



The Update

We hope that you have all had some time to relax and enjoy the summer. Now that September is upon us we're all gearing up for a busy fall. Here's a sample of what you'll find in this issue of **The Update**.

Check out page 8 to find out about some of the wonderful programs the Ottawa Public Library will be offering in the coming months. And then you might like to read the article on 'bookless libraries' on page 9.

Be sure to mark your calendars for **Friday, October 21**. You won't want to miss the Friends of Literacy Luncheon with our special guest speaker **James Bartleman**.

If you are looking for some great new reading for learners, you'll want to check out the articles on the Golden Oak Book Awards (page 7) and the latest batch of Good Reads (page 10).

ALSO had a very successful Amazing Scrabble Race last year so they are going to host a second one, on **Saturday, September 24**. Consider putting together a team for this event that will put the fun in fundraiser!

And of course lots will be happening in programming. Service delivery organizations will prepare to implement the new Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF). The OALCF is a competency-based approach that will help practitioners and learners clarify connections between literacy development and real life tasks in learning, at work and in the community. It will take literacy instruction beyond discrete skill building to focus on the interaction of skills, knowledge and behaviours that reflect adult learners' needs, goals and interests. You will be hearing a lot about the OALCF in the coming months.

On page 6 there is an article about the ACE Equivalency Program offered by Ontario's Community Colleges and the increasingly popular ACE Distance programming.

Looking for professional development opportunities? The Ontario Literacy Coalition is hosting a free webinar on Workforce Essential Skills on **September 13**. See page 12 for details.

September is a busy, exciting and vital time of year for Literacy and Basic Skills and Academic Upgrading, a time to celebrate new beginnings for everyone. Have a great school year!

Friends of Literacy Luncheon

Enclosed with this newsletter is your invitation to the *Friends of Literacy Luncheon* which takes place on **October 21** at the beautiful Restaurant International at Algonquin College.

We are honoured to welcome **James Bartleman**, former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and author of several books, as our keynote speaker

Reserve your spots as soon as possible by contacting Maureen by phone (**613-233-3232**) or email (**maureenmcgovern@occl.ca**). While the Coalition doesn't accept credit cards we can confirm your reservation by phone or email and you can mail us a cheque prior to the day

We can reserve tables for groups of 8 or more.

Dates to Remember.....page 2

National and Provincial News.....page 3

Ottawa Public Library.....page 8

Local Program and Conference News.....page 13



DATES TO REMEMBER

OCCL's mission is to support, promote and strengthen adult literacy services in Ottawa through communication, research and public education.

Please direct any comments or questions to:
Executive Director: MaryWiggin
Community Coordinator:Maureen McGovern

Address: 107-211 Bronson Avenue,
Ottawa, Ontario K1R 6H5
Phone: 613-233-3232
Fax: 613-233-0299
Website: www.occl.ca
E-mail: abcline@occl.ca

Board of Directors

Chair: TBA
Treasurer: Gordon Metcalfe
Literacy Reps: Kim Oastler
Brenda Gaitens
Jan Goatcher
Community rep: Wendy Siebrasse
Library rep: Nelly Beylouni-Zamat

Local Planning & Coordination Committee

Co- Chairs: Jan Goatcher
Claire Snasdell-Taylor
Members:
Lynn Desjardins Louise Lalonde
Nicole Dupuis Maria Makrakis
Brenda Gaitens Kim Oastler
Chris Girard Carol McMurchy
Simone Edwards - Forde

NOTE: Articles and items published in **The Update** do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ottawa Community Coalition for Literacy but are intended to share information and ideas related to adult literacy

- September 13 - Board & LPCC Meetings**
Heartwood House
153 Chapel Street
- September 21 - Family Literacy Day Committee**
Heartwood House
153 Chapel Street
- October 12 - LPCC Meeting**
Youth Services Bureau
Employment Services
1355 Bank Street
- October 21 - Friends of Literacy Luncheon**
Restaurant International
Algonquin College
- October 30 - November 5 - Financial Literacy Week**
- November 9 - LPCC Meeting**
YM-YWCA Merivale
1642 Merivale Road, 2nd floor

Mark your Calendars!

Friends of Literacy Luncheon
Friday, October 21, 2011
Restaurant International
Algonquin College

Keynote speaker: **James Bartleman**



NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL NEWS

News from NALD...

New Interim CEO at NALD

The Board of Directors of the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD) is pleased to announce the appointment of its new interim CEO, Bill Stirling, who replaces Katherine d'Entremont.

Bill has been a member of the NALD Board of Directors since June 2007. He is from St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, where he has been involved in community business and economic development for over 20 years.

A New Home for ABC Life Literacy!

This summer *ABC Life Literacy* relocated their office. Their new address is:

110 Eglinton Avenue East
Toronto, Ontario, M4P 2Y1

All other contact information remains the same.

ABORIGINAL LITERACY CAMP

Camp Successful in Preventing Summer Reading Loss

July 29 marked the end of a pilot project in Mistawasis First Nation which introduced literacy camps to over 300 young campers. By using fun, literacy-related activities such as Balloon Relay and Mannequin Mania, campers were reading, writing, thinking and being physically active.

The camp, which is funded by PotashCorp, is run by Frontier College. Frontier College is a national, not-for-profit literacy organization founded in 1899 which has a long history of working with Aboriginal communities in Canada. It operates over 60 summer literacy camps across the country and has seen great success using this model.

Parents often find that their children experience a smoother transition to school and notice that the children take books home more often and feel more confident in their reading skills.

PotashCorp is a proud partner of Frontier College. "Literacy is the basis of all learning and is instrumental for a high quality of life," said Rhonda Speiss, PotashCorp's Manager of Corporate Philanthropy. PotashCorp strives to improve the quality of life in the communities where they operate, and is pleased to play a role in bringing these camps to Mistawasis First Nations.

To find out more, visit

www.frontiercollege.ca/english/news_releases/aboriginal_literacy_camp_wraps_up.htm



NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL...cont'd

Opportunities for Women Expanding in the Skilled Trades

By Derek Sankey, Postmedia News, June 2011

Megan Wisser grew up in Wetaskiwin, Alberta, as the daughter of a rig welder. So after working summers at a bar — a part-time job she describes as less than ideal — to pay for her nursing education, she jumped at the chance to become her Dad's helper at one of his job sites for eight months.

Suddenly nursing just didn't have the same appeal for her. "I absolutely love working in the trades," says Wisser. "I wasn't expecting it and I didn't think it was something that I would pursue by any means."

Yet that's exactly what she did. "I just wanted to get my journeyman ticket," says Wisser. She changed her career path and enrolled as a steamfitter/pipefitter - an occupation that few women traditionally take on. "There are not many females in the trades - a few" she says.

It hardly stopped her. Instead, she pursued an education in interior design while pursuing her career as a steamfitter/pipefitter in Calgary. Since then, she has worked all over the province, including the heart of the oilsands region of Fort McMurray.

"The more I know about it, the more I love it, so that's where I want to be," says Wisser. "There are lots of opportunities for women that I wasn't expecting to see."

After she earns her ticket, she wants to work for a few years as a steamfitter/pipefitter, and perhaps get some experience at a fabrication shop before moving into a career in quality control, perhaps as a safety specialist, or eventually using her interior design education to design houses and restaurants - the sky is the limit.

When it comes to her trade, though, her passion is obvious. "There are so many new things and there's always something that's going to be a new challenge, always," says Wisser.

The steamfitter/pipefitter trade serves a diverse range of industries. These include myriad commercial and industrial projects where there are either large diameter pipes or more complicated piping systems including everything from water, steam and heating lines to process piping in pulp and paper mills, power generation plants and the oil and gas sector - the single biggest employer of steamfitter/pipefitters in Alberta.



NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL...cont'd

“There is an increasing need for people to help operate and maintain those facilities,” says Darrel Hilman, Academic Chair of the pipes trades at SAIT Polytechnic. He laughs at the notion that women can’t or shouldn’t do the job.

“Women are considered a non-traditional part of the trades and some of the misperception is that the pipefitter has to be a big, burly guy who can crack pipes all day long,” says Hilman. “We have a number of women who have been and are involved in the trades and it dispels that myth. They are very successful at it.”

Another myth about many trades is that they don’t provide a good income. A steamfitter/pipefitter earns, on average, \$40 an hour - excluding bonuses, overtime and living allowances. “Within three years of starting the trade, and once you get your journey person certification, \$100,000 to \$150,000 is not unusual at all,” says Hilman.

The education path generally starts with being hired as an apprentice with an employer and enrolling into a technical training institute after 10 months of work. Then, the individual spends two months in training and continues to work for three more years.

Once the trainee earns a Red Seal qualification, jobs can be taken up anywhere in Canada. “The steamfitter/pipefitter trade tends to be a little more mobile than some of the other trades,” says Hilman.

Wisser encourages other young people to consider it as a lucrative career choice. “Even if you don’t think a trade is what you’re passionate about, it’s just an experience that really opens your eyes,” she says.

© Copyright (c) Postmedia News

Women - Don’t Overlook the Skilled Trades!

In many countries of the world, women have chosen non-traditional skilled trades as careers and are recognized as valuable contributors to their society (By non-traditional, we mean trades that were traditionally limited to men). In Canada, women are just starting to work in these skilled trades and are excelling. But they’ve only just started! Yes, in some cases, physical strength is needed. So what? If you’re a woman who is committed to keeping in excellent shape, and you want to be in on the cutting edge of a fulfilling and in-demand career, don’t hesitate to consider the skilled trades. To find out more visit:

www.tradeability.ca/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=3451



ACE Equivalency

The Academic and Career Entrance (ACE) program is a high school equivalency program for adult learners delivered by Ontario's Community Colleges. It prepares students to apply for and succeed in community college postsecondary programs and apprenticeship training. It is recognized as an OSSD (Ontario Secondary School Diploma) Grade 12 equivalent by Ontario's Community Colleges and by the Apprenticeship Branch. ACE courses have been evaluated by the Ministry of Education and are determined to be "highly comparable" to Senior Level college stream courses.

The ACE Certificate is recognized as an OSSD equivalent by a growing number of employers when hiring and promoting staff. Major employers such as the OPP, Proctor and Gamble, CP Rail, Revenue Canada, Tembec, VALE INCO and many municipalities and regional hospitals recognize the ACE Certificate.

The ACE Program is also offered online and is called Ace Distance.

Studying with ACE Distance has its advantages:

- Provides ultimate flexibility — study when it's convenient
- Offers the convenience of being able to do school work at home in order to accommodate family obligations and employment schedules
- Removes barriers such as time, child care and transportation restrictions that prevent students from attending on site programs
- Allows students to study even if they live in a small community where in-class upgrading programs are not available
- Allows students to use the Internet if they prefer learning in an online environment to the traditional classroom
- Teachers and academic advisor are only an email away
- No interruptions in training — Monthly start dates allow students to prepare to continue further training or re-enter the workforce as quickly and conveniently as possible
- Gives students 22 weeks to finish each course, but they can complete as quickly as they are able
- Meets the needs of Ontario Skills Development, Second Career and other sponsored clients

Note: Due to limited funds, ACE Distance is unable to enrol as many students for this upcoming fall session in the tuition free stream.

What does this mean for students planning to participate in ACE Distance programming?

- Tuition free intakes for ACE Distance courses will only be available in August and September 2011 and January 2012
- Free intakes will be limited to 40 students for each ACE Distance course
- Restricting intakes is only a serious issue for the high demand courses - Core Math, Chemistry/Biology and Communications
- There will be a fee payer option available for all ACE Distance courses in October, November and December 2011 and February and March 2012. Currently Durham College is the only college accepting fee paying students. By October there will be more colleges participating, and participating colleges and fees will be posted on the website
- There is a waiting list for the high demand courses beginning with the August intake
- Free intakes will resume in April 2012

To find out more about ACE Distance visit:

www.acedistancedelivery.ca/choosing-ace.php



The Golden Oak Award

The Golden Oak™ Award is a reading program for adults who are involved in literacy programs and/or trying to improve their reading skills. It provides a unique opportunity for new readers to read books chosen specifically for them. They can read the books by themselves, with their tutors, or as part of a reading group. Adult new readers are encouraged to read one, two, or all of the books and share their thoughts about them in an on-line discussion.

Adults who join literacy programs are often hoping to gain skills to accomplish everyday tasks such as filling in job applications, writing notes and taking messages, reading bills and understanding statements, and reading package directions and medication details. Adult learners rarely say they want to read books for pleasure. There are good reasons for this; it's hard to find adult books written at a beginning to intermediate level; it's hard to say that you don't read well, but would like to read a book on your own; it's hard to know what you would like to read when you might never have read a book before in your life.

The Golden Oak™ program makes it possible for adult learners to build those necessary skills, but also creates an environment where new readers of any age can discover the pleasure of reading a good book.

For a fee of \$20 (including HST) literacy centres can register in the program which offers them ideas and resources, and helps to empower their learners.

For more information contact Meredith Tutching, Program Coordinator for the Ontario Library Association.

Email: mtutching@accessola.com
Phone: 416-363-3388 or Toll-Free 1-866-873-9867 ext 22
Fax: 416-941-9581 or 1-800-387-1181

We'll feature descriptions of the 2011 Golden Oak Book selections in the November/December issue of **The Update**.

“REACHING FOR NEW BEGINNINGS: AIMING HIGH” Deaf Literacy Initiative (DLI) is CELEBRATING 20 Years!

Deaf Literacy initiative is celebrating its 20th Anniversary! The theme is: **“Reaching for New Beginnings: Aiming High,”** November 16 – 19, 2011, at the Courtyard Marriott in Toronto.

The event will be a three-day workshop for practitioners in Deaf literacy programs ending with a banquet and awards night on Saturday, November 19. Special guest at the banquet will be the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Mr. David Onley. For more information contact DLI at:

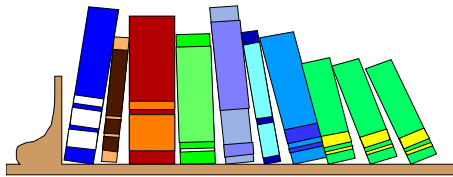
(905) 897-6772 (TTY)
(905) 897-5656 (Voice)



Ottawa Community Coalition for Literacy

Ottawa Public Library (OPL) News

www.bibliottawalibrary.ca



Here are a few activities that will take place at some Ottawa Public Library branches this fall. Visit their website for a comprehensive list of free workshops and events at a branch near you.

Elmvale Acres

Chat & Social: English Conversation for Newcomers

Tuesday September 06, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

Participants can improve their English and meet new friends in a relaxed setting. This program is offered in partnership with the Somali Family Services. For more information, contact Abdullahi Ali at 613-797-4263, or abdullahi.ali@bibliottawalibrary.ca

Prepare for your Ontario Driver's License G1 test / Préparer pour le G1

Monday September 12, 11:00 am - 6:00 pm

To book an appointment for a one-on-one session to prepare for the G1 Ontario Drivers License written road test call 613-236-0003, ext. 225 or email Maral Boudakian at: mboudakian@lassa.ca.

Session d'aide individuelle en préparation pour l'examen du code de la route G1. Contactez Maral Boudakian à 613-236-0003, poste 225 ou envoyez un courriel: mboudakian@lassa.ca

Main Library Branch

Citizenship Test Preparation Information Session

Tuesday September 6, 3:30 - 5:00 pm

Get help in preparing for the Canadian Citizenship Test in a one-on-one setting or in a group environment. Arabic and Kurdish translation available. Information: 613-796-7221 or 613-480-2424 x16906. In partnership with LASSA (Lebanese and Arab Social Services Agency of Ottawa)

Nepean Centrepointe Branch

Computer ABCs in Mandarin

Tuesday September 6, 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Learn basic computer skills. Instruction in Mandarin. Offered in partnership with the Ottawa Chinese Community Services Centre. Registration: 613-899-3108

Pens & Paper Writing Group

Thursday September 15, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Participants can write for two hours, then whoever would like to read their work can. Contact pen-and-paper@babyl.dynds.org

Orléans Branch

Orléans Writing Group

Tuesday September 6, 10:00 - 11:00 am

Budding or published authors can join this local writers' community network! Participants can drop in to get or give support to other writers. Participants should bring work to share.



Electronic Libraries

Is a Bookless Library Still a Library?

We've been hearing about it for years, but the bookless library has finally arrived, making a beachhead on college campuses. At Drexel University's new Library Learning Terrace, which opened just last month, there is nary a bound volume, just rows of computers and plenty of seating offering access to the Philadelphia university's 170 million electronic items. Scott Erdy, designer of the new library, says open, flexible space — the furniture is movable and the walls act as one giant whiteboard — allows student and staff “knowledge transfer,” a concept reinforced by Danuta Nitecki, Dean of Drexel's libraries. “We don't just house books, we house learning,” she says.

The trend began, naturally, with engineers, when Kansas State University's engineering library went primarily bookless in 2000. Last year, Stanford University pruned all but 10,000 printed volumes from its new engineering library, making more room for large tables and study areas. And the University of Texas at San Antonio ditched print in lieu of electronic material when it opened its engineering library in 2010.

But when books disappear, does a library lose its definition? “The library is a societal tent pole,” says Michael Connelly, best-selling author of *The Fifth Witness*. “There are a lot of ideas under it. Knock out the pole and the tent comes down.” Connelly says that browsing through physical books brings inspiration of the kind that led him from wandering his campus library's stacks straight to a writing career. “Can something like that happen in a bookless library? I'm not so sure,” he says.

From a design perspective, some architects also lament the inevitable trend toward booklessness. Steven Holl, architect of Queens Library's new branch, in New York City, says books still provide character and are a nice counterpoint to technology. “Acknowledging the digital and its speed and putting it in relation to the history and physical presence of the books makes it an exciting space,” Holl says. “A book represents knowledge, and striking a balance in a library is a good thing.” But other designers, like Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas who designed the Seattle Central Library, seem inspired by the challenge presented by a world going bookless. His vertical “book spiral” can house over 1 million books while opening floor space for the “equal presentation” of emerging media.

Others are hedging their bets that if the library isn't bookless now, someday it probably will be. The upcoming transformation of the New York Public Library's main branch “anticipates the parallel and integrated worlds of electronic digital systems and traditional books” as they complement each other in flexible space that can endure changes, says architect Norman Foster.

Read more at www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2079800,00.html#ixzz1SSrq5ryo

Discover Digital Media

If you are interested in finding out more about e-books, visit the Ottawa Public Library website at www.bibliottawalibrary.ca and click on the words **Digital Media** on the home page. Then you can click on *New to Digital Media* to access detailed information on what is available and how it all works.



Good Reads

Good Reads are books written by some of Canada's best authors that feature great stories written in clear language. The books are short (less than 100 pages) enjoyable and written for adult learners.

If you visit ABC Life Literacy's website, <http://abclifeliteracy.ca/goodreads>, you can click on the book covers to receive a brief description for each of last year's books. Most of them have free reading and teaching guides that can be downloaded too. From this link you can also access the *Grass Roots Press* website to purchase the books online. The new Good Reads books that will be released in September are:

Picture This

by Anthony Hyde

Paul Stone is an artist. One day, a beautiful woman named Zena walks into his studio. For Paul, it is love at first sight. Zena offers Paul a simple, but strange, job. When Paul takes the job, he steps into a world of trouble. Zena is mixed up with a crook. They are planning to steal three paintings. Paul finds himself dragged into an art theft worth \$3 million. As time goes on, Paul learns he is being lied to, even by Zena. Will Paul stick to the plan? Who will end up with the money? And who will go to jail?

The Day the Rebels Came to Town

By Robert Hough

The year is 1920, and all of Mexico is at war with itself. Gangs of rebels roam the country stealing money, food, and horses. Carlos is twenty-eight years old. He works in his father's cafe. One day, a gang rides into Carlos' village. When the gang leaves, they kidnap Carlos. Weeks later, the rebels and Carlos ride into the town of Rosita. Suddenly, Carlos is forced to make a life or death decision. He does so, though in a way that surprises everyone. Is Carlos a brave man or a coward? It is a question that takes him a lifetime to answer



2011 Good Reads Books

New Year's Eve

By Marina Endicott

On New Year's Eve, Dixie and her husband Grady set off on a car trip. They plan to visit Grady's family, five hours away. But soon they're caught in a blizzard. They turn off the highway and go to their friend Ron's house. Both Grady and Ron are RCMP officers. When Ron must go out on duty, Grady goes with him. Dixie spends the evening sharing secrets with a couple of other RCMP wives. By midnight, Dixie has learned a thing or two about marriage, and about love. New Year's Eve leads to a turning point for Dixie and Grady and a new road for them both.

Home Invasion

By Joy Fielding

Kathy Brown suddenly wakes up. Was that a noise in the house, or part of her dream? In her dream, Kathy was about to kiss Michael, her high school boyfriend. Her husband, Jack, lies beside her, snoring. Michael is exciting. Jack is boring. When Kathy hears the noise again, she gets up. Then she hears whispers. Then she feels a gun at her head. Two men are in the house. Kathy and her husband face a living nightmare. Kathy must also face her real feelings about her husband. The outcome surprises everyone, most of all Kathy herself.

Missing

By Frances Itani

Missing is based on a true story. Luc Caron lives in northern France during World War I. One day, he sees three airplanes fighting in the sky. Luc watches in horror as a plane flips over and the pilot falls to his death. Luc is the only witness. The Greenwoods own an apple farm in Canada. Their son, a pilot, has been missing for 11 years. In 1928, they receive a package from England. The package contains a letter and three objects found at the site of a plane crash. How is the mystery of the missing pilot solved, bringing peace to Luc and to the pilot's parents?



Conferences, Events & Training

Free OLC Webinar on Workforce Essential Skills

The Ontario Literacy Coalition (OLC) is pleased to announce that Karen Geraci and Marisa Mazzulla of Inquire Consulting will be hosting a webinar, **Workforce Essential Skills**, on Tuesday, September 13 at 1:00 pm. Participants should gain a better understanding of the importance of workforce Essential Skills programming.

Workforce Essential Skills across Canada (WESCan) was a two-year research study to investigate workforce ES approaches and implementation processes. The project team worked in partnership with five providers from coast to coast to build community-based, locally relevant workforce ES programs. From such diversity sprang a common understanding of the elements that contribute to workforce ES programming, and a common commitment to offer strong, flexible programming to meet the needs of employment-bound adults.

Participate in this webinar to:

- gain a deeper understanding of what makes Workforce Essential Skills programming different
- understand how this type of program can be implemented
- learn about the benefits of this type of approach, for learners, programs and employers

... and much more!

To register for the webinar visit www3.gotomeeting.com/register/793474078

For more information contact olc@on.literacy.ca

ALSO's 2nd Amazing Scrabble Race

ALSO is holding its *2nd Amazing Scrabble Race* fundraiser on **Saturday, September 24** at the Arrow and Loon Pub in the Glebe. Up to 80 participants can put their literacy to the test and compete in the Speed Scrabble Tournament.

To learn more and/or to purchase tickets (\$25 each) visit:

www.also-ottawa.org/scrabble-race/



Local Program News

Welcome Nelly!

OCCL is pleased to welcome **Nelly Beylouni-Zamat** of the Ottawa Public Library to the Board. Nelly replaces recently retired Marcia Aronson as the Ottawa Public Library representative.

Nelly graduated from Florida State University in 1984, and has been with the Ottawa Public Library since 2003 in various positions. She was recently appointed Manager of Diversity and Accessibility Services, a portfolio that includes Literacy Older Adults, Newcomers, Homebound, Bookmobile, Accessibility, and Volunteer Services.

Nelly is fluent in several languages and she loves nothing more than to curl up with a good book (murder/mystery preferably). She also enjoys meeting people from different backgrounds which makes her work at the library a perfect match for her

and Welcome Jan!

OCCL also welcomes **Jan Goatcher**, Coordinator of the Skills Plus Program at John Howard Society, as the newest literacy representative to the OCC Board. Jan has been a member of the Local Planning and Coordination Committee (LPCC) for many years and currently serves as Co-Chair of the Committee.

Affordable Computers for Learners

RC Tech Outreach is a program providing affordable refurbished computers for low-income learners. The Outreach program is funded by the Trillium Foundation, and run by RCT (Renewed Computer Technology) which is best known for its *Computers for Schools* program. For more information, see: www.rcto.ca/Program/RCTech_OUTREACH/default.aspx

To apply for one of the RC Tech OUTREACH computers, applicants must:

- be a resident of Ontario
- Meet Low Income Cut-Off Standards
- Be enrolled in a learning program (employment programs, ESL, literacy public and post-secondary classes, and any classes or organizations that will write a letter to confirm enrolment of more than 1 day)

The computer packages cost \$60 + HST and include:

- Pentium 4 computer with Software (Windows XP, Word, Excel & Outlook 2007)
- Monitor, keyboard and mouse.

Learners on Ontario Works (OW) can have the \$60 fee paid by OW. If your program has learners who would benefit from this initiative and you'd like to have more details, call or email Keith Blinn at 1-905-795-0497 /

kblinn@rcto.ca



RESOURCES

Read Forward – A New Adult Reading Assessment

With a desire to create a new adult reading assessment that is easy to use in the classroom, incorporates everyday reading contexts, and uses a benchmark that is meaningful across Canada, Bow Valley College developed *Read Forward*, an easy-to-use series of adult reading tests referenced to the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS).

These paper and pencil tests require minimal preparation, can be completed in an hour or less, and are easy to mark. Preparing the assessments entails printing off double-sided PDFs from a USB flash drive and having a discussion with the learners about assessments and what to expect when writing a *Read Forward* assessment. The tests are designed to be written in one hour but this is flexible and up to the discretion of the instructor. All tests come with an answer key and marking guidelines are included in the User Guide; this makes marking straight forward.

Learners who participated in the piloting phases of *Read Forward* appreciated the content of the texts used in the assessments because it was familiar and applicable to their day-to-day lives. With an even division between the contexts of home, community and workplace, learners will work with everything from nutrition labels to energy bills and pay stubs to job interview tips.

The key to the resource is the finer division of the traditional IALS levels into smaller and more specific segments. *Read Forward* contains tests at six segments that are referenced to IALS mid-level 1 to low-level 3. Each segment focuses on a specific set of skills and there are five different tests for each segment, giving learners multiple opportunities to work on and then master the skills.

The resource comes with a paperback User Guide, which provides instructions on how to use the resource and details on how it was developed, and a USB flash drive which contains 30 tests, answer keys, locator tests, and results feedback forms. All items on the USB flash drive can be printed in colour or black and white, as many times as needed.

Read Forward is available for purchase from the Bow Valley College Bookstore for \$59.95 plus shipping and GST. Training on how to use the resource is strongly recommended. For more details, and free introductory training videos, please see the *Read Forward* website.

[\(http://blogs.bowvalleycollegeweb.com/adultreadingassessment/\)](http://blogs.bowvalleycollegeweb.com/adultreadingassessment/)

If you have questions, comments, or a group interested in face-to-face training, contact Audrey Gardner at the Centre for Excellence in Foundational Learning by email bvccfl@bowvalleycollege.ca or phone 1-403-410-1502.

Deanna Jagger
Bow Valley College



RESOURCES on the INTERNET

New Online Tools for Teaching, Learning Literacy and Essential Skills

There are three new interactive teaching tools on literacy and Essential Skills. The tools build on what research has demonstrated about the impacts of violence on learning. They are available at:

www.learningandviolence.net/changing.htm.

Learning and Violence would like to get your feedback on these resources by September 30. If you'd like to express your opinion, the online feedback link appears at the end of the description of each tool.

Student Kit: Helping Myself to Learn

Stunning graphics help tell animated stories that will captivate students' hearts and minds immediately. Each one of the five dynamic stories shows how experiences of violence can live on and affect learning – leading students to space out in class or forget what they just learned; struggle with old habits that interrupt their learning; feel like losers, always comparing themselves to others and coming up short; or quit altogether, weighed down by one crisis after another. Students will recognize themselves and their friends in the stories and find resources and strategies to help everyone learn effectively. Teachers will value the wide range of thoughtfully conceived activities to explore the issues in depth – using words, images, music, and movement – appropriate for many different literacy levels and situations. (<http://blog.learningandviolence.net/forms/form3.php>)

College Tool: Changing Lenses, Changing Practices

A room with a seemingly simple filing cabinet looks at every aspect of the college learning environment to ask – how do students experience the college setting and how do everyday practices support or hinder learning? This online and print resource is for everyone who wants to increase learning success in a college setting. (<http://blog.learningandviolence.net/forms/form1.php>)

Community-based Literacy Reflection Guide: Creating a Culture of Care

A colourful quilt held in place by a diverse group of people hints at the ideas behind this Guide – the acknowledgement of violence in our society and the desire to create community programming rooted in social justice for all students. This Guide builds on the best of community-based practices to encourage us all to dig deeper and notice how students' experience of each aspect of the program is shaped by familiarity with violence. At every stage the authors pay careful attention to individual and systemic violence, inviting readers to recognize such forms of violence as racism and classism. They encourage everyone to reconsider everyday practices in order to create the best possible community-based learning environments for all. (<http://blog.learningandviolence.net/forms/form2.php>)



More Internet Resources

E-Communications from ABC Life Literacy

ABC Life Literacy will send out e-communications to your email inbox for free on any or all of the following topics:

- Family Literacy
- Financial Literacy Week
- Workplace Essential Skills and
- ABC Life Literacy News

To sign up, visit <http://abclifeliteracy.ca/ecommunications>

ABC also has some fun literacy tips and activities for people of all ages.

Visit <http://abclifeliteracy.ca/tips-and-activities> for tips in English.

The French versions are available at

<http://abclifeliteracy.ca/astuces-activit%C3%A9s-et-ressources>

The Learning Edge

The Learning Edge is an interactive online newspaper designed for adult literacy learners. Stories and articles are accompanied by learning activities such as games, crossword puzzles, online quizzes and writing contests. Stories are written in clear language with online audio and highlighted text.

The Learning Edge focuses on enhancing independent living, self-management and self-direction and employment preparation. Issues 10, 11 and 12 are packed with activities and information that focus on different aspects of Workplace Apprenticeship. You'll find them at:

www.thewclc.ca/edge/index.html



Bits & Bites

Correlation Between Spelling Errors and Poor Sales

By Angela Hickman, *Weekend Post* · Jul. 23, 2011

If you were worried that the importance of good spelling was going the way of the giant panda (which is to say endangered but not yet extinct), we have good news. The BBC is reporting that a U.K. entrepreneur has discovered that spelling errors on a website can cut online sales in half. Misspellings, it seems, are a red flag for consumers who might have concerns about a website's credibility, Charles Duncombe says. His concerns were backed up by the Confederation of British Industry, whose head of education and skills said many employers have had to send their staff for remedial literacy lessons. Besides being plain embarrassing, these basic errors are costing online businesses millions in lost revenue. With that much at stake, surely that means a renewed focus on spelling and grammar classes is on the way, right?

Video Games Teach Kids 'New Literacy': Do You Buy It?

By Dakshana Bascaramurty - posted on the *Globe and Mail Blog*, Thursday, August 4, 2011

When you check in with your kid, who is now into hour three of his Halo marathon, you repeat that well-worn phrase your mother used on you about killing brain cells and trading in the controller (well, it was a joystick back in your day) for a book. But are video games really the anti-books?

A new article on PBS's *Mediashift* web portal (www.pbs.org/mediashift/2011/08/the-literacy-of-gaming-what-kids-learn-from-playing215.html) presents a different argument. Our definition of literacy is outdated. Kids may be learning a "new literacy" through playing video games.

"They are learning a new interactive language that grants them access to virtual worlds that are filled with intrigue, engagement and meaningful challenges. And one that feels more congruent with the nature and trajectory of today's world," writes Aran Levasseur. Exploration is a key part of learning and gaming encourages it, he says. Also, unlike many academic pursuits, it lets kids fail without making them feel like they've failed.

It's just understood that players will have to keep practicing to advance through levels and put their problem-solving skills to work. Mr. Levasseur addresses the most frequent critique of video games — that their content is often offensive: "Games are based on problems to solve, not content. This doesn't mean that game-based problem-solving should eclipse learning content, but I think we are increasingly seeing that a critical part of being literate in the digital age means being able to solve problems through simulations and collaboration."

In the last decade, many academics and digital opinion leaders have been exploring this issue and reaching similar conclusions. A 2008 study completed by researchers at Fordham University found students in grades 5 to 7 improved their cognitive and perceptual skills after playing a video game they'd never seen before.

To weigh in on the debate or to read more, visit:

www.theglobeandmail.com/life/the-hot-button/video-games-teach-kids-new-literacy-do-you-buy-it/article2119395/