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Cover: (clockwise from top left): First Nations War Memorial, Peacekeeping Monument, National War Memorial, Korean War Monument, the city of Ottawa’s Boer War Memorial.
A reason to remember
Editorial by Derrick Grose

Each morning as I enter the library at Lisgar Collegiate Institute in Ottawa, I walk beneath a wooden arch inscribed “14-18” on one side and “39-45” on the other. On the adjacent walls of the foyer, hundreds of small name plaques commemorate the students and staff who served and who gave their lives in conflicts dating back to the Boer War. This reminds me that history is the story of individuals, and that one of my jobs as a teacher-librarian is to help students connect with the past. The task is made easier when the high school’s year books document the world wars from the point of view of high school students who were graduating into a world at war. However, even in a school where one is surrounded by history, not all of its dimensions are evident.

This issue of School Libraries in Canada had its genesis very early this year. Lisgar's library received, as a gift, a book, Tjideng Reunion: A Memoir of World War II on Java (ISBN 978-1425151591). The author, Boudewijn van Oort, is a member of the alumni who graduated in 1957.

Described in his high school's 1957 yearbook as “a favourite around Lisgar” with a “fascinating South African accent” Boudy van Oort concealed the fears and anxieties that grew out of his experiences growing up in Java under Japanese occupation during World War II.
The alumni association of our school has started digitizing our yearbooks; I thought Mr. van Oort might be interested in seeing them, so I began to correspond with him by email. In the exchanges that followed he shared the following reflections:

When the war ended all the adults around me were looking forward to resuming their prewar life - to what they saw as "normal." I, on the other hand, knew no other life than camp life with its intense emphasis on physical survival, coping with hunger, disease, frequent encounters with death and violence at the hands of the guards. That, for me, was normal life. So, when I emerged from the camp, I (and many children my age) had a culture shock--some of it was amazing to me, but some was also troubling.

That first year after the war made such an impression on me that I can, to this day, almost relive it day by day. But there also was trauma from the unfamiliar challenges I suddenly faced, and this was suppressed. Let me give you a simple example: I had never owned a ball and therefore had not learned to throw or catch one. In sports crazy South Africa that was just one of the difficulties I faced.

The adults did not want to talk about the war years and the children did not dare discuss their differences from their friends. I grew up as a pretty weird kid, with anxieties and fears artfully hidden. Doing well academically (a superficial achievement when it comes down to it) masked these issues from adult view.

It struck me that Mr. van Oort’s experiences are similar to those of many people who have been, in one way or another, the victims of war. I appreciated his reminder that many ordinary looking people whom we encounter every day have extraordinary stories that they may or may not have told. Students can find, in school libraries, his story, or others like it, reporting wartime experiences that test the limits of human imagination.

School libraries have an important role in helping the decision makers of the future to understand the price--often partially hidden--that humanity pays for war. This issue of School Libraries in Canada is intended to assist in fulfilling that role by documenting sources of content and tools that can be used, with learners and by learners, to access and assimilate that content, and to appreciate the human dimensions of war.

This issue is dedicated to those who have defended Canada in times of war and who have served this country in promoting peace. It is also dedicated to the victims of war whose stories need to be heard. In highlighting the courage, suffering and sacrifice brought forth by war, this issue aims to promote awareness, healing and peace.
Veterans Affairs Canada offers educators a wide selection of free, bilingual resources about Remembrance and Canada’s military history, from the South African War to today.

You can make use of our resources in multiple formats. If high-quality printed copies are what you need, you can request many of our materials using our easy-to-use on-line ordering system (there are absolutely no purchase costs and no shipping charges). And if you are looking for instant access to our materials in your library, our Veterans Affairs Canada Web site is the place to go.

Let’s explore some of the resources that you might find useful to engage students using the school library. These can also be shared with other teachers in your school who come to you for help in preparing a lesson plan about Canadian military history or for planning your school’s Veterans’ Week activities every November.

Veterans Affairs Canada Historical Resources

‘Remembrance’ is an important part of being a well-informed Canadian. How can we truly understand the country we have today without a knowledge of the sacrifices and achievements that have been made by our Veterans and current Canadian Forces members to protect the peace and freedom we enjoy?

“For a country that has an international reputation for peace, Canada has taken part in many wars and conflicts.”

That is where our wide selection of historical resources can come in. For a country that has an international reputation for peace, Canada has taken part in many wars and conflicts. Knowing what Canada did - and why - is important. Veterans Affairs Canada has a wide selection of historical publications like public information sheets and historical booklets, covering many chapters of our military heritage from the First World War to modern-day Canadian Forces efforts. Our two- and three-page public information sheets are ideal for providing a concise overview of a subject, helpful to teachers looking to give their students some historical background in an easy-to-digest manner. Our longer historical booklets (some of which are more than
50 pages in length) offer more in-depth information on a subject, making them very useful for research projects or other situations where a more detailed historical account is required.

Check out the ‘History’ portion of our Web site to explore some of our resources for yourself. Most of our materials are available in HTML and downloadable PDF formats, and we offer our streaming video resources in Flash, Windows Media and Quicktime formats.

You can also order high-quality printed versions of many of our materials for your library using our on-line educational products ordering system.

Veterans Affairs Canada Learning Materials

Veterans Affairs Canada also produces high-quality resources created specifically for educators. Our comprehensive multimedia learning kits offer videos, in-depth historical information, lesson plans and a variety of other resources like posters, music CDs, postcards and information sheets to give educators the tools with which to engage their students. We currently offer kits about the First World War, the Second World War and the Korean War.

We also offer on-line learning modules for you and your school focussing on specific military events, such as D-Day and the Battle of Normandy, the Italian Campaign, and the Battle of the Atlantic.

And that is not all. ‘Heroes and Poppies - an Introduction to Remembrance,’ the ‘60th Anniversary of the End of the Second World War Teacher’s Guide’ and the ‘50 Ways to Remember’ information sheet offer a wealth of activities that educators can use as starting points to incorporate Remembrance into their teaching, while the ‘Candlelight Tribute Ceremony’ information sheet has instructions for organizing a ‘candlelight tribute’ that a school could conduct to show that we remember Canadians who have given their lives in service.
Veterans’ Week Materials

Each year, Veterans Affairs Canada distributes hundreds of thousands of copies of our Veterans’ Week youth newspapers across Canada. *Tales of Animals in War* is aimed at youth aged 5 to 11 and introduces concepts of remembrance to a young audience in a gentle manner using the six Remembrance Clubhouse animal characters: Simone the Cat, Ellie the Elephant, Bonfire Jr. the horse, Gandy the dog, Squeaker the pigeon and Win the bear. These bilingual colour newspapers come in sets of 30, ideal for use in a classroom setting or for distribution in a school library.

The *Canada Remembers Times* is aimed at youth aged 12 to 18 and explores interesting chapters from Canada’s military heritage, from the First World War to today. This year’s new edition features stories about First World War flying aces, D-Day and the Battle of Normandy, the Italian Campaign, the Korean War, Canadians in Afghanistan, the contributions of women, Aboriginal-Canadians and visible minorities in uniform, and much more. This bilingual colour newspaper also comes in sets of 30.

“... First World War flying aces, D-Day and the Battle of Normandy, the Italian Campaign, the Korean War, Canadians in Afghanistan, the contributions of women, Aboriginal-Canadians and visible minorities in uniform, and much more. . .”

*Postcards for Peace* is a learning activity that allows youth to send postcards expressing their personal thanks to those who have served in the cause of peace and freedom over the years. A class pack includes 30 postcards and an instruction sheet with information on how to send the postcards to veterans or current members of the Canadian Forces serving overseas.

We also offer colourful Veterans’ Week posters for use in your library, available in 8.5” x 11” and 18” x 24” sizes. Our Veterans’ Week bookmarks are very popular as well for use in school libraries in the fall.
To request these free materials, you can call Veterans Affairs Canada toll free at 1-877-604-8469 or use our convenient on-line Veterans’ Week ordering system. This easy-to-use system allows you to make your order instantaneously. If you order by the second week of October, you will be assured of receiving your materials prior to Veterans’ Week, November 5 to 11.

Other Veterans Affairs Canada On-line Resources

2009 marks the 65th anniversaries of the Second World War’s Italian Campaign, and of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy. Veterans Affairs Canada has two dynamic Web features with a wealth of information on these significant events. Students in your library can watch the D-Day and the Battle of Normandy vignette, and the Italian Campaign vignette to hear powerful first-hand accounts from Canadian Veterans who were actually there. We offer a number of other interesting Web features as well, exploring subjects like the 90th anniversary of the end of the First World War, the 55th anniversary of the Korean War armistice, and the Canadian Forces - in the service of peace.

We have many other on-line resources, as well. For example, ‘Experience Vimy’ allows users to visit the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France without leaving their chairs. Students can use their computer mouse to swoop up and down and zoom in and out to view the memorial from many different angles. You can also read the names of the 11,285 Canadians who died in France during the First World War and who have no known grave which are inscribed on the base of the monument.

‘Heroes Remember’ is a database of videotaped interviews with Canadian veterans, containing approximately 3,000 English clips and more than 800 French clips. With this tool, students can search for first-hand accounts from men and women who served in the navy, army, air force, merchant navy, or on the home front; stories related to significant chapters in our country’s military heritage; and even find interviews with Veterans from their own communities, regions or provinces. There are a variety of interesting components associated with this resource, such as a section focussing on the contributions of Chinese-Canadians during the Second World War and ‘Profile: Spitfire’, an interactive multimedia module that allows students to learn what it was like to be a pilot in the famous Spitfire fighter plane during the Second World War.

Veterans Affairs Canada’s array of educational and informational resources can help you meet your provincial curriculum goals while fostering students’ understanding of the sacrifices and achievements of those who have served in the cause of peace and freedom. Visit the ‘Youth & Educators’ section of the Veterans Affairs Canada Web site today and see what you may have been missing.
Des ressources pédagogiques d’Anciens Combattants Canada pour votre bibliothèque scolaire

Adélard Comeau
Gestionnaire, Direction du contenu du site Web et apprentissage
Direction générale du Canada se souvient

Anciens Combattants Canada offre aux enseignants une vaste sélection de ressources bilingues gratuites sur le Souvenir et l’histoire militaire du Canada, de la Guerre d’Afrique du Sud à aujourd’hui.

Vous pouvez utiliser nos ressources, offertes dans divers formats. Si vous avez besoin de copies imprimées de haute qualité, vous pouvez demander bon nombre de nos documents en utilisant notre système de commande en direct convivial (il n’y a aucun coût d’achat ni frais d’envoi). Et si vous voulez avoir un accès instantané à nos publications à partir de votre bibliothèque, consultez notre site Web Anciens Combattants Canada.

Examinons à présent, en utilisant la bibliothèque scolaire, quelques-unes des ressources qui pourraient être utiles afin d’impliquer les élèves. Ces ressources peuvent également être partagées avec d’autres enseignants de votre école qui s’adressent à vous pour de l’aide dans la préparation d’un plan de leçon sur l’histoire militaire du Canada ou dans la planification des activités de votre école pour la Semaine des anciens combattants en novembre.

Ressources historiques d’Anciens combattants Canada

Pour être des citoyens bien informés, les Canadiens et les Canadiennes doivent se consacrer au Souvenir. Comment pouvons-nous vraiment comprendre le pays dans lequel nous vivons aujourd’hui sans une connaissance des sacrifices et des réalisations que nos anciens combattants et les membres actuels des Forces canadiennes ont accomplis pour défendre la paix et la liberté dont nous jouissions aujourd’hui?

C’est là où notre vaste sélection de ressources historiques prend toute son importance. Pour un pays qui jouit d’une réputation internationale en matière de paix, le Canada a participé à de nombreuses guerres et à de nombreux conflits. Il est donc important de savoir ce que le Canada a fait – et pourquoi. Anciens Combattants Canada dispose d’une vaste sélection de publications, telles que les feuillets d’information et les bulletins historiques, couvrant de nombreux chapitres de notre
patrimoine militaire, depuis la Première Guerre mondiale jusqu’aux interventions des Forces canadiennes actuelles. Nos feuillets d’information publique, de deux et de trois pages, sont un excellent moyen de fournir un aperçu sommaire du sujet. Ils sont également utiles aux enseignants qui aimereraient fournir à leurs élèves des faits historiques présentés d’une manière facile à comprendre. Nos bulletins historiques plus longs (certains comptent plus de 50 pages) offrent des renseignements plus approfondis sur le sujet, ce qui les rend très utiles pour des projets de recherche ou autres études exigeant des renseignements historiques plus détaillés.

Pour explorer certaines de nos ressources, veuillez consulter la section Histoire de notre site Web. La plupart de nos documents sont disponibles en format HTML et peuvent être téléchargés en format PDF. Nos ressources vidéo en continu sont offerts en formats Flash, Windows Media et QuickTime.

Vous pouvez également commander des versions imprimées de haute qualité de bon nombre de nos documents en utilisant notre système de commande en ligne.

**Matériel d’apprentissage d’Anciens Combattants Canada**

Anciens Combattants Canada produit également des ressources de haute qualité spécialement destinées aux enseignants. Nos trousse complètes de produits pédagogiques multimédias, qui contiennent des vidéos, des données historiques approfondies, des plans de leçon et diverses autres ressources, notamment des affiches, des disques compacts de musique, des cartes postales et des feuillets d’information, offrent aux enseignants les outils nécessaires pour susciter la participation de leurs élèves. Nous offrons actuellement des trousse portant sur la Première Guerre mondiale, la Seconde Guerre mondiale et la guerre de Corée.

Pour vous et votre école, nous offrons également des modules d'apprentissage en ligne portant sur des évènements militaires particuliers, tels que le jour J et la bataille de Normandie, la campagne d’Italie et la bataille de l’Atlantique.

Et ce n’est pas tout! « Héros et coquelicots – Une introduction au Souvenir », le « Guide de l’enseignant - 60e anniversaire de la fin de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale » et le feuillet d’information « 50 façons de se souvenir » offrent une gamme d’activités pouvant servir de point de départ aux enseignants désireux d’intégrer le Souvenir dans leur enseignement, tandis que le feuillet d'information « Cérémonie à la chandelle » contient des instructions sur l’organisation d’une cérémonie à la chandelle qu’une école pourrait organiser afin de montrer que nous n’avons pas oublié les Canadiens qui ont perdu leur vie au service de leur pays.
Matériel didactique de la Semaine des anciens combattants

Chaque année, Anciens Combattants Canada distribue des centaines de milliers de journaux conçus pour les jeunes dans le cadre de la Semaine des anciens combattants. Destiné aux jeunes de 5 à 11 ans, Histoires d’animaux à la guerre initie les jeunes lecteurs aux concepts du souvenir, par la manière non menaçante, en ayant recours aux six personnages animaux du Club du Souvenir : Simone la chatte, Ellie l’éléphant, Bonfire Jr. le cheval, Gandy le chien, Siffleur le pigeon et Win l’ours. Ces journaux bilingues en couleur sont offerts en trousses de classes de 30 exemplaires, ce qui convient parfaitement à l’utilisation dans une salle de classe ou à la distribution dans une bibliothèque scolaire.

Le journal Le Canada se souvient s’adresse aux jeunes de 12 à 18 ans. Il examine des chapitres intéressants du patrimoine militaire du Canada, de la Première Guerre mondiale à nos jours. La nouvelle édition de cette année présente des articles sur les célèbres aviateurs de la Première Guerre mondiale, le jour J et la bataille de Normandie, la campagne d’Italie, la guerre de Corée, les Canadiens en Afghanistan, les contributions des femmes, les Canadiens autochtones et les minorités visibles en uniforme et plus! Ce journal bilingue en couleur est également offert en trousses de classe de 30 exemplaires.

Cartes postales pour la paix est une activité d’apprentissage qui permet aux jeunes d’envoyer des cartes postales afin d’exprimer leurs remerciements personnels aux personnes qui ont servi la cause de la paix et de la liberté au fil des années. Une trousse de classe comprend 30 cartes postales et un feuillet d’instructions sur la façon d’envoyer les cartes postales aux anciens combattants ou aux membres actuels des Forces canadiennes servant à l’étranger.

Nous offrons également des affiches de la Semaine des anciens combattants en couleur que vous pouvez installer dans votre bibliothèque. Ces affiches sont disponibles dans les dimensions de 8,5 po x 11 po et de 18 po x 24 po. Nos signets de la Semaine des anciens combattants sont également très demandés à l’automne dans les bibliothèques scolaires.
Pour commander ce matériel gratuit, vous pouvez téléphoner à Anciens Combattants Canada au numéro sans frais 1-877-604-8469 ou utiliser notre Système de commande de la Semaine des anciens combattants. Ce système convivial vous permet de passer vos commandes instantanément. Si vous commandez avant la deuxième semaine d’octobre, vous allez certainement recevoir votre matériel avant la Semaine des anciens combattants, du 5 au 11 novembre.

**Autres ressources en ligne d’Anciens Combattants Canada**


Des héros se racontent est une base de données d’entrevues sur vidéo avec des anciens combattants canadiens, contenant près de 3 000 clips en anglais et plus de 800 clips en français. Grâce à cet outil, les élèves peuvent obtenir des témoignages de première main d’hommes et de femmes qui ont servi dans la Marine, dans l’Armée de terre, dans la Force aérienne, dans la marine marchande ou sur le front intérieur; des récits portant sur des chapitres importants du patrimoine militaire de notre pays et même des entrevues réalisées avec des anciens combattants dans leur propre communauté, régions ou provinces. Cette ressource comporte diverses rubriques intéressantes, notamment une section portant sur les contributions des Sino-Canadiens durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale, et Profil Spitfire, un module multimédia interactif qui permet aux élèves de comprendre ce que signifiait être pilote à bord du célèbre chasseur Spitfire durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale.

La gamme des ressources pédagogiques d’Anciens Combattants Canada peut vous aider à atteindre les objectifs des programmes d’études provinciaux tout en aidant les élèves à mieux comprendre les sacrifices et les réalisations de ceux et celles qui ont servi la cause de la paix et de la liberté. Consultez maintenant la section « Les jeunes et les éducateurs » du site Web d’Anciens Combattants Canada et découvrez la richesse de nos ressources!
Guardians of Remembrance

by R.J. (Bob) Butt
Director Communications
The Royal Canadian Legion

First Place Winner
Colour Poster Contest

Sam Loewen
Lethbridge Collegiate Institute,
Lethbridge, Alberta –
General Stewart Branch #4

The Royal Canadian Legion and its members are the “Guardians of Remembrance” in Canada. In this role, the Legion provides a number of resources that people can access when planning commemorations.

The most important resource –the veteran– is located at the branch.

First, there is the local branch of The Royal Canadian Legion. By calling the number listed in the white pages of the local phone book, people can access veterans of World War II and the Korean War who are willing to share their experiences with an audience. The local branches may also have people with peacekeeping experience and some Afghanistan veterans who can talk about modern warfare. Amongst the possible speakers there may be veterans who have been wounded and who would like to share their experiences. So it is at the branch where the most important resource – the veteran - is located.
First Place Winner

Black and White Poster Contest

Natalie Lloyd
Koinonia Christian Academy,
Waterloo, Ontario –
Waterloo Branch #530

There are many resources that can also be used by going to http://www.legion.ca and clicking on any of the lines in the menu category that says Poppy and Remembrance. There people can find a plethora of information about Remembrance in general, the poppy and our pilgrimages for youth leaders. It is also there where people can find the rules and regulations for the poster and literary contests that are run each year in schools across Canada. Last year, as an example, there were more than 100,000 students across this nation that made submissions to their local branches. The winners were then submitted to the next highest level in the Legion’s chain of command until the best in each category were judged by those selected at the national level.

The categories include colour poster, black and white poster, essay and poem in each of the senior, intermediate, junior and primary classifications.

The winners of the national competition in the seniors’ group go to Ottawa to represent the youth of Canada at the National Remembrance Day Ceremony and lay a wreath on their behalf.

This particular part of the site tells people how to go about accessing bursaries and scholarships through the Legion and it also has a comprehensive teacher’s guide that will help educators plan a lesson around the theme of Remembrance.

The pilgrimage for youth leaders section also includes impressions of the battlefields and the graveyards visited by those who attended the visits and can give those researching the theme a whole new look at Remembrance.
It informs, plants a seed, makes a connection and entertains.

*School Libraries in Canada* interviews war artist and author Sharon E. McKay about her experiences as a war artist and her recent novel *War Brothers*.

Montreal born author Sharon McKay is well-known for her novels for young adults including *Charlie Wilcox, Charlie Wilcox’s Great War, Esther* and four novels in Penguin’s “Our Canadian Girl” historical fiction series. Her most recent works for young adults include *War Brothers*, a story of child soldiers in Uganda and the winner of the Arthur Ellis Award and, recently released, *Whispers from the Ghetto, Whispers from the Camps* and soon, *Whispers from Hiding*, all short stories dealing with the Holocaust and written with Kathy Kacer, a multi-award winning writer and a child of survivors.

In January 2008 Sharon was accepted into the Canadian Forces (War) Artists Program or CFAP. She is the first children’s writer to hold the title. In March 2009 she went to Afghanistan to, in the words of the program description, “capture the daily operations, personnel, and spirit of the Canadian Forces.”

*School Libraries in Canada* is pleased to have the opportunity to discuss her work as a young adult author and as a war artist.

**SLiC** - What was it like in Afghanistan?

**SM** - Amazing. Eye-opening. Bridging the great divide between civilians and the military is harder than I expected. I do understand why people volunteer for second and third tours however. I would go back in a heartbeat.

**SLiC** - What was your most memorable experience there?
SM - Rides – rides in planes (Hercules), helicopters (Griffons and Chinooks), tanks, LAV’s. Oh to be a nine-year old boy. But no, my most memorable experience happened at Camp Mirage, Canada’s staging area, the leaping off point to Kandahar Airfield (KAF). Being in Mirage felt like taking an exotic vacation. There were camels outside the gate, the food was great, weather was divine, as was the shopping and then a soldier said, “There’s a ramp ceremony at O-200 hours. You’re invited.”

I stood on an airfield under the black wing of a Hercules aircraft and listened as a Padre said a prayer over the transfer case (not coffin) of a fallen soldier. (No one ever said the word “dead.”) Then came the command, “Soldiers, salute your comrade.” Three hundred hands cut the air. It is a sound that I will remember forever.

SLiC - Were you able to get much of an impression of the every day lives of Afghan people?

SM - No. While I did get out on a foot patrol in Taliban territory close to the Pakistan boarder, I did not get into the city of Kandarhar. (Think of KAF, where the UN is stationed as being Pearson Airport and Toronto as being Kandahar.) The security was very tight and when a war artist goes out, so do soldiers. I don’t think anyone wants to put soldiers in harm’s way because a war artist wants to sightsee. I did visit a school and meet village children. If I have one regret it is that I did not spend much time with children. Keep in mind too, some teachers (males especially) do not want us to have a great deal of contact with their children.

SLiC - Did your involvement in the program change your perspective on the conflict in Afghanistan or war in general?

SM - Not really. I am careful not to give my opinions on the war to children in the classroom. Even children who are not the sons or daughters of military personnel may have an uncle or an aunt, or a family friend, in the Forces. The time to ask the question, “Should we be there?” is over. We are there. The dialogue now is, should we (Canada) remain in with the role of a battle group and how long should we stay? These are questions that teachers may want to have in their political science classes but I am not prepared to discuss them in primary or middle schools.

Canadian war artists interpret war, not (necessarily) support it. When I accepted the gig it was because no one (in the CFAP program) asked me what I think of our role in Afghanistan. No one has told me what to write or requested to preview my material and no money has exchanged hands.

But I am mindful that I’m on the heels of a long line of artists including Alex Sorrell, Alex Colville and, a personal favourite, Gertrude Kearnes. They are all people whose artistic efforts are hard to live up to. More recently the list boasts Ken Steacy, a cartoonist, and Althea Thauberger, an amazing and gifted photographer who was with me on the trip. The point is that there is not a propagandist in the bunch: no glorious, flag-waving, blank-eyed soldiers marching to drums or pre-approved narratives.

SLiC - How and why did you become involved in the war artist program?

SM - I thought everyone knew about the war artist program. I have been aware of it since I was twelve years-old and standing on the deck of the QEII. My grandma and I made the crossing to Belfast via Liverpool every summer. We travelled third class but always ate in the second class restaurants. My grandma came to Canada as an indentured servant and nearly starved through the Depression. Leaving fresh buns on the dinner table was hard so every night she put them in her purse. Every morning I snuck them out of our tiny cabin and walked up to the very top of the ship (First Class) and fed the fishes. There, standing by the rail, was a well dressed, dignified, senior man named Mr. Silver. He and I
became friends and as I left a trail of bread crumbs across the Atlantic, he told me stories of The Great War and how war artists like George Plante, A.R. Thompson, Arthur Lismer brought the war home to Canadians. And while the WA program has come and gone and been reinvented a few times, I have known about it for forty years.

Likely I got the WA gig because of my novels, Charlie Wilcox and Charlie Wilcox’s Great War. And having spent six summers in a house between two warring areas in Belfast, Northern Ireland in a nasty skirmish dubbed The Troubles, I have had my share of conflict. Then there are the three books on the Holocaust and of course War Brothers, the book on child soldiers.

SLiC - Do you envision yourself sharing the experience with your young adult readers? What form would the story take? Are there any particular difficulties involved with writing about contemporary events?

SM - The book's tentative title is Stones Over Kandahar and it will be published in 2010 by Annick Press. It is the tale of Yasmine and Tamanna, two girls from different backgrounds, who make a run for it over the mountains. One girl will not make it. (I lie.)

I write for Canadian children about any number of topics. God is in the details and so I am careful to have lots of readers – people from the culture I am writing about. I write slowly. I interview, I read and I listen. Then I have the entire book fact checked all over again. All of my books are read by teacher-librarians after the first edit. I take their comments very seriously.

SLiC - How did you become a writer?

SM - I pitched a non-fiction book idea on parenting after my first son was born and had it accepted by a publisher. I immediately spent the advance and had no choice but to write the book. I was terrified. When I wasn’t writing, I was anxious, upset, and convinced that I could not write. Worse was listening to irritating pep-talks from my husband. I finished the book and it was well received. Many more non-fiction books followed.

And then I took the scary leap into fiction. I’d always been a story-teller and I found a home in writing fiction for young adults.

SLiC - Your writing seems to reflect a great interest in history. What are the origins of that interest?

SM - Going back in time is just, well, fun. I don’t have the guts to write about kids today. I really have no idea where my interest in history comes from. I have never taken a history class and did not do well in it in school but my husband loves history so maybe it has rubbed off.

SLiC - Military conflict has been a central feature in many of your most successful novels. Why?

SM - I have no idea why I write about conflict but over the years I have learned to tell the story that honors the victims without giving (too many) librarians heart attacks. It’s a difficult balance and I don’t always get it right.

SLiC - What is the attraction of war for you as a writer?

SM - Drama.

SLiC - What do you like best about writing for young people?
SM - It is the hardest writing there is. Kids don’t give a book a second chance. Maybe they will forgive a writer one boring bit, but that’s it. Stay on the game or you’re out.

SLiC - What is the biggest challenge in writing for young people?

SM - Keeping history honest without getting the book bounced out of the library. That sounds too flippant. Facts are librarians have lives (I was one once). A teacher-librarian has bills to pay, hockey practice to get to and a house to keep. Fighting irate parents who want a book out of the library can be very upsetting – an understatement if there ever was one. I don’t want to put librarians in that position. On the other-hand if young adults don’t know what their counterparts of the same age are experiencing (i.e. child soldiers) how will they ever grow into caring adults? A knowledgeable, compassionate, thoughtful, pro-active adult does not suddenly blossom at twenty.

At the ripe old age of 56, I am now in a position of seeing what happens to children who are put in hothouses and kept there by over-involved parents. It’s not pretty. Most teachers (all?) know this. No one wants to send children into conflict for the experience but to the best of our ability, we can give them enough information to care.

SLiC - Most of your historical fiction has focused on the experiences of young Canadians. What prompted you to shift your attention to the holocaust in the Whispers series and to the experiences of child soldiers in War Brothers?

SM - I have been a volunteer member of the Christian/Jewish Dialogue Holocaust Remembrance Committee for 18 years. The Whispers series was a simple outgrowth of that work. (I place Holocaust Survivors in churches and schools during Holocaust Education week.) I can count many Survivors as
friends and I was particularly proud to work with co-writer Kathy Kacer. *War Brothers* is a different story. On a beautiful fall Friday afternoon I heard an interview on CBC radio about the work Adrian Bradbury was doing in Northern Uganda. By Monday I had read a small mountain of material and had written a sample chapter. The following Friday I had a publisher and was planning a trip to Uganda. Oh-god-what-have-I-gotten-myself-into? Julia Bell, intrepid traveler and brilliant illustrator, made me braver than I am. When she agreed to go I simply could not back down. I was scared stiff. I know *War Brothers* is a hard read; it was a hard write, but my hopes are that it informs, plants a seed, makes a connection and at the very least, entertains.

**SLiC** - The book *Good to Go, a practical guide to adulthood*, that you have recently written with Kim Zarzour, seems a radical change from your other recent work. What inspired this change?

**SM** - I returned to my roots. I have written ten-plus non-fiction books. most of my early books were how-to books. They can be surprisingly hard to write. Kim Zazour is an amazing writer. When she agreed to co-write, I thought why not? I could take a break, still work and have a great time with Kim. We laughed our way through 700-plus pages.

**SLiC** - What is your next project?

**SM** - FUN! I know the character, I know her name, I know the era, but I am still thinking up the story. One way I scare myself silly is to start writing and not know where the story is going. It gets really frightening if there is a publisher involved.

**SLiC** - What’s the best part about writing?

**SM** - It sure isn’t the self-doubt, the nagging feeling that at any moment someone is going to say, “Who do you think you are?” Or, the long days writing and deleting all but one sentence. The best part is when I am with kids, really. I remember meeting an author when I was ten years old. The book was called *Apples Everyday*. She wanted to sign the book and I wouldn’t let her ‘deface’ it. Today kids have great access to writers. Last year alone I answered hundreds of letters and e-mails. The children today are fearless and I love that. (I still have *Apples Everyday.*) Often I am in remote or small towns or villages and visit every classroom from K to grade 12. Here are some questions I have received from students:

“Are those your real teeth?” Yes

“Is that your real hair?” Yes.

“Are you rich?” No.

“Do you write your own books or does someone else do it for you?” Ahhhhhhhhhh. I wish.

You can visit Sharon McKay’s website at: [http://www.sharonmckay.ca](http://www.sharonmckay.ca)
Aboriginal women enlisted in Canada’s WWII military for much the same reasons as their non-Aboriginal sisters, but were they treated equally? Where were their voices? I was interested in hearing their stories but locating Aboriginal female veterans was no small feat. With no place on enlistment papers for race or ethnicity, searches through the records of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Department of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada were of no avail. Government documents from Indian and Northern Affairs, the House of Commons Debates 1940-1946 and military documentation also produced limited results.

Therefore, it was imperative to contact Aboriginal organizations, to advertise in military and Aboriginal publications, and to send faxes to Reserve communities. The results were sparse and only twenty-five names were uncovered. Eighteen participants were involved in this project: fourteen Aboriginal women graciously consented to face-to-face dialogues as did the family members of two others (including the son of the first Native nurse overseas during WWI); another person spoke to me by telephone, and one provided a written submission. I travelled from New Brunswick to British Columbia to talk with the participants. Their individual stories and photos appear separately and some of the women’s stories can be found in anecdotal publications, often in respect to their male relatives’ military involvement, as mentioned within their narratives. Other stories can be accessed through an Internet search engine.

All of the women’s stories were interesting. Some were comical and underscored the naiveté of the times as evidenced by Teresa Dion’s account of her first posting after Basic Training:

There was a necessary two-week quarantine because one of the girls had contracted measles or chickenpox or something. They put us in a men’s barracks. That had to be an experience! We were just herded from the train and couldn’t contact each other to tell a friend where we were
They took us immediately to barracks. There was no door on the bathroom and the first night there the girls tried to hang a curtain for privacy. We had to wash our underwear every night so we washed it in the “long metal sink” We were eighteen years old. We didn’t know that it was a urinal – [we] had no idea!

I am most pleased with what I consider the pièce de resistance in uncovering the story behind Mary Greyeyes Reid’s famous photo.

According to her son:

The Army orchestrated this photograph. The man in the photo was neither Chief nor Councillor and the Army provided the trappings. He was paid twenty-five dollars for posing and the Army paid for Mary’s dinner. Actually the man was saying, “I wish they would hurry up and take the picture. The mosquitoes are eating me alive!” to which Mary replied, “What do you think it’s like for me down here?”

Was Mary, portrayed by the Army as a typical Indian, manipulated as a recruiting tool? Or was she, as Sheffield suggests in The Red Man’s on the Warpath, used to indicate that the Indians of Canada, especially the women, were doing their ‘bit’ for the war effort?

It was an honour to talk with these women and I cannot express my gratitude enough for the sharing of their stories. It has been my privilege to render them visible.

Photo: Mary Greyeyes being blessed by her native Chief prior to leaving for service in the CWAC, 29 Sept. 1942

Source: Library and Archives Canada/Canada, Department of National Defence collection/PA-129070

Sources:


Grace Poulin prides herself in being a life-long learner. At the age of forty she returned to school to become an R.N. Subsequently, she did an undergraduate degree in Native Studies at Lakehead University and an M.A. in Canadian Studies specializing in Native Studies at Trent. Her work on her thesis led to work with the Ontario Native Women’s Association and Veterans Affairs Canada on a reunion of World War II Aboriginal Servicewomen and to the publication of Invisible Women. More recently she has been collaborating on a documentary based on the book. For contact information, visit her website: http://www.gracepoulin.com.
Reading and Remembrance is an on-line resource targeted at educators. The programme started at the Durham West Arts Centre in 2005 with free arts and reading materials focused on “In Flanders Fields.” This year the resources will develop the theme of "Medals and Memories." The website, readingandremembrance.ca, archives materials from previous years. The themes of those materials include “Women and War,” “Anti-Racism and Holocaust Education” and “The Art of Dissent.” Over 100,000 students have benefitted from the ready-to-use lessons that complement Ontario Ministry of Education curricula. This year, for the first time, all lessons are also in French. Teachers and Boards of Education are encouraged to register for the Honour Roll to indicate they are participating in Reading and Remembrance activities on Remembrance Day. In 2009 the Ontario Library Association and the Ontario Historical Society joined founding sponsor Ontario Power Generation and founding partner the Durham West Arts Centre to promote the project.
Monique Polak is the author of eleven novels for young people. Last year she published What World is Left, a novel for young adults based on the experiences of her mother who, as a teenager, was deported to the concentration camp at Theresienstadt after the Nazi occupation of Holland. The novel emphasizes the importance of finding the beauty and the meaning that remains in the world after the Holocaust. In a world of ambiguity, the protagonist discovers courageous acts of resistance behind apparent collaboration. She sees how the victims of intolerance can become its perpetrators. She triumphs over bitterness and hatred by realizing, “Even after all the senseless sorrow and suffering, there is still world left. I know I will never be able to forget all I saw and felt and lost . . . but there is still world left. It will be up to me to find the loveliness.”

Refusing to be defeated by a shadowy video signal and barely audible sound, the energetic writer shared her enthusiasm for writing and for working with young people in a recent video conference.
DG - Why did you choose to write a novel based on your mother’s experiences at Theresienstadt?

MP - It was almost like I didn’t have a choice. My mother’s story was central to my entire life, even before she told it to me.

DG - Your previous works of young adult fiction have dealt with a wide range of contemporary issues ranging from self-mutilation and gambling addiction to the protection of animals. What similarities and differences did you notice between writing other young adult novels and writing a work of historical fiction based on your mother’s experiences?

MP - In a way I guess I feel like all the books I had written before What World is Left were preparation for this one; I had to work my way to this story. I am very interested in exploring a narrator’s voice. I had to get the character to talk to me while I was writing the story. This was also my first historical novel and that was quite different. It was the closest, the most personal novel.

DG - Other than providing specific inspiration for a novel, do you think that your experience as the daughter of a Holocaust survivor has influenced you as a young adult novelist?

MP - Definitely. I have been wondering about that myself. For me, being the daughter of a Holocaust survivor has meant that I have always been trying to get inside my mother’s head. When you grow up with a parent who is troubled like that, it is almost like their psyche is more important than your own. My mother is the first person I really tried to figure out and I think that has influenced me as a writer because I am interested in getting inside another’s person’s head. I almost had an unnatural interest in getting inside her head.

DG - How do you think an audience of contemporary teenagers will relate to the experiences of Anneke Van Raalte?

MP - I am in a good position to answer that question because I teach teenagers here in Montreal and I have been giving lots of talks about the book. I have been very pleasantly surprised, but not all that surprised, by how well kids have been connecting with the character.

The essential thing about Anneke is that she reaches a point where she really needs to question her own father and what he is doing. She is involved, from a distance, in a terrible moral dilemma, and that to me is a major part of what growing up feels like. What happens when you realize your parents aren’t perfect?

When you are a little kid the world seems much more black and white but when you are a teenager it gets to be more grey. The first wave of Holocaust literature was very black and white. Now people can handle the grey areas that we couldn’t. I am interested in the grey; that’s where I live.

I had a student from Kosovo and she was in a refugee camp. She couldn’t talk about what happened to her there but she met my mother when my mother came to speak at my school and emailed me that night and she said that having heard my mother she felt that some day she would be able to tell her daughter her story. That’s why I read and that’s why I write.
In writing about Scarred for the Brantford Examiner a reviewer commented, on the fact that you had “worked into the story a way to self-heal.” It struck me that there was a similar achievement in What World is Left where Anneke develops the optimism to seek out the beauty that remains in the world despite the horrific experiences she has endured. Do you think there is a particular human quality that enables some people to heal from wounds from which others would never recover?

That’s something that really interests me; I wish we could figure out what that quality is and we could bottle it. There are lot of people who need it. Until you mentioned it, I never thought of the connection between those two books but I am very interested in the notion of recovery and redemption. I had, growing up, some hard times, nothing compared to my mother but I also had to do some healing. I think it was the writer Ring Lardner who said, "How can you write if you can’t cry?" Having gone through it I feel that I am well–positioned to write about it. I wish that I had had books like that when I was growing up. Books that would show that healing was possible and that you don’t make the past go away and you can’t forget it but that you can move forward. The title of the book brings to mind the fact that you bear the scars but you go on and maybe the experience helps you to have more empathy for others.

Your web site says that while you were working as a journalist you were dreaming of writing for a young adult audience. What was the special attraction of writing for teenagers?

I love teenagers. I teach teenagers and I live in a world surrounded by teenagers. I think books for teens are the most interesting books available. I think teenagers are the most interesting people on the planet. If I could choose, I wouldn’t speak to anybody but teenagers.

What would you identify as the most important elements in a novel directed towards a teenage audience?

Writing that is done for teenagers has to tell the truth. It has to talk about what teens want to know. It has to come from the heart. It can’t be phoney. It has to be a voice that grabs them that narrates the story. I try to write what I would have wanted to read when I was their age, or what I would want to read if I was them.

How has your experience in journalism contributed to your success a young-adult novelist?

The journalism gave me the confidence to write. I was able to sell the journalism with ease, unlike my books for kids. They took a little longer. It gave me a chance to practice my research skills and my interviewing. I loved interviewing. I think that was my strength as a journalist and I had to do a lot of it. The hardest interview I had to do was with my mom. Partly it was my mother’s personality. She is very funny, very feisty. But she didn’t want to talk about what happened to her in the war. She hardly ever gave me a straight answer. The other part of it was, as her daughter, I wanted to know, I needed to know, but it was like stepping into a kind of hell. Especially the act of imagining and writing it. Writing it was the closest I could get to being there with her. But I am so glad that I wrote that book, it has made a big difference in many areas of my life. As a writer, this was a project I always wanted to do but I was afraid of it. I tackled the most important subject for me. It meant that as a daughter I came as close as I possibly could to living what my mother lived. I really love my mother. My mother was a bit of a nut as
mother. Very understandable of course. Whatever I would have had to forgive from the past there was no question that she did her best and I could forgive anything.

*DG* - What are your most recent projects?

*MP* - I have two books coming out this fall with ORCA. One, a novel for teenagers called *The middle of everywhere* is set in Nunavik; I visited there in 2007 and I am very interested in Inuit culture. The novel is about a white kid who thinks he is better than all the Inuit kids in town and he finds out that he isn’t. The other one is *Junk Yard Dog* which is about a boy who ends up infiltrating the guard dog business.

The one I am working on now is another departure for me. In a way it is connected to *What World is Left* because, in it, I am looking at faith and doubt. It is about miracles and it is set in Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré. I am going back this weekend to pray for a miracle: that I can finish the book and get it right.

*DG* - What came first the theme or the setting?

Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré came first. We stopped there one night on our way to whale watching at Tadoussac. I am a jogging fanatic and I jogged through town and I was hooked. It’s such a weird place and yet a place of tremendous faith. It’s partly tacky and partly spiritual all rolled into one. But I am interested in the question of whether or not faith can sustain us. Psychological healing is as important as physical healing.

*DG* - Is there anything else you would like to mention to *SLiC*’s readers?

*MP* - I am wearing a necklace that my mother gave me when I was interviewing her. It has a drawing that my grandfather made in the camp and gave to her for her fifteenth birthday. It is like a little piece of many things. It appears on the cover of the book.

*DG* - What is the significance of the necklace for you?

*MP* - It is a reminder to never give up. I didn’t give up with the writing and that’s why it works for me. Every day there are moments when I want to give up but I don’t, and that’s what makes it possible.

I want to tell everyone to get the stories. Listen to the stories. Everyone has stories. Pay attention. Soak them up. Write them down. It’s all about stories for me. If I will miss anything when I am dead, it will be hearing stories and telling stories.
In their own words...

The Azrieli Foundation’s Elin Beaumont describes its Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program and how school libraries can help students access the stories.

Since the end of World War II, over 30,000 Jewish Holocaust survivors have immigrated to Canada. Who they are, where they came from, what they experienced and how they built new lives for themselves and their families is an important part of our Canadian heritage. The Azrieli Series of Holocaust Survivor Memoirs is guided by the conviction that each survivor of the Holocaust has a remarkable story to tell, and that such stories play an important role in education about tolerance and diversity.

 Millions of individual stories are lost to us forever. By preserving the stories written by survivors and making them widely available to a broad audience, the Holocaust Survivor Memoirs series seeks to sustain the memory of all those who perished at the hands of hatred, abetted by indifference and apathy. The personal accounts of those who survived against all odds are as different as the people who wrote them, but all demonstrate the courage, strength, wit and luck that it took to prevail and survive in such terrible adversity. The memoirs are also moving tributes to people – strangers and friends – who risked their lives to help others, and who, through acts of kindness and decency in the
darkest of moments, frequently helped the persecuted maintain faith in humanity and courage to endure. These accounts offer inspiration to all, as does the survivors’ desire to share their experiences so that new generations can learn from them.

The Holocaust Survivor Memoirs Program collects, archives and publishes these distinctive records. The first series of seven volumes – four in English and three in French – was launched in the fall of 2007. Series 1 was honoured with a 2008 Gold Medal at the 12th Annual Independent Publisher Book Awards in Los Angeles and one title, Bits and Pieces by Henia Reinhartz received the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem Award in the Holocaust Memoir and Literature category at the 2008 Canadian Jewish Book Awards in Toronto. Series 2 – comprised of five titles in English and three in French – was launched in Montreal and Toronto in June 2009.

The program has now collected some 170 individual memoirs and ongoing outreach has inspired many survivors to at last write about their experiences. Print editions of the Azrieli Series are available free of charge to libraries, schools and Holocaust-education programs across Canada, and to the general public at Azrieli Foundation educational events. Online editions of the books are available for free download on our web site, www.azrielifoundation.org.

Note: While many of the memoirs are suitable for readers 14+, the series as a whole is intended for senior high school and adult readers.
Canadian resources to help young people remember

by Victoria Pennell
Editor, Resource Links

In this bibliography of resources I have tried to include materials which will give our young people some idea as to why we celebrate Remembrance Day every year on November 11. There are titles here for the very young as well as titles for more mature readers which focus on the main wars which we remember on Remembrance Day. I have also included some titles which focus on present day wars which affect Canada’s soldiers and their families. Most of the titles included here are non-fiction or of a picture book variety which bring war-related information to young readers in an appropriate format. There are many other wonderful fiction books which deal with the topic of war and the Holocaust - maybe that is something for another time. All of these materials have been reviewed in Resource Links and the annotations are for the most part edited versions of the reviews.

BARCLAY, Jane
Proud as a Peacock, Brave as A Lion
Illustrated by Renné Benoit.

This book introduces the very young child to the importance of Remembrance Day. A gentle and caring grandpa answers his grandson’s questions about what it was like to serve in the war. As the two make a game of preparing for a memorial parade, the young child comes to understand the importance of the occasion and why it is important to remember. Benoit’s illustrations in muted colours also help to portray the sombreness of the story.

BREWSTER, Hugh
At Vimy Ridge: Canada's Greatest World War I Victory
Scholastic Canada, 2006.

In this book Hugh Brewster traces the Canadian military force which was engaged in World War I from its “rag-tag” beginnings as “Sam Hughes' Army” to the carefully planned and well-executed Battle of Vimy Ridge which brought that “most powerful German bastion of the Western Front” completely into Allied hands. Brewster describes the beginnings of the Canadian military forces, their lack of good training and early entry into active warfare with catastrophic losses in many of their early battles, then under the leadership of General Julian Byng and General Arthur Currie, the growth and skill development which enabled them to win a victory at Vimy Ridge and come to be considered “the elite troops of the British Army.”

Brewster’s text is enhanced greatly by historical photographs, paintings, maps, quotations and detailed captions throughout the book. In addition to a final chapter on the Memorial at Vimy Ridge, there is a small section on “The Victoria Cross at Vimy,” “Vimy Veterans,” a glossary, a bibliography, and an index. The book is well organized into two page spreads containing text and illustrations which focus on a specific topic.

In this volume Brewster conveys the story of one of the most fateful days in Canada’s history - August 19, 1942 - when almost 1,000 Canadians were killed on the beaches of Dieppe. 586 were wounded and 1,946 were marched off as prisoners of war. The text is enhanced with historical photographs, paintings, maps, quotations from some of the soldiers who took part in the raid, and detailed captions. Two page spreads trace the chronology of the raid, the retreat, the imprisonment and finally the freedom. The book also contains a glossary and an index. A final spread focusses on why we remember.


BREWSTER, Hugh
On Juno Beach
Introduction by J. L. Granatstein.

On June 6, 1944 thousands of young Canadian soldiers were deposited off the shores of a beach called Juno in France. Wading ashore amid gunfire, they managed to remove German defenses and take the beach. This campaign was the beginning of the fall of the Nazi regime. On Juno Beach tells the story of the triumphant Canadian conquest.

This volume is loaded with photos, maps, posters and illustrations which add realism to the well-organized telling of this historic event. Sprinkled throughout the detailed account are quotations from soldiers who were there, family members and relatives. A well-organized index and glossary add to the convenience of this historic study.


CREW, Gary
Memorial
Illustrated by Shaun Tan.
Unp. Illus. Gr. 3-8. 1-894965-08-6. Hdbk. $22.95

“My great-grandpa says they planted the tree on the day he came home from the war.” So begins the story of Memorial, a touching story about remembrance, conservation, and family by Gary Crew. Told by the youngest member of the family, the book goes on to tell the story of the memorial tree, which was planted in 1918 as a “Shrine of Remembrance” after the First World War. This living memorial grows and grows, reminding people of all the wars fought over the years. As the tree grows, its roots begin to grow, knocking down statues and causing traffic problems. The town council wants to remove it. The narrator is outraged at the thought of the tree being cut down and says, “I will fight the council. Because the tree’s a memorial too. They have to see that. A living memorial...”

The book concludes with the boy’s great-grandpa telling him that the fight might not convince council to leave the tree alone, but, he says, “that don’t mean they’ll forget you. It’s the fight in you they’ll remember. That memory won’t die - not like my old bones. Even concrete and rock won’t last forever. But memories, now they’re different. Memories, they’re ever-livin’ things. Like you say, son, like our tree...” Gary Crew’s words are simple and powerful and will resonate with both young and older readers. Shaun Tan’s illustrations are beautiful. From the front cover to the end pages, readers will be entranced by the muted tones of the illustrations. Using mostly shades of green and brown and yellow, Tan illustrates both the words and the mood of the book.

Memorial is an important book for young readers. It is a story that does not focus on conflict and war, but rather on remembrance and hope and conservation. Remembrance Day is often a holiday that leaves teachers and librarians struggling to find books to use with young children. Memorial helps to fill this gap.
DEBON, Nicolas
*A Brave Soldier*
32p. Illus. Gr. 2 up. 0-88899-481-8. Hdbk. $15.95

*A Brave Soldier* tells the story of Frank, a young Canadian who joined the army at the beginning of the war. The book follows his journey across the Atlantic to England for training and then on to the battlefields in France. Debon gives descriptions of the front lines of the battle areas, the trenches, No Man’s Land, and the deplorable living conditions which the soldiers experienced. When Frank participates in one of the battles he experiences the devastation of war where some of his comrades are wounded or killed and he is wounded to the point that he is unable to fight again. Frank’s initial enthusiasm turns to disillusionment at what he sees as the uselessness and destruction of war.

This is a difficult topic to present to young children and while Debon does not gloss over the brutal conditions experienced in World War I, he does not dwell on the horror or glorify the fighting. His acrylic illustrations in muted colours enhance the atmosphere which is created by the text and add to its description and meaning. While categorized as a picture book, this is one of those that can appeal to and have meaning for all ages.

DOUGLAS, Tom
*Valour at Vimy Ridge: Canadian Heroes of World War I*
143p. Illus. Gr. 6-10. 978-1-55439-241-4. Pbk. $9.95

The chapters in this book are easy to read, but have a depth of war history. Trench warfare is described in detail that students can understand and bring home the reality of what it must have been like to be seventeen and under fire. The description of the Canadian preparation for the attack on Vimy Ridge was astounding. The battle each of 4 Divisions undertook are described in detail. The creeping barrage is highlighted as a Canadian invention which was somewhat responsible for the Canadian success. Chapter 10 details the valour of individual soldiers, so that we do not forget their sacrifice. The memorial at Vimy Ridge is also described.

ELLIS, Deborah
*Children of War: Voices of Iraqi Refugees*

In this book, Deborah Ellis brings us the voices of children who have been affected by the ongoing war in Iraq. The book includes interviews with a variety of children most of whom are refugees who fled Iraq because of the war and were living in Jordan in the fall of 2007. Each child’s story is preceded with some background information which helps to set the scene for the child’s story. The book also includes a picture of each child, a map, a glossary and a list of websites for further reading.
ELLIS, Deborah
*Off to War: Voices of Soldiers’ Children*
175p. Gr. 5-10. 978-0-88899-894-1. Hdbk. $16.95

Over twenty-seven Canadian and American military families are featured in this offering from Deborah Ellis. Each chapter details the experience of children whose father or mother has been deployed overseas either in direct battle or as support to soldiers in battle. Most of the families have a father serving in Afghanistan or Iraq, while a few are from children whose mother is in the military or whose father was killed. The words are the children’s own and this is what makes their stories so very powerful. Ages range from six to seventeen years. Some chapters are from individuals, some from siblings. Experiences and emotions expressed vary widely, but all show respect for the men and women who risk their lives to serve overseas.

ELLIS, Deborah
*Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*
110p. Illus. Gr. 6 up. 0-88899-554-7. Hdbk. $18.95

In this book, Deborah Ellis brings us the voices of children on both sides of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict which give us glimpses into the ordinary and extraordinary lives they live. The book includes interviews with twenty children ranging in age from 8 to 18. Each child’s story is preceded with some background information which helps to explain the living conditions, the government, the conflict, the education system, the curfews, etc. The book also includes a picture of each child as well as other black-and-white pictures taken by the author, a map, a glossary and suggestions for further reading. The author does not take sides in the conflict but lets the children present their own stories - their frustrations and their hopes and dreams.

FILIPOVIC, Zlata & Melanie Challenger (Ed.)
*Stolen Voices: Young People’s War Diaries from World War I to Iraq*

*Stolen Voices: Young People’s War Diaries from World War I to Iraq* contains accounts of war as experienced by young people ages twelve to twenty-one. From the diary entries of Piete Kuhr who was only twelve when war broke out in her native Germany to Nina Kostermina’s account as the daughter of a Russian Communist during WWII to Holocaust survivors of 1939-1945, Vietnam War draftee Ed Blanco who went to fight at age nineteen to Hoda Thamir Jehad who was eighteen when war broke out in Iraq *Stolen Voices: Young People’s War Diaries from World War I to Iraq* presents stories of fear, disbelief, grief, anger and disillusion.

Editors Zlata Filipovic and Melanie Challenger have selected a cross-section of youth varying in age, nationality, the war they experienced and how they were involved. In addition to the fourteen diary sections ranging from twenty to thirty pages, the editors have provided a foreword, a photo section showing period photographs, excerpts from authors’ diaries and a glossary of people, places and terms which appear in diary entries.
GRANFIELD, Linda

*I Remember Korea*
Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 2004.

Korea is often called "the forgotten war" and author Linda Granfield has set as her goal changing that situation. The book, *I Remember Korea* contains stories by the combatants and civilians whose lives were altered forever by the events of the Korean War. The book is organized chronologically and divided into sections: "Terror and Courage", which covers the early war events of 1950; "Food, Fun and Finally Rest", which spans 1951; "Family Matters", involving the experiences of 1952; and "After War", which covers 1953.

An interesting and poignant introduction is written by Russell Freedman who was a twenty-two year-old draftee fresh out of college when he entered the Korean War and joined the Counter Intelligence Corps whose job it was to counter enemy efforts to gather intelligence.

*I Remember Korea* is made more meaningful with maps, many photographs and interviews with war participants and their family members. In addition to stories from over 20 different people affected by the Korean War, there is an extensive Glossary, a detailed index, websites of interest, a timeline and an afterword by the author.

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GRANFIELD, Linda

*In Flanders Fields (Special 10th Anniversary Edition)*
Illustrated by Janet Wilson.
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2005.
Unp. Illus. Gr. 3-9. 1-55005-144-X. Hdbk. $24.95

Linda Granfield tells the story of the poem "In Flanders Fields" and its writer John McCrae, in a story interspersed with the beautiful illustrations of Jan Wilson as well as archival materials and photographs. In telling the story of the poem, Granfield provides biographical information about John McCrae and the story of how he composed the poem while providing medical attention to soldiers on the battlefield. She also presents many of the horrors of World War I especially from the perspective of the trench warfare, and focuses on the significance of the poppy which we all wear so proudly each year on Remembrance Day. While the subject is one of horror, Granfield treats it with a sensitivity which will appeal to a young as well as an older audience.

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GRANFIELD, Linda

*Remembering John McCrae: Soldier - Doctor - Poet*
Scholastic Canada, 2009.

In this book Granfield gives us some insight into the life of John McCrae, the author of the famous poem "In Flanders Fields". Through a scrapbook style Granfield tells McCrae’s story through text, historical photographs, captions, maps, and various other paraphenalia which all blend together in a highly visual appealing presentation. Two page spreads touch on various phases of McCrae’s life as well as his famous poem and the significance of the poppy. A timeline, a glossary and an index are also included in the book.
**KIRK, Dylan**
*Canada at War* (Canadian History Series)

*Canada at War* is a resource that covers Canada’s involvement in both World War I and World War II. It is organized in chronological order beginning with world events leading up to the World War I. Particular attention is given to the major battles involving Canadians such as the Somme and Juno Beach. In addition to providing information on the events of the world wars, issues such as conscription, the Great Depression, the role of women during the war, and the aftermath of the wars are also covered. There is also a time line summary of each of the world wars, a glossary and a quiz.

**KOGAWA, Joy**
*Naomi’s Tree*
Illustrated by Ruth Ohi.
Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 2008.

This picture book from critically acclaimed Canadian author and Order of Canada Member, Joy Kogawa, is based on the characters from Kogawa’s 2005 children’s novel, Naomi’s Road. The story in *Naomi’s Tree* is based on events in Kogawa’s own life, and centered around the account of a cherry tree in Japan known as the ‘Friendship Tree’ because of its ability to bring people together through its beauty in the Spring, and the sharing of its fruit in the Summer. A seed is brought to Canada from Japan in Naomi’s mother’s Kimono, and planted in the backyard of her family home, where it is cherished by the family until their internment in World War II.

**LEACH, Norman**
*Passchendaele: Canada’s Triumph and Tragedy on the Fields of Flanders: An Illustrated History*
Foreword by Paul Gross.

“It is this uncommon skill, tenacity and ferocity which Norman Leach describes in this history of the Battle of Passchendaele, one of the bloodiest battles of World War I. In this 47 page, picture book style offering, Leach brings us detailed descriptions of the battle and the role of Canada’s soldiers, along with numerous captioned historical photographs, artifacts, symbols and quotations from actual soldiers who participated in the battle. Leach is well versed in his topic having developed an interest in history at an early age which he developed into a lifelong career. He was the historical advisor to Paul Gross in the production of the film Passchendaele which was just recently released and Gross actually wrote the foreward to this book.
Lest We Forget: Canada at War - D-Day 1944 (Teacher’s Resource Kit).
iCardz Graphic Communications Group, 2008.
Kit consists of 112 cards, teacher’s guide and CD. $63.95

“The Canadians had been called to the front because they had distinguished themselves in some of the bloodiest battles fought to date. Storm troops, the Germans called the Canadians. Like a storm that could not be stopped, the Canadians assaulted the enemy lines with uncommon skill, tenacity and ferocity.” (p. 4)

Endorsed by the Royal Canadian Legion, this set of collector cards highlights the people and events that contributed to the planning, organization and execution of Operation Overlord, D-Day during World War II. The kit consists of 112 cards - modelled after the ever popular sports cards - which have photographs on one side and text on the other. They depict leaders, events, equipment, weapons, regiments, maps, medals, puzzle cards and veteran’s accounts of actual events. The cards are highly visual with colour photographs and graphics. In addition to the cards there is a very comprehensive teacher’s guide based on the curriculum outcomes for Atlantic Canada dealing with Canadian Military History in the areas of Social Studies, English Language Arts and Information Technology for Grades 4-9. There is an introduction, 12 learning modules (complete with outcomes, lesson plans and worksheets where applicable), and evaluation rubrics. A CD is also included which has extra information including interviews with some of the veteran’s who participated in Operation Overlord. There is also a website - www.lestweforgetcards.ca - which has additional information.

MACLEOD, Elizabeth
The Kids Book of Canada at War
Illustrated by John Mantha.

Beginning with the earliest conflict in Canada between the Vikings and the Beothuk around the year 1000 in what is now Newfoundland, the book takes us through all the major conflicts in Canada up to the present day peacekeeping efforts by Canadian troops in various regions of the world. The book deals with conflicts with the early explorers and the native people, conflicts over the fur trade, conflict between the French and the English on the Plains of Abraham, the War of 1812, the rebellions of 1837 1nd 1838, the Metis Rebellions, the South African War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War and Peacekeeping efforts. The book is well designed with clear headings and easy to read text. Mantha’s illustrations are a wonderful accompaniment to the text - rich in colour and detail. The book also includes historical photographs and maps. Sidebars include additional information about courageous Canadians, specific battles and “did you know” details. Four chapters are included on the technology of war. The book includes a Table of Contents, an Index, a Timeline and throughout the text there are references to websites, historic sites and museums where additional information can be found.

PATTERSON, Heather
A Poppy is to Remember
Illustrated by Ron Lightburn.

Patterson’s text is very simple yet movingly conveys the importance of why we remember. She has included the text of In Flanders Fields and she gives the various reasons why the “poppy is to remember”. Award-winning illustrator, Ron Lightburn’s vivid oil paintings compliment the text extremely well. The bright colours of the foreground of some of the pictures depict the joy and celebration set against the more muted colours of the backgrounds which depict more of the sombre moments of the war. Included at the end of the book are 2-page spreads on “The Story of the Poppy” and “Remembrance Day in Canada” which provide additional information and photographs.

In this wonderful little book dedicated to her uncle Thomas Delaney, “who, alongside thousands of other brave souls, fought to restore light and freedom in a time of obscurity and oppression”, Anne Renard relates the story behind the Canadian Tulip Festival which officially began in Ottawa in 1953. During World War II, Princess Juliana of Holland and her two daughters sought refuge from the Nazis in Canada. During the time she was living in Canada another daughter was born and the Canadian government declared the place of birth as extraterritorial - or outside of Canadian territory - so that the baby could be born a Dutch citizen. During World War II as well, Canadian troops played a major role in the liberation of Holland - 7,600 Canadians died liberating the Netherlands and when the surviving soldiers returned home to Canada more than 1,800 war brides and 400 children came to Canada with them. Shortly after her return home in 1945 Princess Juliana presented Canada with 100,000 tulip bulbs and every year since that time Canada receives 20,000 tulip bulbs which are planted in and around the capital of Ottawa. Malak Karsh, one of Canada’s greatest photographers was particularly fond of the tulips that bloomed every spring on Parliament Hill and was one of the driving forces behind the establishment of Ottawa’s Canadian Tulip Festival.

In addition to the factual text organized into 2-page spreads, this book contains sidebars containing “Instant History Facts” (linked to the text by different coloured tulips, these facts further explain terms, events, etc. which are mentioned in the text), time lines, historical and present day photos, artifacts and newspaper clippings. Interspersed with this are Ashley Spires colourful collage style illustrations, which younger readers will enjoy. A lot of information is packed into the book’s 24 pages and while at first glance it appears to be a picture book for younger children, this book is really aimed more at the elementary to junior high reader.

ROGOW, Sally M.
Faces of Courage: Young Heroes of World War II
162p. 1-894694-20-1. Pbk. $16.95

“In order to learn lessons from the Holocaust, we have to identify in some way with the material...Only when we identify with this reality can we learn from it and begin to take action.” (p.xi)

In this book Sally Rogow brings us twelve stories which will help young people identify this reality. Based on true stories and documentation, she relates the experiences of young rescuers, resisters, victims and survivors of the Nazi tyranny including Christians, Jews, Gypsies and young people with disabilities from within Germany and various other occupied European countries during World War II. In telling the personal stories of these young people, who had the courage to act on their beliefs and in many cases to assist others to escape capture and death from the Nazis, Rogow helps us see the way life was during this time in a more realistic and believable manner. While the stories contain references to many horrific deeds, Rogow tells them in a very sensitive and non-threatening manner, yet they have great impact and create a lasting impression.

SKRYPUCH, Marsha Forchuk
Silver Threads
Illustrated by Michael Martchenko.

Silver Threads sets out to fill a gap in the education of Canadian children by telling them about the unjust imprisonment of Ukrainian-Canadians as suspected enemies of Canada during World War I. Nearly 5,000 men, women and children spent years in internment camps in the country that had invited them to immigrate, and many had their lands and goods seized without compensation. The historical facts of this story are based on the wartime experiences of author Marsha Forchuk Skrypuch’s grandfather.

Skrypuch softens history for children by introducing an element of magic and folklore. Anna and Ivan, a young Ukrainian couple recently arrived in Canada, are separated when Ivan is brutally imprisoned because of his origins. Left alone in the strange land, without news of her beloved husband, Anna struggles during the years of war to farm the single acre of ground they had
managed to clear. Her only companion is a small spider. As the war draws to a close, Anna is threatened with the seizure of the farm, but she bravely perseveres, enduring the sad disappointment of yet another Sviat Vechir (Christmas Eve) alone. That same night a miracle occurs when the spider sends a brilliant signal out into the dark, bringing Anna and Ivan together on Christmas morning for a joyous new start in Canada. Illustrator Marchenko, has captured the wistful mood of the story very well in gentle, glowing paintings.

TANAKA, Shelley
*Attack on Pearl Harbor*
Illustrated by David Craig.

Early on the morning of December 7, 1941, Japan launched a massive surprise attack on the U. S. naval base at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. Two brief and terrible hours later, much of the American fleet lay sunk or burning, 2,388 Americans were dead, and the United States and Japan were at war. Dozens of children witnessed this important moment in history. Hundreds of young servicemen - both American and Japanese - came of age on this unforgettable day. Their moving eyewitness accounts are woven together in a powerful retelling of the events at Pearl Harbour. Shelley Tanaka, an award-winning author, re-tells every frightening and heroic moment through the memories of young people who were actually there. Eleven-year-old Peter Nottage’s peaceful schoolboy life is changed forever as he watches the bombs rain down on Kaneohe Bay. Young Kazuo Sakamaki, barely out of the Japanese naval academy, goes on a suicide mission when he takes part in the underwater attack. Nineteen-year-old sailor George DeLong is trapped for thirty-two hours inside the hull of the capsized USS Oklahoma Richly illustrated with original paintings and many previously unpublished period photographs, *Attack on Pearl Harbour* also includes maps, diagrams, and features that explain everything from what led to the attack to its lasting impact on our world today.

TROTTIER, Maxine
*Forget-Me-Not*
Illustrated by Nancy Keating.

Bridget is living in a small fishing village in Newfoundland during the First World War. Her mother, a widow, supports the war effort by knitting socks for the men fighting overseas. One day Bridget observes a man disembarking at the old lighthouse station. Her mother informs Bridget that the man is recovering from injuries received in battle and that Bridget’s job will be to take him food every day. As Bridget carries out this duty she gets to know a bit about this man as they communicate through notes. A crisis at sea brings her face to face with the man. It is this turning point at which he silently resolves his own issues and leaves for places unknown.

The author skillfully captures the essence of wartime without overdramatizing the subject. Trottier opens the door to discussion about human relations and the effect war has on individual lives. An information page at the end of the story, relating the history of Newfoundland’s participation in the First World War enriches this story, providing an understated depth to the human pathos within the text and also tying the text to modern traditions.

TROTTIER, Maxine
*Mr. Hiroshi’s Garden* (Original title: *Flags*)
Illustrated by Paul Morin.
Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2006.

Maxine Trotter has set her picture book *Mr. Hiroshi’s Garden/Flags*during the period of time surrounding the internment of Japanese-Canadians during World War II, and is told from the point of view of a young girl sent to spend the summer on the west coast with her grandmother. *Mr. Hiroshi’s Garden/Flags* is a powerful retelling of a dark incident in Canadian history. The author has taken a small piece of this much larger and more complex story and tells it simply and carefully, producing a tale as elegant as a Japanese garden. Paul Morin’s illustrations perfectly compliment the text. His colours are bold, the images simply but beautifully presented.
D-Day: The Greatest Invasion presents an inclusive history of the June 6, 1944 invasion of the beaches of Normandy, France. Readers are given both the strategic perspective - that of the commanders planning the invasion - and the perspective of the ordinary soldiers who experienced the invasion. The entire invasion is presented, including the efforts of Canadian, British, American, French, and German forces on land, in the air, and by sea. Illustrations include maps, photographs (both historic and modern), and copies of the works of war artists. Besides the usual index, there is a second index by nationality so a reader can easily follow the invasion from various points of view.

Desperate Glory presents the story of WWI and its huge tragedies. It describes the loss of vast numbers of Canadian lives and the impact on their families and communities. The clear well-organized text is enhanced by black and white photos, maps, a clear time line of WWI events and an extensive index.

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An Interview with
Linda Shantz-Keresztes
(President of CASL)

In her 30 years of teaching, Linda Shantz-Keresztes has worked with the Calgary Board of Education as a classroom teacher, teacher-librarian and district school library specialist and consultant. She holds a Diploma of Education and a Bachelor of Education. In June of this year she assumed the presidency of CASL and she agreed to share some of her ideas about CASL and school libraries in an interview with SLiC.

SLiC - As you begin your term as as President of CASL, what do you see as the greatest challenge facing the organization?

LS-K - Membership appears to be a challenge with many professional associations, and CASL is not unique in this area. Considering the concerns around school library staffing, collection funding, censorship and copyright issues, it appears that the advocacy role of the Canadian Association for School Libraries is urgently needed. CASL can offer the professional lifeline required by many teacher-librarians and library support staff working in isolation during some very challenging times.

SLiC - What is the greatest challenge facing Canada's school libraries and how should individuals who are concerned about school libraries respond?

LS-K - Staffing of qualified school library staff appears to be the greatest challenge in meeting the national standards for school libraries, as outlined in Achieving Information Literacy: National Standards for School Libraries (CASL). There have been regional coalitions on behalf of student learning through quality school libraries, based on the many research papers that identify staffing as crucial to meeting the learning needs and reading literacy achievements of students. Individuals who value quality learning for all elementary and secondary students should advocate on behalf of school libraries at all levels of government. Parents are the best advocates on behalf of their children, but they need to be informed of the research available, which connects outstanding school libraries with student learning success.

SLiC - What recent development(s) in school libraries are the greatest source of excitement for you personally?

LS-K - The visioning of school libraries as Learning Commons (The New Learning Commons: Where Learners Win! by Loerscher, Koechlin and Zwaan) has generated a great deal of excitement. It means embracing technologies that our students are using daily, and re-creating their use within a client needs perspective. The endless possibilities challenge us all to keep current with the various new technologies, and to find effective ways to incorporate these tools within authentic student learning experiences. I am also excited to see greater collaborative efforts between school, public and academic librarians in meeting these challenges together.
How do you think people who work in school libraries should prepare to cope with change in school libraries?

Keeping up with new technologies in support of student learning and collaborating on the most effective use of these technologies, is a challenge for many school library professionals. Creative evolvement of virtual information networks and exploration of social networking tools for student learning will prove to be essential in maintaining the relevance of school libraries to student clients. Collections must be thoughtfully developed with consideration of budgetary restraints and increased demand for 24/7 digital learning resources. Professional networks will become increasingly valuable to maintaining this edge, and with the recent launch of the CASL network this has created an accessible professional community of school library specialists.

What is the best thing about working in or with school libraries?

Students have always been at the heart of learning in school libraries and working with a dynamic collaborative team on behalf of student success, has always been most rewarding. A professional relationship with members of the larger school library community continues to sustain my personal advocacy on behalf of quality school library programs. Being part of the big picture to ensure that all learners have equitable access to excellent learning resources and experiences, through the expertise of qualified teacher-librarians and library support staff, has been the focus of my professional work. As president I look forward to working with the CASL executive and membership on providing a national forum for promoting excellent school library programs in Canada.
Many thanks to all of the school library staff members who responded to the request for school library profiles. We would love to hear from more school libraries, particularly those in the Maritimes, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. Thank you to school librarian Rolande Durand for sharing the profile of the library at École Saint-Joachim in rural Manitoba. You are invited to submit your own school library for consideration to be featured in a future edition of School Libraries in Canada. The form is available in English at http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv27n1/profile.doc and in French at http://clatoolbox.ca/casl/slicv27n1/profil.doc.

École Saint-Joachim

École Saint-Joachim and its library in La Broquerie, Manitoba
École Saint-Joachim is located in La Broquerie, Manitoba, a bilingual community of French descent located southeast of Winnipeg. There are two schools, an English K to 8 and a French K to 12. The school library at École Saint-Joachim also hosts the municipal library collection. This provides access to a much larger collection of material and broader range of services than would otherwise be the case. This is an advantage to both the school and the municipality.

The school has 299 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. There is one library technician and a collection of 22,000 books as well as nine computers.
The virtual library as a learning hub

Anita Brooks-Kirkland
Library Consultant, Information Technology Services
Waterloo Region District School Board

In my last column, I talked about setting the stage for a truly inviting virtual library learning commons with good web design principles. Now we need to explore what happens in the library’s virtual learning commons that makes it far more than a mere website.

The library is a learning space. What makes the library different from any other classroom is the range and diversity of resources that it provides. The library program is about curiosity, exploration and sense making in a resource-rich environment. Let’s start then, by thinking about how the virtual library organizes and presents its resources to connect with students in a meaningful and helpful way.

Providing Signposts and Pathways

Our virtual library collections are diverse. Subscription databases range from online encyclopedias to indexes of peer-reviewed journals. We have readers’ discovery tools, e-books, audio books and streamed video collections. The virtual library provides searchable access to our physical library collections. How we organize these multiple access points is crucial. If our students are confused by what they see, they will go elsewhere. The website design needs to help our students connect to the right starting point for their research, depending on their information need, their prior learning, and their reading level.

Organizing resources by information type and describing them in plain English facilitates access. Listing databases by publisher and describing them in library lingo hinders access. Providing one single portal to password-protected content facilitates access. Complicated procedures for remote authentication hinder access.

Visually representing access points to library resources aligns with the way we read the web. Students will likely not remember the name of a particular database, but they likely will remember that catchy green icon in the top right-hand corner of the page. We need to invite them in, not scare them away.

Tools Too!

Learning in the library goes beyond accessing resources. We support students as they sort through ideas and share their learning. The virtual library commons should connect students to the tools that they need to see their way through the research process. From sources for copyright-friendly images and music files to avatar-makers, the virtual library can bring together a toolbox for learning.

Bring It In, Don’t Send Them Out

A big shift is happening in how we can build access to web resources. Traditionally we have selected and organized links that send our students out to other sites, and consequently out of the library. Now we can bring those resources in, and make them part of our virtual learning environment. This is a fundamental change, and has huge potential. How do you draw external resources into your library’s
webspace? Many sites now offer code to insert search widgets directly into your site. Students can search other site’s resources without ever leaving the virtual library. Taking this a step further, a web utility such as PageFlakes allows us to gather news and blog feeds, interactive maps, search widgets and all manner of resources together in one place, drawing continuously updated information into the virtual library site. Students can even use these tools to construct their own flexible learning environment in the library. We are just entering this new construct, and it represents huge potential.

**Providing Context**

The virtual library learning commons puts this diverse array of resources, tools and strategies into the ethical context of academic honesty and good digital citizenship. It offers the opportunity to introduce learners and teachers to the new rules of intellectual property, authority and ethics of our networked culture.

**Fostering Learning**

So far we’ve talked about the information flow from the library to the student. Loertscher (2008) talks about information flowing, “not just from teachers to learners but in multiple directions: among students, from students to classroom teachers, from teacher-librarians to classroom teachers and students.” These learning conversations are enabled by Web 2.0 technologies, and keep the library doors open and the space active for around the clock learning.

**Instructional Alignment**

Over the past few years, I have seen many great examples of teachers and teacher-librarians using interactive web technologies to extend the classroom online. Where this is successful is when the choice of platform is based on sound instructional goals, extending and improving already exemplary teaching practices. Where this is less successful is when the instructional purpose is not clear – the technology is used for the sake of using technology. Blogs, wikis, podcasts and Nings all foster collaborative learning, but all have unique characteristics that suit different learning needs.

The most important aspect of aligning library virtual learning is in making sure that the strategies we use and our expected outcomes align with the greater goals of our respective school systems. We need to make sure that we can explain this alignment, and we also need to make sure that we are diligent about collecting evidence to inform our own instructional practices and to help us advocate for our programs.

**Just in Time Learning**

The virtual learning commons can be a hub not only for virtual classrooms and resources, but also be the virtual “anchor chart” centre. From reminders of critical information skills and downloadable graphic organizers to short video tutorials, students and teachers can have 24/7 access to the tools that they need. Gone are the days when we expect students to remember, synthesize and apply complex ideas without reinforcement. The virtual library commons enables maximum flexibility – learning from school from home, on computer desktops or portable devices, as frequently as desired.

**Reach for the Clouds**

What makes all of this possible, of course, is the wide range of free and easy-to-use online applications and tools that we have at our fingertips. An iGoogle approach to drawing information into the site is made easy by tools such as PageFlakes. Internet pathfinders can be made infinitely more useful and
powerful by using collaborative bookmarking sites like Delicious or Diigo. From literature circles built with an online blogging tool to collaborative research project wikis, there are many free tools that make creating virtual classrooms a viable option for educators. Joyce Valenza’s newly re-minted Springfield Virtual Library site provides an exciting example of bringing these technologies together into one huge and dynamic online learning space. Consider also how teacher-librarian Roger Nevin of the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board in Ontario uses Google Apps for Education to facilitate collaborative learning across his school. Students and teachers have access to online tools for everything from word processing to presentations, and can work individually or in flexible groupings as needed. No desktop applications are required beyond a web browser, eliminating the compatibility problems that often undermine students as they negotiate school and home computing environments.

Be the Hub

The new vision of the learning commons sets the library as a hub of activity in the school – a magnet for a range of teaching professionals to connect with students and to extend their own professional learning and practice. The teacher-librarian is a facilitator in this setting, coaching other professionals, connecting them with each other and with resources. The library’s virtual space can be as much of a hub as the physical space, where resources, technology, user-focused design and innovative teaching practices mingle to empower learners.

Transforming Thinking

The concept of the library as a learning commons has the potential to be transformative, yet the challenges in getting there are significant. The role of the school library program and the effective use of technology both remain largely on the fringes of curricula and mainstream instructional practices. Thinking about technological infrastructure also needs some transformation to enable networked learning. We appreciate the efforts that have created safe, secure and supportable network infrastructures and desktop learning environments in our school systems. Twenty-first century learning means access to robust and secure wireless networks, and mobile and ubiquitous computing. At some point, the needs of our already networked learners will overtake any educational infrastructure that is not adapting to these changes in a strategic and supportable way.

We need to think about modeling the potential of the virtual library commons and also demonstrate how networked learning aligns with the goals of our respective educational institutions. Merely declaring our libraries to be learning commons without the alignment, infrastructure and investment in resources and staffing needed to make it work effectively is not enough. Loertscher, Koechlin and Zwaan (2008, p. 73) state it most succinctly. “It is as if the school was to buy a school bus without wheels and then wonder why kids are not getting to school.” It’s time to get the wheels on the bus rolling again, as we explore the possibilities of the library as a true learning commons.

References


Net filtering in Canadian Libraries

Richard Beaudry
Teacher-Librarian
Langley Secondary School, Langley, British Columbia

On September 16th, 2009, MPP Gerry Martiniuk (Conservative Party) introduced a bill in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario that, if passed, would require the installation of filtering software on all computers in provincial public libraries and schools (Canwest, 2009). Net filtering is another Internet hot button issue in Canada, along with Copyright and Net Neutrality that has been discussed and debated in newspapers, magazines and on TV across the country. Though Mr. Martiniuk denied that this constitutes censorship, many people in Canada would disagree. But it should also be noted that there is support for filtering the Internet in libraries from many groups.

The big picture – Where do we stand?
In the aftermath of the Iranian elections on June 12th, 2009 and the widespread protests that followed, the Iranian government attempted to cut off the flow of information to the outside world. They did succeed, but only to a point; protesters were still able to send out information worldwide through the Internet, cell phones, and word of mouth. In fact, activists were able to launch attacks against president Ahmadinejad’s and Supreme leader Khamenei’s websites (Iranian Presidential). The aftermath of the elections in Iran revealed the limitations of Internet filtering. It can be done but it is a constant battle of wits and software and it may never be resolved.

Two views in Canada
1. The Canadian Library Association (CLA) perspective: Net safe; Net smart: Managing and communicating about the Internet in the library (Canadian Library Association).

In this document, the CLA does not oppose Internet filters in the children’s area of a library like its counterparts in the United States (American Library Association (ALA) and American Association for School Librarians (AASL) which does not endorse them (American Library Association), but instead views filters as a possible option for libraries and librarians concerned about ‘due diligence’ in safeguarding children and avoiding liability suits. The CLA guide also provides librarians with a practical approach for dealing with the media on this contentious issue in Public Access to the Internet: A Media Guide for Libraries (Canadian Library Association), and guidelines for librarians to pass on to parents concerned with their children accessing an unfiltered Internet, Have a Safe Trip! A Parent’s Guide to Safety on the Internet (Canadian Library Association).

2. The legal perspective: School librarians and public librarians in Canada have to balance their approach to Internet access in their libraries between the Canadian Criminal Code (Government of Canada, Criminal Code) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Government of Canada, Canadian Charter). If any issues arise, it would be useful to become familiar with both documents to clarify the public or school library policies in place. In most cases, the library board for public libraries and library districts would seek legal council before enacting an Internet access or use policy.

Internet censorship in Canada
In countries like Iran and in China, the government heavily censors the Internet. The 2009 elections in Iran (Iranian presidential election, 2009) and the previous year's Tibetan unrest (Tibetan Unrest) in
Foreign countries demonstrate how hard it is to actually control Internet access. Reporters Without Borders (RWB) ranks countries based on Internet Censorship regulations in place. Countries like China and Iran rank as Internet black holes (most heavily censored nations). On the opposite end, countries like Mexico and Chile are ranked as having no censorship of the Internet at all. Canada and the United States are ranked in between these two extremes and do have some forms of censorship in place (Internet Censorship). The OpenNet Initiative ranks Canada’s censorship as nominal explaining, “Internet content restrictions take the form of extensive legal regulation, as well as technical regulation of content in specific contexts, such as libraries and schools” (K. O'Keefe and W. Selzer).

Internet Censorship Tools
Even though librarian associations in Canada take issue with censorship efforts to Internet access, many public schools and public libraries have bowed to the pressure by some politicians and parents to use filtering software to limit Internet access to sites deemed inappropriate. Common Internet censorship methods used in Canadian libraries are IP Blocking, URL Filtering, Web Feed Blocking and Catch All Filtering.

IP Blocking - The IP blocking process is simple as long as the IT department for the school district or public library knows the IP addresses that need to be blocked. With the IP addresses block list specified, the IT department can expect a script to be matching each incoming connection's IP addresses against the block list entries. All users with IP addresses not featured in the ban list will be granted instant access to the library. If, however, an IP address is featured in the block list, the web server blocks access to the site.

URL Filtering - URL filtering enables IT departments to monitor and control website access and Internet use to all library computers in a school district or to all libraries in a public system. It can also block access to certain audio or video media files.

Web-Feed Filtering - Web-feed filtering lets the IT department block specific Internet feeds like "rss", "blog" or "feed".

Catch-all Filtering - In its simplest form, catch-all filtering blocks words or parts of words that are part of a list. As an example, let's use the word "sex". The word itself will be blocked but also combinations of word that include “sex”. So catch-all filtering would block a search for the word "Essex" since it contains "sex". The results can be viewed as positive for the IT department from the point of view of security or negative and for the annoyed librarian and his or her clients.

BC – Some Local Case Scenarios
Since I am familiar with BC public and school libraries, let’s look at two local library systems.

1. Fraser Valley
The Fraser Valley Regional Library (FVRL) system encompasses 24 libraries in 14 municipalities in the Fraser Valley of B.C. The administrative offices and main branch are located in Abbotsford. The FVRL has been using a software package that filters specific websites, prevents exposure to viruses, malware, and other security risks. Apart from risk prevention, the FVRL also uses this software package to reduce their legal liability over Internet use (C. Murray).

2. School districts in BC
Access to the Internet in BC school libraries is through the Provincial Learning Network (PLN). They offer basic filtering to school districts across the province and each individual district can add to the number and type of sites that can be blocked. One issue that has been at the forefront of school libraries lately is students accessing social networking websites like Facebook and wasting time. In most cases, students were able to bypass any attempt to block Facebook by going to a proxy server.

Internet Filtering – The reality
As stated earlier, the ALA and the AASL are opposed to Internet filters and filtering because they believe them to be limited in their ability to block websites and Internet content and a nuisance because they also block useful websites and content. A study by a university librarian concludes, "The internet-
content filters most commonly used by schools block needed, legitimate content more often than not” (C. Murray). Offering a more practical approach, the American Library Association recommended "a greater focus on Internet safety education in light of a new study that demonstrates Internet filters fail to block 13 percent of pornography sites while denying access to important health information” (National Research Council). It is important to understand that, for every software package or Internet gateway that filters the Internet, the same amount of effort is made to counter these filters. In Canada, this might seem like overkill considering the benign use of filters, but it is important to understand the situations in countries like China and Iran to see the importance attached to countering Internet filters. While students in school libraries and public library users of computers don’t require such sophisticated tools, there are enough who understand the complexities of Internet filtering that they can use a proxy server to bypass Internet filters. The Media Awareness Network sees a flaw in Internet filters in that "safe-only access can not happen because individual perceptions of safe are as varied as the number of sites on the Internet" (A. Schrader).

MPP Martiniuk’s call for Internet filtering in school libraries and public libraries is well intentioned and makes for good press but the best solution that parents, educators, library boards of trustees and school districts have is making sure that in Ontario (or any other province or territory in Canada) there are certified school librarians in all the school libraries and enough librarians in public libraries to monitor Internet use. Adult supervision at home, at school and in a public library is the safest filter to the Internet for students and children.

Bibliography


National Research Council. Education is the only way for children to safely navigate the Web. ALA. October 2nd, 2009 http://www.al.org/Template.cfm?Section=ifissues&Template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=77636.


Keeping up with the latest citation standards in MLA, APA, and Chicago

MLA has released the 7th edition of their handbook. Below are examples from EasyBib.com on how to cite some of the most popular sources.

### MLA 7 – Understanding Citations

Generally, citations follow the below format.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributor.</th>
<th>Title.</th>
<th>Secondary Contributors.</th>
<th>Publication Information.</th>
<th>Medium.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Contributor Information and Titles

The main contributors to the source, normally the author, are placed before the title. If there is more than one author, then arrange the authors in the same order found in the source. Reverse only the name of the first author, and follow the rest in normal form.

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| Two authors | Smith, John K., and Tim Sampson. | Title. |
| Three authors | Smith, John K., Tim Sampson, and Alex J. Hubbard. | Title. |
| More than three authors | Smith, John K., et al. | Title. |

Sometimes the main contributor is not an author, but another contributor type, such as an editor for a book or conductor for a musical piece. In this instance, follow the contributor by an abbreviation of the contributor type (i.e. ed. or cond.). If plural, then change the abbreviation accordingly.

| One editor | Smith, John K., ed. | Title |
| Two editors | Smith, John K., and Tim Sampson, eds. | Title. |
| One conductor | Smith, John K., cond. | Title. |

Many sources have secondary contributors - individuals who added to the work outside the main contributors. This can include editors and translators for books, and producers and screenplay writers for movies. Place secondary contributors after the title. Precede the name of the contributors with the abbreviation for the contributor type. For instance, “Ed.” means “Edited by.”


You may decide to emphasize the work, for example, when citing a live performance. In this instance, place all the contributors after the title. Authors and writers are preceded by the word “By.”


Some sources may have corporate or group authors. Write these organization where you would write the authors, if they are also publishers of the source, include it in the publication information as well.

| Corporate author | Modern Language Association. | Title |
| Government author | Illinois. Dept. of Industrial Relations.. | Title. |

### Other guides from EasyBib:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Understanding MLA 7</th>
<th>MLA 7 Quick Reference Guide</th>
<th>MLA 7 Web Sources</th>
<th>MLA 7 Parenthetical Guide</th>
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<td>APA Quick Reference Guide</td>
<td>APA Web Sources</td>
<td>APA Parenthetical Guides</td>
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<td>Chicago Quick Reference Overview</td>
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<td>Teacher and Librarian Center</td>
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Engage and Grow with Questions

by Carol Koechlin and Sandi Zwaan
School Library Consultants, Ontario

For students to fully participate and thrive in this new ‘learning age’, they must be critical and creative thinkers. Questioning is the base skill that makes all thinking purposeful. Consequently intuitive questioning techniques are becoming essential learning tools. Through the lens of effective questions students learn to be responsible and effective information users. Reading, writing and thinking for understanding are enhanced by effective questioning strategies. We leave behind the ‘information age’ where teachers ask all the questions and students hunt for the answers. In this new age of learning, it is evident that creativity, innovation, collaboration and knowledge building are highly desired competencies.

To make this possible, schools and libraries need to build a culture of inquiry. Educators and librarians must become good coaches of questioning. Learners need to understand how to apply their skills on the learning stage. We need to develop intuitive questioners who engage with information and ideas deeply and grow as learners. To be successful we propose the following questioning concepts:

1) Effective Questioning Requires Knowledge of the Topic

You cannot ask effective questions about something you know nothing about. Questioning is key to building 21st century learning skills, dispositions, and habits of mind as well as content knowledge. Like all skills, questioning cannot be taught in isolation. The content provides the reason for questioning and the questions provide the thinking tools needed to delve deeper into the content. Investing in building background knowledge about a topic is critical in order for students to engage meaningfully with content. Learners need opportunities to gain overviews and build vocabulary and context for critical and creative questioning.
Guiding learners through a process of exploring a topic and making connections will ensure questioning success.

2) **Questioning Is a Skill**

To become good questioners students need strategies, experience and feedback. They need opportunities to play with questioning, trying out different techniques until they are happy with their questions. They must know that different kinds of questions serve different purposes. They also need to see good questions and understand the criteria of an effective question. Learners need to make connections between the questions they pose and the relevance and accuracy of the responses. Just like any skill learners need modeling, overt teaching, and lots of practice in context of appropriate content. They require feedback so that they can become better and better at questioning. Learning how to respond to the questions of others and probe for clarification is just as important in our growing collaborative learning environments.

3) **Questioning Is the Key to Understanding**

Good readers ask questions to:

- Talk to the text (record questions and thoughts as they read)
- Make connections (text, self, author, world)
- Clarify ideas
- Make inferences
- Make predictions
- Test ideas and theories
- Challenge ideas, perspectives, opinion, propaganda
- Provoke thought
- Extend their thinking

Good writers ask questions to:

- focus their ideas
- clarify their thinking
- organize their ideas
- test their ideas with others
- analyze their thinking
- create personal meaning
- monitor their own work
- evaluate their work

Good Researchers Ask Questions

Successful research depends on student developed questions that will drive engagement and analysis. Critical thinking and understanding require strategic questioning to see relationships and make personal connections. Higher order questions enable learners to consider alternatives, develop solutions, and create new knowledge. Effective and creative synthesis is a result of those questions. The best way to ensure that students work is original thinking is to empower them to develop their own focus with good inquiry questions.
Research based on effective questions:

• stimulates curiosity and engagement
• demands rich information sources
• guides and focuses the process
• provokes deep thought
• prompts analysis and synthesis
• enables personal understanding
• encourages transfer

4) Questioning Is the Catalyst for Metacognition

To become better learners students need to be guided through the process of thinking about what they have learned and how they have learned. Only then are they ready to consider what they need to do to improve. To accomplish this, students need to do more than reflect; they need to actively ask themselves probing questions about the content learned as well as the skills and processes used. They need meaningful opportunities to engage with others to gain feedback, share problems and ideas, and then set targeted goals for improvement.

5) Questioning Must Be a Habit of Mind

If learners are to be successful readers, writers, researchers, and participants in learning communities they need to hone their questioning skills. The vast sea of information and ideas available to students today through print and digital sources, social networking sites, and a myriad of multi modal providers, on any topic make learning today exciting but also complex. Questioning is not negative. Questioning helps learners to scrutinize information and ideas critically or systematically or analytically or methodically, and thus become healthy skeptics of what they read, view and listen to.

6) Questioning Creates a Desire to Know

Questions are the mental hooks that capture interest, imagination, and creative spirit. If students own the question they are interested and motivated. Without student generated questions, reading, writing, research, communication, and general study lack engagement and will not generate meaningful growth. The question is a catalyst for purposeful thinking and a desire to learn. Questioning nurtures intellectual curiosity which is a valued disposition for future success.

Questioning is a cross curricular skill. In order for learners to become intuitive questioners, we must incorporate lots of questioning practice into all areas of study. Only then will students transfer these skills, and know when and how to apply their questioning skills in different situations. Questioning is a natural motivator that we need to capitalize on and nurture. When we combine an authentic learning experience with the right technology, we have great synergy to drive successful learning.

There are many good professional resources to help you teach and coach student questioning. We have listed our favourites for your continued exploration. To give our readers a taste of some practical questioning applications and to encourage experimentation we have developed a few examples of student questioning and the benefits to learners in the accompanying chart.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Engage and Grow with Questions</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exploring a topic for research</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Question Storming</strong> – individually learners record lots and lots of questions about a topic on sticky notes. Share with their group and look for common themes. Group sticky notes into categories to create a web. Learners build questions about questions to keep on expanding the web. Learners could also use webbing software such as Bubbl.us. Use these questions to develop an e-tour to build background on the topic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| - Develops fluent thinking  
- Builds vocabulary and broadens the topic  
- Provides opportunity for reinforcing development of effective questions  
- Promotes collaboration  
- Expands connections  
- Builds on knowledge and skills of others |
| **Evaluating Websites** |
| **Talk to the text** – provide learners with sticky notes so they can record their reflections and questions as they read. If they are reading digital text they can stick question notes on the computer monitor. Older students can use Diigo to share their questions and respond to others as they are reading articles. |
| - Develops reflective thinking  
- Engages readers with content  
- Promotes personal connections with content  
- Makes reading active and purposeful  
- Encourages curiosity  
- Establishes talking points |
| **Making Inferences** |
| **Re-Quest Procedure** – Learners read an article, website page, textbook paragraph and develop three levels of questions.  
1) On the line questions - The answers to these questions are found directly in the text. (facts already known)  
2) Between the line questions – The answers to these questions are formed by putting together clues from the text. Students need to make some inferences based on information available and will help shape understanding of the text.  
3) Beyond the line questions – These questions are usually reflective in nature. The questioner is making connections with the text and other concepts or ideas related to the text. The answers to these questions require thought about the implications of the facts and clues and perhaps further research. Ask learners to respond to a blog entry with one question from each level. |
| - Establishes details  
- Helps students understand how questions are constructed and how different types of questions serve different purposes.  
- Provides strategies for discovering where to look for answers  
- Promotes creation of questions demanding inference making and predicting  
- Provokes deep thinking  
- Spurs curiosity, thinking and further investigation |
| **High Order Thinking** |
| **De Bono’s Six Thinking Hats®**  
Use this strategy for deep reading, analyzing visuals or deconstructing media. Develop questions to reflect each thinking hat:  
White - the neutral hat. White hat thinking identifies the facts and details of a topic.  
Yellow - the optimistic hat. Yellow hat thinking focuses on the positive and logical aspects of a topic.  
Red - the intuitive hat. Red hat thinking looks at a topic from the point of view of emotions and feelings.  
Green - the new ideas hat. Green hat thinking requires imagination and lateral thinking.  
Black - the judgmental hat. Black hat thinking examines and weighs the negative aspects of a topic to provide caution.  
Blue - the metacognition hat. Blue hat thinking encompasses and reflects on all the other hats looking at the big picture.  
Set up a wiki for each thinking hat so learners can build on each other’s questions. |
| - Pushes critical and creative thinking  
- Highlights facts  
- Considers affective aspects  
- Looks at issue from all sides  
- Identifies stakeholder perspectives and opinions  
- Promotes analysis in preparation for synthesis  
- Spurs creativity and innovative thinking  
- Promotes holistic consideration |
| **Planning for writing** |
| **Visualization** – use concept mapping software tools such as Smart Ideas® and Inspiration® to brainstorm questions and then decide on the best questions to frame research and report writing. Learners create question cells and organize layered content from their research to use in their reports or multimedia presentations. |
| - Supports visual learners  
- Clarifies thinking  
- Promotes fluency  
- Assisting in organizing thoughts  
- Facilitates planning  
- Highlights need for details and supporting material  
- Organizes ideas |
| **Self Evaluation** |
| **Checklists or Rating Scales** – Learners develop questions to self assess the knowledge gained and processes applied in their learning, and use these to create an assessment tool. |
| - Describes levels of achievement  
- Highlights important skills and content  
- Identifies strengths and weaknesses  
- Facilitates metacognition |
Using Survey Monkey learners can survey others in the class using these questions. Debrief the results and set class goals for improvement.

- Promotes goal setting
- Helps learners develop personal responsibility for their learning

Your Ideas

Selected Resources to Support Student Questioning


Ciardiello, Angelo V. *Puzzle Them First*. Newark, DE: International Reading Assoc. 2007


Koechlin, C. and Zwaan, S. *Q Tasks: How to teach students to ask questions and care about their answers*. Toronto: Pembroke, 2006.


Questioning Skills Wiki [http://question-skills.wikispaces.com/](http://question-skills.wikispaces.com/)

Q Task Bibliography by S&B Books [www.sbbooks.com](http://www.sbbooks.com)
This is the second in the series of articles in which presenters revisit topics explored in sessions related to school libraries at the CLA Conference in 2009.

Info to go for school libraries!

Linsey Hammond
Editor, School Library Information Portal

If you, like most school library staff, need information on library management, resources, programs and advocacy instantly - connect to the School Library Information Portal: [http://www.clatoolbox.ca/SLiP](http://www.clatoolbox.ca/SLiP).

This portal, a “publication” of the Canadian Association for School Libraries, is the place to go for Canadian documents and information related to school library programs. SLiP focuses on Canadian content and features documents from across the country that you can use, either as reference points for your school or organization to develop something similar, or as downloads to use as they are.

The SLiP portal features six categories of information for school library professionals: Advocacy, Standards & Policies, School Library Programs, Professional Development, Research and Management. Clicking on one of the blue tabs in the header on the SLiP homepage will take you to the category and its subheadings.

**TOP: Advocacy:**

- Community Connections (9)
- International Documents (3)
- Public Relations (9)
You can then choose a link of interest to you such as "Public Relations" which will lead to the following links:

"Library Advocacy Now!" - Canadian Library Association's workshop, action plans, quotes to use and links to more sources. A good place to start for any library.

A teacher-librarian makes your child's school library the heart of the school - A brochure produced by the Ontario Elementary Teacher's Federation.


Advocacy slide show - Haycock - A sample slide show which could be a model for local presentations.

OR, you can enter a search topic in the search box on the header to locate links on a specific topic.

The portal features numerous links in the School Library Program category, as that has been a popular topic in recent years, particularly with the emphasis on literacy and literacy instruction in many school districts across Canada. This section features layers of links ranging from Library and Archives Canada’s Learning Centre Toolkit for students (http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/education/008-3000-e.html) to Alberta’s Focus on Inquiry: A Teacher’s Guide to Implementing Inquiry-Based Learning (http://education.alberta.ca/media/313361/focusoninquiry.pdf) and Me Read? No Way! a practical guide to improving boys’ literacy skills (http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/meread/meread.pdf) from Ontario.

As well as the links to specific documents, there are also links to other portals. These will keep you busy for hours as the links lead to links which lead to links, etc! Examples are the Living Sky School Division's Teaching for Information Literacy Site from Saskatchewan, edited by Donna Desroches and the Ontario School Library Association’s Think You Can’t? Yes You Can: the Teacher-Librarian’s Toolkit for Evidence Based Practice at http://www.accessola.com/osla/toolkit/home.html.

While my favourite section is Resources for Teacher-Librarians under School Library Programs, some of the most popular sites appear to be in the Management and Standards & Policies sections and are those which focus on Collection Development and Facilities. (Could the numerous hits in these sections reflect the assignment in part 1 of many education courses in school librarianship?) There are certainly many useful links in these sections. The basics on selection policies, weeding, inventory and book repair are covered, and there is also a site on creating a multicultural collection. As well, there are helpful tips on dealing with challenged materials, acceptable internet use requirements, and cataloguing.
Be sure to browse through the variety of brochures, posters, documents and portals that represent the expertise and innovation of those who care about school libraries in Canada! SLiP is updated several times a year with new sites and documents, so there is often new content, and suggestions from users for additions are always welcome.

A few Disclaimers:

- some of the documents referenced are not available on-line and must be ordered from the source indicated
- links change frequently and sometimes the link to a specific document or section of a website seems to revert from a very direct link originally entered to the less direct home page of the site. Use the search feature on the home page of the site to which you are directed to focus in on the title originally sought.
- while there are some fantastic American and International sites out there, SLiP’s mandate is to focus on Canadian content
- SLiP is edited and maintained by volunteers (actually, one volunteer at the moment)

ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation launches annual Munsch at Home Contest

ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation recently launched the annual Munsch at Home Contest – a fun contest where families get to write a creative story together in hopes of winning a private home visit from Robert Munsch!

But that’s not all… the winning family will also get to choose a local school, library or literacy group to receive a public reading by Mr. Munsch. Encourage your schools to promote the contest to their students with this attached flyer and they could receive their very own private story-telling event from Robert Munsch!

The contest runs until December 11 and is open to all Canadian families.

The Munsch at Home Contest runs in celebration of Family Literacy Day, an annual initiative developed by ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation and Honda Canada to celebrate parents and children reading and learning together and to encourage Canadians to spend at least 15 minutes enjoying a learning activity every day. Thousands of Canadians across the country participate in this initiative with their families, and in their communities every year. Last year, more than 119,000 Canadians read together to break the Guinness World Record for “Most Children Reading With an Adult, Multiple Locations.”

For more information, please visit http://www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca.
A CALL TO ACTION

What do we believe about student learning? About supporting teachers?

What do we believe about school library programs?

RETHINKING...

REVISIONING...

TRANSFORMING...

A National Research Symposium to begin the discussion will be held Tuesday evening June 1st, all day June 2nd, 2010 at the University of Alberta, Edmonton just prior to CLA Conference.

The moderator of this first time historic Canadian event is Dr. David Loertscher Professor at the School of Library and Information Science, San Jose State University

Planning Facilitators:

Carol Koechlin, Library Program Consultant, Speaker, Author

Liz Kerr, School Library Advocate, Education Director, OLA

Cindy Matthews, CASL Councillor-at-large: Advocacy Portfolio, TDSB Instructional Leader

Ruth Hall, OSLA President, TDSB SS Teacher-Librarian

Linda Shantz-Keresztes, CASL President, Calgary Bd of Ed SS Teacher-Librarian

Please join in the conversations on our planning wiki at http://tmcanada.pbworks.com
Application Form

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Please check here if you want to be excluded from CLA mailings □

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□ CASL Corresponding Membership $50.00
□ CLA Full Membership $200.00 ($100 to members earning less than $40,000, per annum)

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To learn more about the benefits of full CLA membership, please visit: www.cla.ca

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