédie est relativement rapide, selon le genre d'installation choisie. Par exemple, en installant toute l'encyclopédie sur le disque dur, on peut la consulter sans avoir besoin d'insérer les divers disques dans le lecteur. Afin de permettre une interactivité aussi efficace que possible, l'installation des dernières versions de QuickTime et de RealPlayer fait partie du processus initial d'installation. Les instructions sont simples mais parfois données dans un français qui laisse à désirer : « SVP insérer le disc 1 et depresser OK. »

Après une présentation visuelle bilingue, l'écran s'arrête sur une image qui donne accès aux deux grands volets de l'encyclopédie. Cliquer sur TROUVER amène l'utilisateur dans l'encyclopédie proprement dite, tandis que le cercle où se trouve le mot EXPLORER lui donne accès à des activités interactives.

La première partie s'avère intéressante et bien écrite en français. De

nombreux liens hypertextes amènent rapidement le lecteur aux rubriques qui l'intéressent. En outre, les images, les photos et les graphiques ajoutent au plaisir de l'utilisateur. L'encyclopédie proprement dite est donc bel et bien bilingue. Les choses se gâtent lorsque l'utilisateur choisit le volet EXPLORER.

En cliquant sur le bouton EXPLORER, l'écran s'ouvre sur une fenêtre à plusieurs boutons. Selon le Guide de l'utilisateur, les « Interactivités sont des présentations multimédias sur des sujets canadiens ». Mais hélas, elles n'existent qu'en anglais seulement. Cliquer sur un autre bouton, celui de la visite guidée de l'encyclopédie par l'entremise d'Internet, s'avère tout aussi décevant : « pas prêt, is being translated », peut-on lire. Et bien sûr, le bouton sur les premiers ministres canadiens nécessite le quatrième disque qui n'existe qu'en anglais.

L'utilisateur se décide donc à cliquer le bouton du jeu questionnaire pour se faire accueillir par le « Maître de jeux James Marsh », un bonhomme qui l'invite en français... avec un petit accent anglais à choisir le domaine qui l'intéresse, puis de répondre aux questions. Parmi les domaines se trouve « La histoire ». Erreur de frappe? Non. La traduction du jeu interactif est pitoyable. Les fautes d'orthographe, de genre, d'accord, etc., sont nombreuses, la majuscule apparaît à tort et à travers, les articles manquent. Les exemples suivants en attestent : « Le premier champion mondiale du Canada. », « Le Grive fauve », « Préparez-vous pour question #1. », « Ces oiseaux... s'accouplent sous les hutes latitudes ».

Pis encore, le jeu s'avère une traduction de l'anglais et non une adaptation française portant sur des sujets que connaissent les francophones, comme la littérature québécoise ou française, par exemple. Et quoique les questions

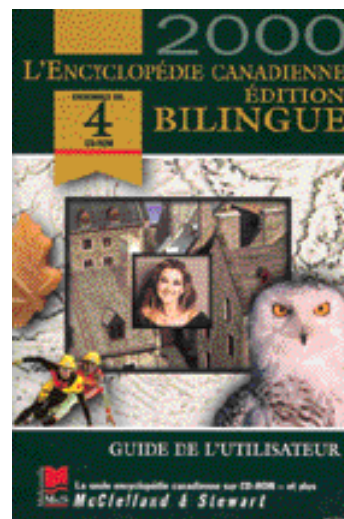
sur les œuvres de Margaret Atwood soient certes intéressantes et pourraient ajouter à la culture de l'utilisateur francophone, comment pourrait-il répondre à la question « Quelle est l'origine de la phrase "Dog days of summer"? »

Tout le volet EXPLORER s'avère une insulte envers l'utilisateur francophone. On lui parle français avec un accent anglais, on lui pose des questions sur la langue anglaise, on écrit sa langue n'importe comment, et on lui offre de s'adonner à des activités en anglais parce qu'on n'a pas eu le temps ou la politesse de les traduire, encore moins de les adapter.

Le jeu questionnaire se qualifie d'« irrévérencieux ». En fait, c'est tout le volet EXPLORER qui s'avère un manque de respect total envers la population francophone. Bien qu'elle comporte des éléments en français, l'édition bilingue de l'encyclopédie canadienne n'est pas bilingue dans le sens qu'on l'entend habituellement au Canada. Son utilisation complète nécessite la connaissance de l'anglais. La solution? Un dernier clic sur « Cliquez de Quitter ».

La maison d'édition McClelland & Stewart aurait mieux fait d'attendre avant de lancer sa version « bilingue » de l'encyclopédie. Il est évident qu'elle était pressée par le temps, par la nécessité de faire sortir la version 2000 avant la fin de l'année. Dommage!

Lyse Ward, traductrice agréée, est pigiste en affectation spéciale au TEACH.



Web Stuff

by marjan glavac



By Marjan Glavac

A to Z Teacher Stuff

<http://atozteacherstuff.com/>

Created by a teacher, this one-stop resource provides quick and easy access to thousands of online teaching resources. Find original lesson plans for grades Pre-K through 12, thematic units and theme resources, teacher tips, educational articles, children's literature activities, top educational sites, and teaching materials. Although the site is extensive, it has a search feature to help you find what you need. Educators can also interact with others on the message boards, or join a collaborative project. The theme section is attractively displayed in chart form. A search engine is available to search over 3,500 lesson plans. The lesson section contains over 175 original lessons submitted by teachers that can be browsed by grade level, new plans, all lesson plans, or by lesson plan contributors. You can also search lessons by subject area, which is divided into grade categories. Another section that teachers would want to check out is the teaching section, which features "A to Z Teacher Tips" and "Educational Sites for Teachers." A to Z Teacher Stuff is a one-stop resource area where teachers can productively spend their time.

Classroom Connect

<http://www.classroom.com>

Pieces of paper notes, scribbled at a kitchen table in Pennsylvania, eventually became the Classroom Connect Newsletter. The web companion to that newsletter is Classroom Connect. The two main areas of the site are Classroom Today and Connected Teacher. Classroom Today

provides Internet links to the curriculum through student activities such as Think Facts, Kids' Quiz, Survey Says, and Connections. The "topics" section provides topics to match curriculum. An email newsletter lets you find out more about Classroom Today topics every month. There is also a "teachers' lounge," with planning tools, a teaching guide, and tips and ideas on measuring student progress. Connected Teacher links teachers to the latest in state-by-state discussions on education, as well as the latest ideas from fellow educators and world-class keynoters at Connected Classroom Conferences. You can also read the presenters' handouts and participate in discussions from past conferences. An invaluable addition to any teacher's professional development is Connected University, which offers courses. Classroom Connect offers a free, 30-day trial subscription to Connected University. The scribbled notes at the kitchen table have journeyed far and wide.

Kentucky Migrant Technology Project

<http://www.migrant.org/>

Here is an innovative and constructive use of computer technology. This site is meant to help highly mobile migrant students, grades 6-12, overcome the challenges of low academic achievement and the lack of a continuous education. However, this site does not restrict itself to migrant students alone. In keeping with the original philosophy of sharing and caring on the Internet, the courses are free to use and available to all students, parents, and teachers. The detailed and useful resources cover subject matter across the core curriculum areas of math, English, science, social studies, arts and humanities, and practical living. The uses of these online courses include: direct online learning for students (for enrichment or remediation), curriculum supplements for in-class and after-school programs, alternative school curriculum, and models to help teachers prepare for their classes. The courses are organized similarly to regular school courses. They are taught with daily lessons and activities that are followed by online quizzes and exams. The curriculum correlates with ten sets of state core-content standards or academic expectations. All the resources needed to take the courses can be found online. This is a must site for anyone who wants to help students that have fallen through the cracks or need help in education

Marjan Glavac is the author of The Busy Educator's Guide To The World Wide Web, revised and updated 2nd Edition, London, Ontario, Canada. 200 pages. ISBN 0-9683310-1-7. Marjan Galavac may be contacted at marjan@glavac.com or mglavac@wwdc.com.

Learning Can Be a Virtual Experience at RB Russell Vocational School

By Jeremy Simon
Editorial Sponsorship

A dented, scratched-up van limps into the service bay. The man behind the wheel slides out of the van and approaches to find out what it would take to repair it and get it back on the road quickly. This is just one of the many learning scenarios students at R.B. Russell High School in Winnipeg, Manitoba face as part of their vocational training.

Founded 33 years ago, R.B. Russell is located in the inner city section of Winnipeg, serving a large aboriginal community. The school has over 630 registered students, although throughout the year, almost 1,000 students that will attend. The student population ranges in age from fourteen years old to fifty-seven.

The local school division schedules some community classes during the evening and R.B. Russell uses the Block System for its curriculum, rotating academic and vocational programs every three weeks. For the vocational programs, students can choose from a range of programs including Power Mechanics, Graphic Arts, Hairstyling, Advertising Art, Autobody, Landscaping, Metals, and Health Care. One of the key factors in the successful implementation of these programs is the use of technology.

When the school's Department Head of Technology, Jay Willman, arrived at the school eight years ago, he was hired to integrate technology across the curriculum in every academic and vocational program rather than making it a stand-alone subject. Working with technology teacher assistant David Berg, the two worked at turning their learning area, the TEKLAB, into an all-access resource model. This is a model that relies heavily on collaboration and producing multimedia content for each class.

"With less than two per cent of the students attending our school having a computer at home, the best approach to creating a solid understanding and comfort in using technology is to make it

accessible to each staff member and student in every school program," said Willman. "Technology is particularly vital to our school population, given that we have over 85% aboriginal students; we feel it is important to offer multimedia instructional strategies to students, respecting their skills in visual and oral-based learning."

Students at the school have access to over 250 PC and Macintosh computers, supported by 3 different computer labs. The TEKLAB uses an iBook and iMac running QuickTime digital video and QuickTime VR applications to create multimedia instructional content. Each vocational program can use the digital content when recruiting students or to help students during the orientation stage of their education when they are deciding which program to select. Each program has a QuickTime VR Challenge,



R.B. Russell vocational program (Graphic Art).

which tests the students' knowledge and helps them more easily develop their understanding and skills in applying a specific vocational tool or process in an employment setting. An example of a QuickTime VR Challenge includes the Autobody VR Challenge as mentioned above. In fact, every vocational shop at R.B. Russell has a VR Challenge on their web page.

"A major focus of our school is to help our students enter the workforce more easily," said Willman. "We have forged strong partnerships with a number of local businesses in our community and

we integrate our curriculum and students' skill development tightly with the needs of potential employers."

Technology is also used to forge links with the community. The school will host Pow Wows and will use an iBook running off an Airport wireless network, along with a digital camera, to record and document the aboriginal rituals enacted by the participants at the meeting. These cultural records and experiences are then digitized and placed on the school's web site, thereby building stronger community relationships through technology. For his contribution and leadership in developing the school's innovative learning program, Jay Willman was awarded the National Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence.

As a result of its many innovative approaches to learning, the school was also awarded membership in the Network of Innovative Schools organization, which ties together and supports a number of schools across the country that take a creative approach to excellence in education. R.B. Russell's clear focus on employability, technology, culturally sensitive curriculum, and strong



R.B. Russell vocational program (power mechanics).

community links has made the school a model for other schools serving economically challenged communities across Canada.

To find out more about the innovative vocational programs at R.B. Russell and how much it's going to cost to fix that dented van, you can visit the school's web site at <http://rbrussell.org>.

Jeremy Simon is a freelance writer based in Toronto.

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