

# Teaching Librarian

The Magazine of the Ontario School Library Association  
ISSN 1188679X



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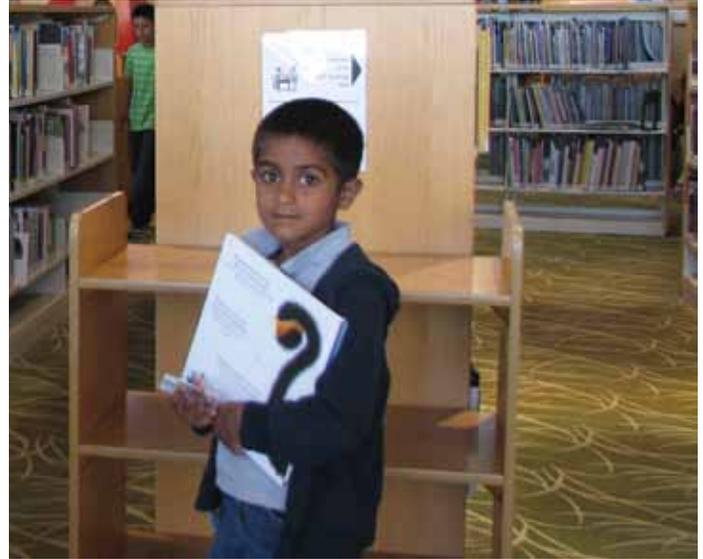
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**do we @ your library**

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Volume 21, Issue 1



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## TingL mission

The **Teaching Librarian**

*The Teaching Librarian* is the official magazine of the Ontario School Library Association. It is published three times a year to support OSLA members in providing significant and effective library programs and services. *The Teaching Librarian* promotes library programs and curriculum development that furthers exemplary educational objectives. The magazine fosters effective collaboration within the school library community and provides a forum to share experience and expertise.

## TingL references

*The Teaching Librarian* is a general magazine for OSLA members and not a scholarly journal. If your article does require citation of sources, please provide them within the text of your article or column with as much or as little bibliographic information as necessary for identification (e.g. book title, year). If you feel that the works you are citing require full identification, please provide a bibliography at the end of your piece, formatted according to the latest Chicago Manual of Style (15th edition) or APA Style.

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## TingL guidelines

V. 21, issue 2	“Crime and Punishment @ your library” Deadline: September 22, 2013
V. 21, issue 3	“Wonder @ your library” Deadline: January 21, 2014
V. 22, issue 1	“Climate Change @ your library” Deadline: May 10, 2014

Articles of 150–250 words, 500 words, or 800–1,300 words are welcome. Articles, when approved, should be accompanied by good quality illustrations and/or pictures whenever possible. Text must be sent electronically, preferably in a MS Word (or compatible) file. Pictures can be printed or digital (minimum size and quality are 4” x 6” and 300 dpi, approximately 700 mb and in jpeg format, if electronic). With photos which contain a recognized individual, please secure the individual’s permission in writing for the use of the photo. Photos taken at public events, or crowd shots taken in a public place do not require permission from the subjects. All submissions are subject to editing for consistency, length, content, and style. Journalistic style is preferred. Articles must include the working title, name of author, and email address in the body of the text. OSLA reserves the right to use pictures in other OSLA publications unless permission is limited or denied at the time of publishing. Any questions about submissions should be directed to the Editor of *The Teaching Librarian*: TingLeditor@gmail.com.

## TingL subscriptions

*The Teaching Librarian* is a benefit of OSLA membership. Non-members may subscribe for \$36.00 per year, plus HST.

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## On the cover:

Photo by Diana Maliszewski.  
Public librarian Analisa Zabella reads to the Grade 3 Lucy Maud Montgomery P.S. Summer School students at the Malvern branch of the Toronto Public Library.

# The Editor's Notebook



Diana Maliszewski

**DO** — two little letters that pack a huge punch. The classic question everyone hears when they return to school in September is “What did you do this summer?” I was doing a lot this past summer within and beyond the borders of school libraries. I taught a Grade 3 class for summer school; it was a great change of pace and extremely enjoyable. A book I had a small part in writing was published (*Graphic Novels and Comics in the Classroom: Essays on the Educational Power of Sequential Art*, edited by Carrye Kay Syma and Robert G. Weiner). My family and I traveled to Baltimore to visit my husband’s relatives and enjoy Maryland’s humidity. Building the foundations for future activities, I corresponded with people

from the National Reading Campaign, and the Open Book Foundation about potential projects and wrote research grant proposals. The more we do, the more we can do. Although there may be excitement in anticipation of summer, there is even greater satisfaction when we have a long list of things that we have actually done at the end of the break.

Isabelle Hobbs, our current OSLA President, wrote in her report for this edition of the magazine about advocacy, highlighting what we do to help students to do what they have to do. Doing is a verb that serves us well throughout the year. Reflecting on our practices (“do we”) and then flipping the insights into actions (“we do”) is the key to professional growth and working with purpose and passion.

Several of our feature articles for this issue, for example Natalie Edgar’s piece on weeding and Lisa Hascal’s commentary on reading, may inspire you to get around to some of those things you have been meaning to do. When we fear that what we do will not live up to our dream, we need to keep in mind Pixar’s 11th rule of storytelling, “Putting it on paper lets you start fixing it. If it stays in your head, a perfect idea, you’ll never share it with anyone” (<http://tinyurl.com/rulesforstorytelling>). Don’t just think about what you need to do to make your vision a reality— DO IT! P.S. Our third feature article by Kate Edwards offers a chance for Ontario school libraries to win a free box of books. Read carefully to see how! ■

**Tell us what you think:  
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Carla Wintersgill

## Do we Dewey?

### MEET METIS: THE POST-DEWEY ALTERNATE

“Metis is a flexible, intuitive and child-friendly system of library categorization. It uses whole language, visual cues, and logic that reflects children’s own experiences. It puts the child in the center of his or her own search.”

– Tali Balas Kaplan, Andrea Dolloff, Sue Giffard, & Jennifer Still-Schiff, creators of Metis

#### Main Categories of Metis

- A. Facts/Concepts
- B. Machines
- C. Science
- D. Nature
- E. Animals
- F. Pets
- G. Making Stuff
- H. Arts
- I. Sports
- J. Ourselves
- K. Community
- L. USA (Then & Now)
- M. Countries (Then & Now)
- N. Languages
- O. Traditions
- P. Tales
- Q. Verse
- R. Humor
- S. Mystery
- T. Adventure
- U. Scary
- V. Graphic Novel
- W. Memoir
- X. Fiction/Picture stories
- Y. Beginning fiction
- Z. Middle level fiction

**M**etis was created in 2011 by four elementary school teacher librarians at the Ethical Culture School in New York City as a Dewey Decimal System alternative. The teachers felt they were spending more time teaching children to navigate the Dewey system than actually using the library’s materials. They were also faced with some practical quandaries, such as, “Why are we using decimals in a children’s library, when they don’t learn that until fourth-grade math?”

Metis was named after the clever mother of the Greek god Athena, and is based on three guiding principles:

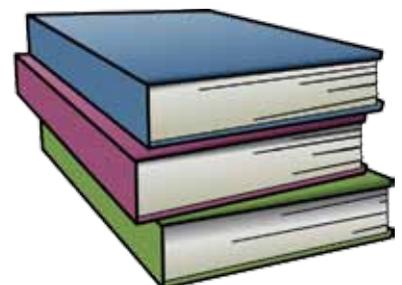
1. **Child-centered** — created from the students point of view and used appropriate language for children
2. **Browsable** — The system of organization should be easy to use for all users - students, faculty and parents
3. **Flexible** — It should be able to accommodate a growing and fluctuating school library

The result is a classification system that uses 26 broad categories (such as Animals, Making Stuff, Facts, etc.) ordered using the letters of the alphabet A-Z. Subcategories are listed in alphabetical order. Call numbers use the letter indicating the category, as well as words for the sub-category.

#### For more information:

<http://metisinnovations.com/>

<http://www.slj.com/2012/09/librarians/are-deweys-days-numbered-libraries-across-the-country-are-giving-the-old-classification-system-the-heave-ho-heres-one-schools-story/>



# President's Report

**T**he theme of this issue is Do We @ Your Library. This is actually a question we should ask ourselves frequently and ties in perfectly with the focus on advocacy that OSLA Council is pursuing this year. What do we do in our libraries on a typical day?

## Do we:

- create an open, welcoming and safe space?
- ensure that students and staff know that they can come to us for help?
- talk to students about what they want to read? (Not necessarily always suggesting what they should read i.e. level but what they want to read?)
- create displays of popular/timely topics?
- teach students how to find, use and evaluate information?
- demonstrate the variety of tools available for creation and sharing information?
- create/share virtual spaces that contain authoritative websites and online tools?
- allow students and staff the opportunity to request items that should be purchased for our collections?
- teach and model digital citizenship, including copyright regulations?
- collaborate with staff to co-plan and co-teach lessons and units, with a focus on research and inquiry?

The answer is yes! We do all of these things and more. Is your school administration, however, aware of everything you do? Are parents aware of the impact you have with their children? I don't think any of us are comfortable 'tooting our own horn' but in this age of cuts to library budgets and staffing, advocating for libraries and teacher-librarians is a necessary part of everyday life. (And, as a teacher-librarian for 21 years, that has not changed. I was told to advocate for my role from the time I started in 1992.)

So, what can you do? The following are just a few tips that allow you to advocate for your position within your school and school board.

## School:

- Write a staff newsletter for every staff meeting. Include information about upcoming events in the library, special displays and new resources. You could also include a brief description of your ongoing collaboration with teachers/classes. Your staff and administration will clearly see how busy you are and it may perhaps inspire a teacher to approach you to co-plan a unit.
- Write something for every school newsletter. It could be information about clubs, such as Forest of Reading®, or a couple of educational websites/apps that parents may be interested in.
- If a class completes an inquiry unit, invite their parents to come in to see their presentations or to do a gallery walk through their creations.
- Go to every division meeting, if elementary, or every subject meeting, if secondary, to find out what those teachers are working on. Offer to help. Share resources that may tie into what they are doing.
- Volunteer to be a staff representative on your School Community Council.

## Board:

- Whether you have someone in a centralized role to support library or not, talk to your colleagues.
- Attend all available board professional learning opportunities to keep up with latest trends in education.
- If library professional learning is not available, work with colleagues to organize your own learning opportunities. It could be done after school or you could ask to do it on a PD Day.
- Attend OLA's Super Conference. Invite a colleague to attend with you. Share your learning with your staff and administration.
- Ask to present a report on school libraries at a Board Meeting. Present with your library colleagues. Collect quotes from parents and students.
- Ask to present to your union Bargaining Committee. They may have no idea what you do and would appreciate a presentation by you and a few colleagues.



Isabelle Hobbs

## OLA's Advocacy Committee

Additional advocacy suggestions and tools will be created over the next year as OSLA Council works with OLA's Advocacy Committee. We were thrilled to hear that this committee, made up of members from all library divisions, has decided to focus on school library advocacy and we will be working closely with them over the next year to produce some strategies and resources to help you.

## Canadian Library Association Standards for School Libraries

The Canadian Library Association (CLA) has undertaken a project to write a new set of standards for school libraries. They have asked for feedback from every provincial and territorial school library group in Canada. In Ontario, I am co-chairing our provincial committee with Elizabeth Gordon, OSLA Past President. Our committee is made up of teacher-librarians, library technicians, library consultants, teachers, administrators, federation representatives and parents. The committee has met three times to verify the details in our submission.

### The framework for the submissions is organized around five Principles:

**Principle 1:** Facilitating Collaborative Engagement to Cultivate/Empower a Community of Learners

**Principle 2:** Cultivating Effective Instructional Design to Co-Plan, Teach and Assess Learning

**Principle 3:** Fostering Literacy to Engage Life-Long Learners

**Principle 4:** Designing Learning Environments to Support Participatory Learning

**Principle 5:** Leading the Learning Community to achieve school goals in alignment with district and provincial/territorial education policies and plans

Our Ontario response was created during our face-to-face meeting. The time passed quickly as discussion flowed around the room. An observer would have heard people speaking

passionately about school libraries and the important role they (and you) have in our schools. Our submission was sent to the CLA committee in May. The CLA committee brought all the provincial/territorial submissions together over the summer. A draft version will be sent back to committees to review/edit in the fall.

The final product will be released in ebook form during Treasure Mountain at the CLA conference in June 2014. Details will be shared when it becomes available.

## T4L Tips @ OSLA

Have you noticed these emails? OSLA Council's goal is to send out one of these emails each month to highlight features/ideas found in the T4L website ([www.togetherforlearning.ca](http://www.togetherforlearning.ca)). Remember, you can submit your own ideas/lessons to the T4L website and help it continue to grow! The submission form can be found on the lower right side of the main page.

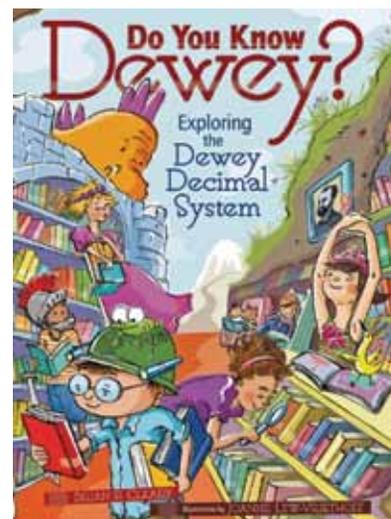
## Web Sessions on T4L

Did you notice that Anita Brooks-Kirkland and Carol Koechlin offered a session through the Education Institute called Together For the Future? OSLA Council would like to offer recordings of web sessions that would be of interest to school library staff and that tie into the principles of the Together For Learning document. What would you be interested in? Reading Engagement? Research and Inquiry? Building a Learning Commons? Let us know by sending an email to [president@oslacouncil.org](mailto:president@oslacouncil.org). Links to the recordings can be found on the OSLA website and the Together For Learning website.

As we gear up for another school year, consider the many opportunities/resources that will be available to you in the coming year. A new school library standards document from CLA! Tips and web session professional development tied to Together For Learning! New curriculum (hopefully) from the Ministry that will tie in directly with our inquiry focus! All of these resources can be used as advocacy tools to promote your library program and your role. ■

# Book Buzz

Derrick Grose



## Dewey Do We?

**U**nable to derive much guidance for this issue’s “Book Buzz” from the theme, I turned to two scriptural works of teacher-librarianship. For the “Do we?” part of the double-entendre I turned to Together for Learning, and you will see a reference to an “idea to consider” along with a page reference in each category. For the Dewey aspect of the column I turned to my library’s (somewhat outdated) DDC21 Dewey Decimal Classification. In this column I have tried to cross index questions arising about our role in the Learning Commons with the ten broad classifications in the Dewey Decimal system. I hope that some of the books I have found at the intersections of the best practices and thematic categories will be useful to you and your students. Please note, considerable poetic licence has been exercised in placing books into Dewey Decimal categories; this column should not be used for guidance in cataloguing your collection!

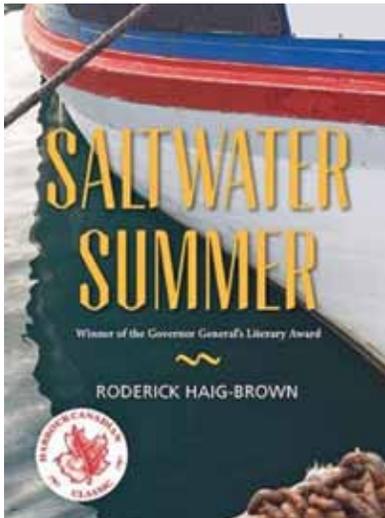
000 – Computer science, Library and Information science and general work  
Do we “[t]each effective search strategies that enable independent and relevant learning”? (TfL 17)

### **Do You Know Dewey? Exploring the Dewey Decimal System**

by Brian P. Cleary

illustrations by Joanne Lew-Vriethoff  
*Brookfield, Conn.: Lerner Publishing Group, 2012; ISBN 9780761366768*

Brian P. Cleary and illustrator Joanne Lew-Vriethoff have provided junior and middle-grade readers (marketed for grades two to five) with a colourful introduction to one of the most commonly used systems for organizing school libraries. The use of verse is likely to be irritating to poetry lovers but it helps add a playful tone to a discussion of a dry subject. It is interesting that the potentially controversial subject of mythology has not been mentioned in the 200’s (Religion section) and some other cataloguing decisions may not be consistent with your library but this could lead to an interesting discussion of “right” and “wrong” answers and interpretation. Students could be asked to classify a number of books that do not fall nicely into any one category. This book is not definitive but the discussions might include why we should spend time discussing this classification system in an age of on-line catalogues, databases and, of course, the Internet.



100 – Philosophy and psychology  
Do we “[create] an atmosphere that fosters intellectual freedom and the power to choose to explore ideas, question beliefs and reach personally significant understandings”? (TfL 17)

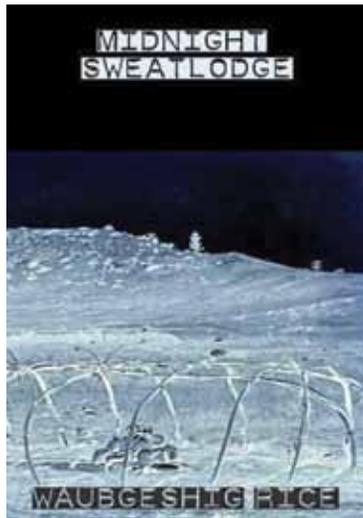
### **Saltwater Summer**

by Roderick Haig-Brown

Madeira Park, B.C.: Harbour Publishing, 2013.

ISBN 9781550176094

Not too many of the teenagers at my school would ever say, “Gee, my old man’s going to be sore...” but, despite the dated language, Roderick Haig-Brown’s *Saltwater Summer* is a provocative exploration of attitudes towards work, the environment, community and the meaning of life. It challenges racist attitudes that still existed in the post World War II era despite the sacrifices made during war that should have defeated such attitudes. The novel also questions the pursuit of material wealth for its own sake. Often naïve in its tone, this novel demonstrates that many of the existential questions haunting students today are not new ones, and, although the times were simpler half a century ago, many of the answers to the most important questions facing humankind have not changed.



200 – Religion  
Do we “[e]xplore the role aboriginal people’s play in Canadian Identity”? (TfL 31)

### **Midnight Sweat Lodge**

by Waubgeshig Rice

Penticton, B.C.: Theytys Books, 2011

ISBN 9781926886145

There was a time when First Nations’ traditional spiritual practices were outlawed and if anyone attempted to construct a sweat lodge in which to conduct a ritual of purification and healing, the Indian Agent would destroy it. That is why, according to author Waubgeshig Rice, people began to conduct their rituals at night, under the cover of darkness. It is the sweat lodge ritual that provides the framework for this collection of short stories exploring the quest for healing after a range of traumatic experiences, both personal and cultural, ranging from residential schools and the theft of land to substance abuse and political corruption in First Nations communities.



300 – Social sciences  
Do we “[e]ngage in routine discussions on current topics”? (TfL 31)

### **May Day: A Graphic History of Protest**

by The Graphic History Collective

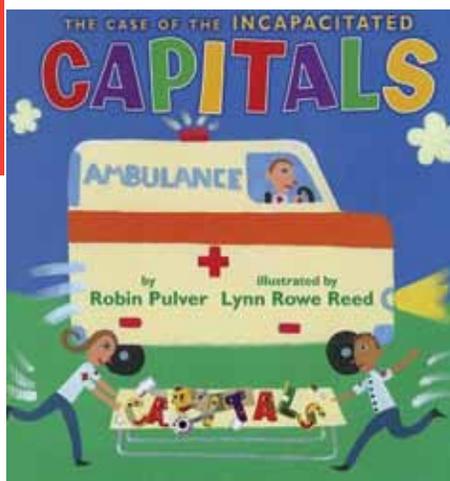
Toronto: Between the Lines Books, 2012.

ISBN 9781926662909

Students have been reading and hearing in the media about the consequences of poor protection for workers in Bangladesh but they may have difficulty understanding some of the connections between our history and what is now happening on the other side of the world. *May Day: A Graphic History of Protest* will help students to understand their world by describing aspects of the struggle for workers’ rights in North America and around the world. While not attempting to provide a comprehensive history of the struggle for workers’ rights, the comic documents some significant events. These range from the Haymarket Riots in Chicago in 1886 to bean suppers in Cumberland, B.C. that commemorate the struggle for safe working conditions in the mines. Although the somewhat academic tone of the language at times seems at odds with the graphic format, this comic traces how a celebration of spring morphed into a focus for protests in defence of working people. The graphic narrative, as well as the extensive bibliographies can be useful tools in showing students the power of collective action.

*continued on page 12*

...continued from page 11



#### 400 – Language

Do we “[p]rovide opportunities for students to see themselves reflected in what they read”? (TfL 16)

### **The Case of the Incapacitated Capitals**

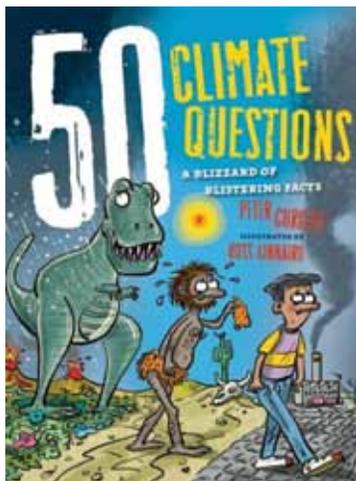
by Robin Pulver

illustrated by Lynn Rowe Reed

New York: Holiday House, 2012

ISBN 9780823424023

As the world googles and IMs its way to case insensitivity, Robin Pulver offers an entertaining story to persuade students in junior grades to capitalize on the uses of upper case letters. Although I work in a secondary school, I can identify with the despair experienced by Mr. Wright, the teacher in the *The Case of the Incapacitated Capitals* who is trying to persuade his students to pay attention to neglected capital letters. As the word play in the title suggests, Pulver adds a dimension of fun to learning about grammar by setting his story in a familiar school setting. The story is supplemented with an explanation of the origins of the terms “upper case” and “lower case” as well a list of rules for capitalization.



#### 500 – Science

Do we “[T]ake on the challenge of learning about and taking a position on an issue (local, national or global)”? (TfL 31)

### **50 Climate Questions: A Blizzard of Blistering Facts**

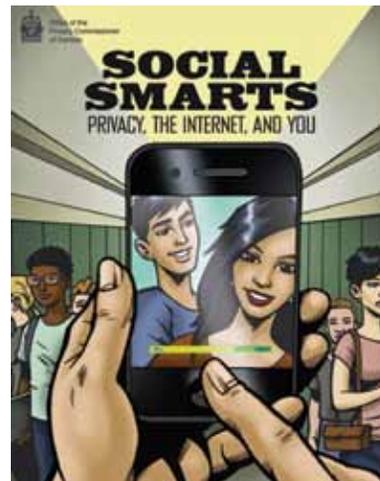
by Peter Christie

illustrated by Ross Kinnaid

Toronto: Annick Press, 2012

ISBN 978-1554513741

*50 Climate Questions: A Blizzard of Blistering Facts* is not the handy reference tool that the title suggests. This is not to say that the “blistering facts” lack scientific credibility. The book takes scientific facts and presents them with a supermarket tabloid approach emphasizing gaseous emissions (of the biological sort), excrement and weather-related events of a catastrophic scale. This is not a criticism! The approach, complemented by colourful and entertaining illustrations makes the book a great tool for creating curiosity and opening up discussions about serious issues confronting the planet. It may also help to unenthusiastic readers to discover the entertaining and informative experience that reading can be.



#### 600 – Technology

Do we “[L]ook for real world contexts for curriculum based expectations”? (TfL 31)

### **Social Smarts Privacy, the Internet and You**

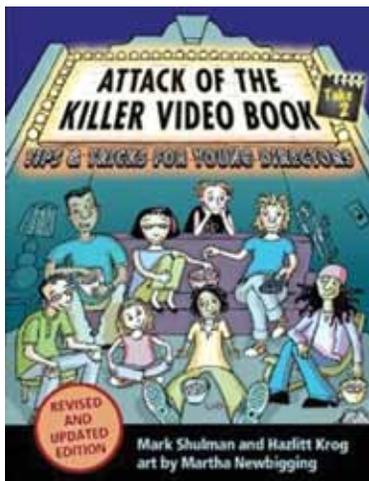
by Mark Slutsky

illustrations by Daniel Buller

Ottawa: Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, 2012

ISBN IP54-43/2012E

This twelve page graphic novel ([http://www.priv.gc.ca/youth-jeunes/fs-fi/res/gn\\_e.pdf](http://www.priv.gc.ca/youth-jeunes/fs-fi/res/gn_e.pdf)) from the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada depicts the role of cell phones and social networks in the lives of typical teenagers. A cute cell phone character provides warnings regarding the perils of sharing personal information on cell phones and through gaming and social networking. The language and narrative are simple but the format is attractive and this free graphic novel could act as a good starting point for a discussion of safe behaviour in a wireless world. Perhaps this example could inspire students to rise to the challenge of developing their own cautionary graphic narratives. The great news for French teachers is that this resource is also available in French ([http://www.priv.gc.ca/youth-jeunes/fs-fi/res/gn\\_f.pdf](http://www.priv.gc.ca/youth-jeunes/fs-fi/res/gn_f.pdf)).



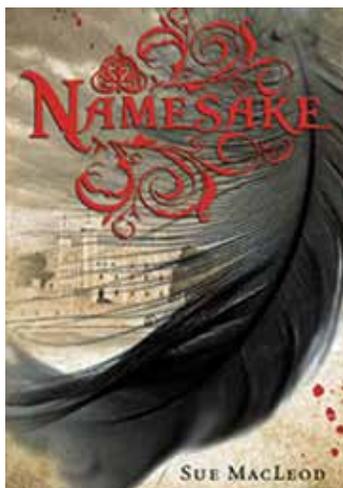
## 700 – Arts

Do we “[a]llow different ways of expressing learned content”? (TfL 30)

### Attack of the Killer Video Book Take 2

by Mark Shulman and Hazlitt Krog  
art by Martha New Bigging  
Toronto: Annick Press, 2012  
ISBN 9781554513666

*Attack of the Killer Video Book Take 2*, an update of a 2004 publication, is a comprehensive yet very accessible introduction to creating a video for students in elementary grades and beyond. It guides the reader from finding inspiration to sharing and marketing a finished product. Acknowledging the rapid changes in technology, the authors are very practical in endorsing the use of whatever hardware and software the user has available (however primitive). The approach to storyboarding and scripting is very practical and an exemplar for a simple script is included. There are great practical hints for lighting and sound production, as well as suggestions for special effects. The inequities in access to video technology are acknowledged in discussions such as how to make a movie without a video camera, and how to achieve “green screen” effects without expensive technologies. There is an index to assist readers who are looking for a quick technical tip, but there is considerable creative inspiration and entertainment to be found in reading this book from cover to cover.



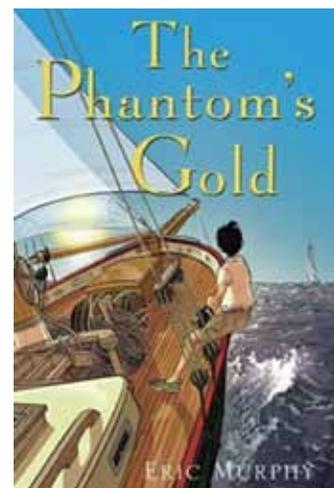
## 800 – Literature

Do we “[c]onsciously connect learners with the local community organizations and resources”? (TfL 31)

### Namesake

by Sue Macleod.  
Toronto: Annick Press, 2008.  
ISBN 781927485293

Sue Macleod’s novel *Namesake* could easily fit into all three of the categories in the 900’s by combining travel (through time, to England) with history and biography as a contemporary Jane Gray meets up with her historical namesake. However, the exploration of Elizabethan language woven throughout provides an interesting literary touch in this young adult novel that is really about an adolescent’s struggle to fit in with her more academically successful friends while enduring life with a neglectful and often abusive single parent. Although the fate of the historical Jane Grey is predetermined, the contemporary adolescent discovers that she can find help in her own community, assert her independence and shape her own destiny.



## 900 – History, geography & biography

Do we “[p]romote reading that expands horizons and engages the imagination”? (TfL 30)

### The Phantom’s Gold

by Eric Murphy  
Toronto: Dancing Cat Books, 2013  
ISBN 9781770862661

I thought the “Real McCoy” referred to the authentic locomotive lubrication system developed by African-Canadian inventor Elijah McCoy. As it turns out, on Canada’s east coast the phrase was used to describe the high-quality booze delivered by American rum-runner William S. McCoy whose ghost is the phantom mentioned in the title to this novel. The reader joins the thirteen-year-old protagonist in this novel as he discovers the geography of the East Coast from Lunenburg to Saint Pierre and Miquelon and the history of the rum-runners while he struggles to come to terms with the death of his father and the collapse of his grandfather’s sail-making business. A gripping schooner race at the conclusion to the novel leads the protagonist to discover himself and “the phantom’s gold” that is not what he expected it to be. This engaging blend of travelogue, history, biography and fictional adventure is spiced up with an element of the supernatural. All of this is combined in a novel that will be an engaging read for boys or girls at the intermediate level. ■

# Meet the Author

Evelynne Bernstein

## Michael Betcherman

Michael Betcherman is an award-winning screen writer and author, with numerous credits in both documentary and dramatic television. *Breakaway* is his first young adult novel.

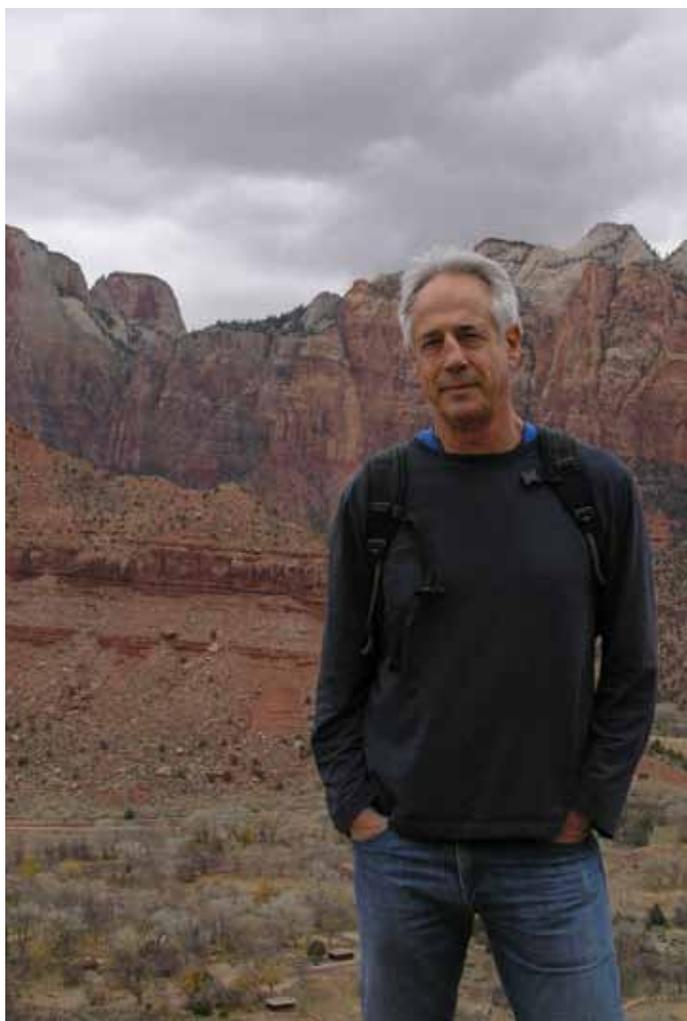


Photo: Courtesy of Michael Betcherman

Michael Betcherman in Arizona.

**TingL:** You have had a varied background – from entertainment lawyer, to scriptwriter, to young-adult novel writer. What led to you focus *Breakaway* on a young-adult audience?

It wasn't a conscious decision. In fact I'd never thought about writing for a young adult audience until I woke up one day with the basic story idea for *Breakaway* — a story about a boy whose father has been wrongly convicted of murder — and started writing. Within an hour I'd written fifteen pages, so I knew I was on to something.

I discovered that I love writing for this age group. It's not about flowery language or description which I've never been keen on; it's about telling a good story about characters people will care about. When I was a teenager, there wasn't much YA literature, and what existed was completely sanitized. Now it has to be real or nobody is going to want to read it. And the issues that are real for teenagers are issues that we all can relate to, which is why I think so many adults enjoy YA.

**Why did you choose a male protagonist?**

It wasn't a conscious choice. It was part of the original idea that I woke up with.

**Nick seems to be a pretty good all-round student. Dylan Thomas's "Do Not Go Gentle" affects him. He gets up early so he can have extra time to study for his Physics exam. Why was it important to have Nick be a committed student?**

Nick led a charmed life before his father was convicted of murder. He was a star hockey player, a good student, and he had a girlfriend he really cared about. I set it up this way

so that his fall, after his father goes to jail, would be more dramatic. He quits the hockey team, his grades plummet, and he freezes his girlfriend out of his life. His understandable anger at his father's conviction threatens to derail his life. His challenge is to accept his situation and get his life back on track. Getting his grades back up is part of this challenge.

I didn't consciously set out to make Nick a role model but the truth, as my economist brother is fond of pointing out, is that education is the single biggest predictor of success. I wanted Nick to succeed in life - even after we parted company - and doing well in school was part of the package.

**There are other references to Nick's school work — how did you design his curriculum?**

Nick takes a range of courses that would be typical of a Grade 12 student who's planning to go to University: Math, Physics, Biology and English are all mentioned in the book. I set a number of scenes in the English class because I thought the theme of the Dylan Thomas poem, "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night," was relevant to Nick's situation.

At the start of the story, Nick's father explains that, in order to preserve his sanity, he has accepted the fact that he is in prison for a murder that he didn't commit. If he continues to be angry, he will become a bitter human being. Nick isn't ready to accept that his father won't get out of prison, and contrasts

his father's acceptance of his fate with that of Dylan Thomas' father whose son urges him to "rage, rage against the dying of the light." Nick eventually understands his father's decision but until he does, he wants his father to do a little more raging, and a little less accepting.

**Was it difficult to get *Breakaway* published?**

I was extraordinarily lucky. Everything came together relatively easily, if one discounts the struggle involved in actually writing the book. The first step was to find an agent, which can be difficult these days, but fortunately the first agent I contacted agreed to represent me. She sent the book to five of the top publishers in Canada. A couple of months later Penguin offered me a two-book deal.

**How long did it take you to write the book ... did you encounter any unexpected obstacles and how did you overcome them?**

I wrote the book over the course of about three years, in between television contracts. Fortunately for the book, if not for my bank account, there was a lot of 'in between' - about a year of actual writing.

**What advice would you offer to young writers?**

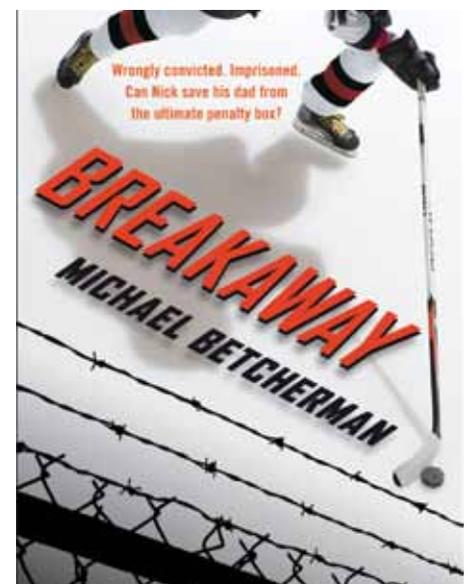
Don't give up! Don't give up! Don't give up! I wish I'd learned that lesson earlier in life. I got discouraged far too easily when I was younger. As the saying goes, writing is 99% perspiration and 1%

inspiration.

Write about something you care about. It's a long journey to transform an idea into a finished piece of work, and if you're not working on something that touches you, you're not going to enjoy it, and it's probably not going to be very good. The events that happen in our lives are rarely unique, but the way we feel about them is. Our emotions make us unique. Tear your emotions out of your heart and put them on the page.

Learn your craft. Writing isn't all about talent. It's a craft that can be mastered. There are techniques that can be learned and applied. The more you know about the craft, the more you will be able to maximize your talent. It can be helpful to read books about writing and to take workshops and seminars.

But the main thing is to keep at it. If you want to be a writer, write.



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**You have written for dramatic and documentary television, with CBC's *Street Legal*, the medical series *Side Effects* and the script of *Iris Chang: The Rape of Nanking* among your many credits. How difficult (or easy) is it to change genres? Are you still involved in television and script writing projects?**

I haven't found it all that difficult to switch genres. Each genre has its own "rules" that the writer needs to be aware of, but they're not difficult to learn. In the end it's all about storytelling. The challenge, no matter the genre, is the same: find a compelling way to tell the story, one that will engage the audience.

I am still working in television. Right now I'm working on a couple of documentaries. I'm also working on a novella for adults, a comedy about an opportunistic widow in search of a rich husband. But most of my energy in the past year has focused on my next YA book, *Face Off*, which will be published by Penguin this winter.

**How did you conduct your research on these projects?**

There wasn't much research involved in writing for *Street Legal* or *Side Effects*: a little legal research in the former and medical in the latter. However, *Iris Chang: The Rape of Nanking* is about a historical event I knew very little of, and I read a number of history books to make sure I had my facts right. I also interviewed dozens of people, both for background and to determine who we should interview on screen. The film was a docudrama, so I went to China to get a sense of the landscape in order to write the dramatic scenes, and to meet survivors of the massacre, which was a truly amazing experience. If I didn't know what they were talking about I would have thought they were talking about something that happened last week instead of seventy years ago. The emotions were that raw.

**I enjoyed *Breakaway*, and I am looking forward to your upcoming novel *Face Off*. What can you tell us about it?**

The protagonist, Alex Petrovic, was born in the fictional Eastern European country of Berovia. At the time, Berovia was at war with its ancient enemy Maldania. The hatred between the two countries was so deep-rooted that when Alex's mom, a

Berovian, married his Dad, a Maldan, their families disowned them.

When Alex was a year old his father was killed by two Berovian generals who herded him, and 240 other Maldans, into a church and burned it to the ground, part of a campaign of ethnic cleansing to rid the country of all Maldans. The two generals were accused of war crimes by the UN but the Berovian government refused to hand them over. A few months later Alex and his mother came to Vancouver.

When the story starts, Alex is 17 and playing goal for Team British Columbia in an international hockey tournament. When he shakes hands with Team Maldania's goalie after a game, he finds himself face to face with his identical twin brother, Stefan.

The discovery that he has a twin brother comes as a complete surprise. Alex's mother never told him about Stefan because she thought he was dead. He had been with Alex's father the day he was captured by Berovian soldiers and she assumed he had been killed too. Meanwhile, a new government comes to power in Berovia and promises to arrest the two generals who killed Alex's father. The two men go into hiding and rumours abound that they have escaped to another country. Alex follows the story closely. He desperately wants the men who killed his father to be brought to justice.

After the tournament, Stefan is recruited by a local hockey team and moves in with Alex and his mother. It seems like a fairy tale come true - except everybody doesn't end up living happily ever after.

Stefan is a better goalie than Alex, and he's better with the girls. His arrival triggers a severe case of sibling rivalry that causes Alex to lose his mojo. As he struggles to get it back, he and brother suspect that the Stork and the Snowman are in Canada, and find themselves hunting the two war criminals who murdered their father, and ripped their family apart.

**Lots of suspense! Can't wait to read it! Thank you very much. |**

# Professional Resources

Rob Baxter

## **The Slow Fix: Solve Problems, Work Smarter, and Live Better in a World Addicted to Speed**

**Carl Honoré, 2013**

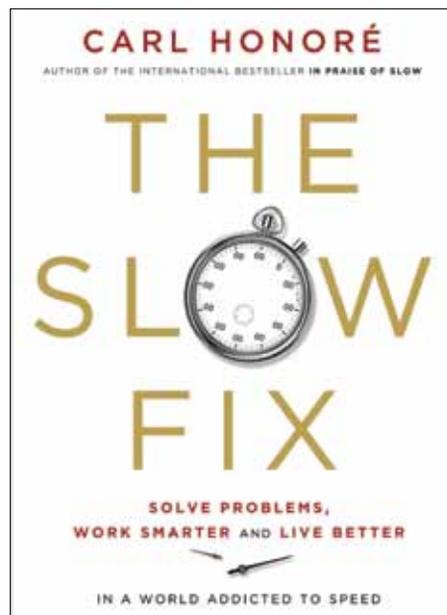
**ISBN 978 0 06 112882 0**

*A must read for primary and secondary school educators, parents, students*

“Slow and steady wins the race,” said the tortoise to the hare. So why are we all, including the author of this column, in such a hurry to do almost everything we undertake in life?

In fourteen fascinating chapters, Honoré presents a variety of examples from various countries to illustrate the advantages of slowing down to make sure society benefits from acting more slowly. The first step an individual or community must make, to recover from the “quick fix” solution mentality is to admit that speed, when applied to a problem, will probably lead to mistakes and failure.

We’ve all heard that, “in just two weeks,” the overweight can lose countless pounds, only to gain them all back, and even more, later on. Pharmaceuticals promise temporary relief for many common complaints, but often produce serious side effects, including addiction and even death from overdose. Even the president of Toyota admitted to U.S. Congress in 2010 that the company’s reputation was seriously damaged when some ten million vehicles were recalled. Why? Because quality and safety were sacrificed for the sake of rapid growth. The coach of a losing sports team is quickly replaced by a new one who rarely improves the players’



performance; according to studies done in England: “maximum return for minimum effort,” leads to stagnation or, ultimately, failure. Statistics show that police officers working alone are more cautious than when they work with a partner, and will think before acting, resulting in fewer arrests and shootings. Haste makes waste in all these examples.

Of importance to educators, Honoré examines how thinking “too quickly” has infiltrated the minds of educators who seek solutions, without taking the time to examine problems thoroughly. Unlike Milan Kundera, Arthur Conan Doyle or Charles Darwin, who apparently all understood the link between creativity and thinking slowly, boards of education too often look for the short-term, ephemeral solution, thus missing the benefits of long-term (slow) thinking.

However, real achievement seems to have been made at Locke High School in the Los Angeles Unified School District, where poverty and poor schooling guaranteed that students would never succeed in life. Decision-makers had tried a number of Band-Aid solutions, without looking at the bigger picture, until Green Dot, a non-profit charter management organization, was consulted in 2007. According to Marco Petruzzi, CEO of Green Dot Public Schools ([www.greendot.org](http://www.greendot.org)), “...there is no one policy, one piece of software, one single change to the environment that can fix a broken school. It’s a whole host of factors, and you have to figure out what they are, how they are interconnected, and then tackle them all together.”

To find out how this was done — quick — run out and buy the book, but be sure not to speed read through it: you’ll miss the magic of thinking things through slowly.

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## **Project Media**

**Sylvie Webb, Jessica Pegis, 2012**

**ISBN 978-1-55239-410-6**

*For primary or secondary teachers of English, Media Awareness, Computer or Technology studies*

Twelve sections of this book present 12 different low or high tech media projects (radio, graphic novel, story to video, website makeover, among others) which could be easily adapted by teachers at the primary and secondary levels.

*continued on page 18*

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Each chapter starts with a Purpose, followed by Key Terms and Ideas, Your Media Challenge, Mindset, Materials and Production Steps. Also available is a workbook containing line masters and assessment tools to guide students through to the finished product.

What makes this resource so practical is the career advice supplied at the end of each unit in case students would like to pursue this line of work as a future profession. For example, the Spotlight on Loyalist College's Radio Broadcasting Program briefly describes the courses which can lead graduates to jobs as announcers, copywriters, producers, sportscasters, and radio web managers.

Project Media website: [www.emp.ca/projectmedia](http://www.emp.ca/projectmedia)

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### **Sticks and Stones: defeating the culture of bullying and rediscovering the power of character and empathy**

**Emily Bazelon, 2013**

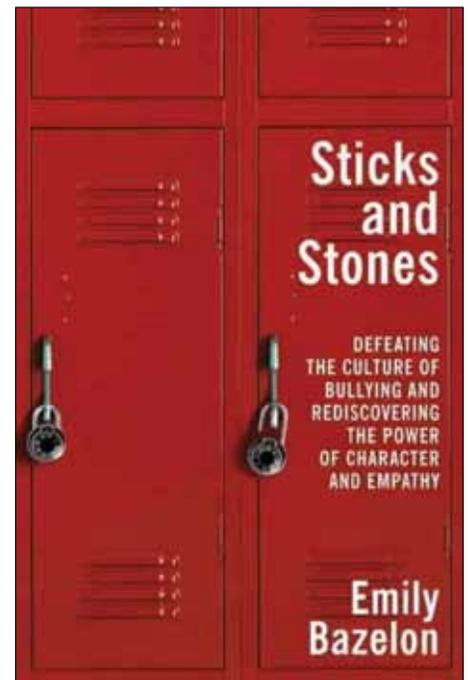
**ISBN 978-0-8129-9280-9**

*Essential for primary and secondary teachers, administrators, parents, students*

Incidents of bullying and harassment are found at all levels of society, but seem to be especially serious when they involve our students. In her four-part book (Trouble; Escalation; Solutions; What Next?), Ms. Bazelon presents three well-researched case histories of teenage bullying, one of which led to the 2010 suicide of Phoebe Prince in South Hadley, Massachusetts.

Approaches in dealing with the problem vary from school to school and can result in court cases brought about by parents who want to protect their children, but encounter indifference or denial from school authorities who refuse to act responsibly. Bazelon's research shows that double standards go almost unnoticed. One bully said he'd "gotten suspended for calling his girlfriend a bitch," but it was proven in court that the same school "hadn't taken the necessary action to help" a gay student when he was harassed by the same bully.

Bazelon devotes a whole chapter on the role of Facebook in facilitating bullying. One million of the twenty million preteens and teenagers who used Facebook in 2010 "were bullied, harassed, or threatened on the site. A Pew Center survey from the same year



found that 15 percent of teens between twelve and seventeen said they'd been harassed on a social networking site in the last twelve months..." By click on a button to report abuse, some two million adults and teenagers a week complain to Facebook after receiving hate speech, nudity, drug sales and solicitations for sex. However, FB's action or responses are rated from slow to non-existent.

According to Arturo Bejar, Facebook's Director of Engineering in charge of designing a tool for dealing with bullying and harassment, "Facebook shouldn't be in the business of dictating and enforcing community norms. People should enforce their own norms." [...] "Our goal should be to help people solve the underlying problem in the offline world."

In a Q + A format at the end of her book, Bazelon provides students, parents and educators with many recommendations in dealing with this problem. She advises students to talk to someone trustworthy, to ask the website to delete posts which contravene its rules, or try to befriend the target of bullying. Parents should outline expectations for their children's online behaviour and even monitor their comments routinely at the outset, then ease off in later years: "Trust but verify." And for teachers: "Reducing bullying is an ongoing annual, monthly, weekly, even daily commitment." She recommends that schools pick just one approach and stick with it. If things get out of hand, the police can be asked to intervene.

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### **Movie Time Social Learning: Using Movies to Teach Social Thinking and Social Understanding**

Anna Vagin, 2012

ISBN 978-0-9701320-9-3

*A must for teachers, teacher-librarians, and parents of students with social and communicative challenges (Asperger's, ADHD, for example), from preschool to high school age*

It's probably a "perfect grasp of the obvious" to state that all teachers use movies, videos, DVDs or YouTube, to stimulate interest among students of all ages.

However, the purpose of *Movie Time Social Learning*, is not only to raise

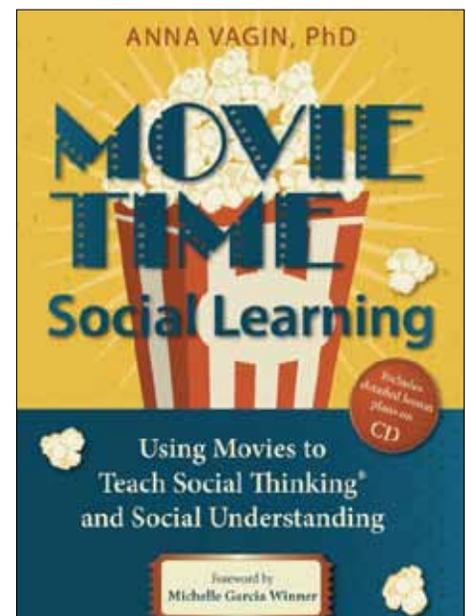
awareness or interest in a given classroom topic, but also to stimulate a greater social understanding by using a therapeutic program to help "children with a range of social cognitive challenges explore and dissect social relationships, thoughts and feelings in a therapy or classroom setting or at home." This approach thus enables students to apply to their own behaviour and skills acquired while viewing and discussing a movie.

Each of the ten chapters guides the teacher or facilitator as Mediator, through the various stages of running the program, from designating which students will be in which Mindreader group (chapter 2, Getting Ready – Spy Eye: students think "with their eyes" about what a character feels, thinks, does; Detective Head: to help students see more complex social relationships and subtleties; and Me Too!: students compare themselves with the movie's characters, to grasp the basis of empathy), to "exploring context and the feelings, thoughts, and plans of movie characters" in chapter 7.

Included with the book is a CD detailing lesson plans of movies (*Knuffle Bunny, Whistle for Willie, No Roses for Harry, Frog Goes to Dinner, Like Mike, The Indian in the Cupboard, Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*) for various Mindreader levels, plus templates, handouts and letters of permission to parents. Recommendations for other movies are also provided, so that once teachers gain more experience, they can also develop their own lesson plans.

Dr. Vagin uses many of the Social Thinking ideas (i.e., thinking of others; for a more complete understanding, visit [www.socialthinking.com](http://www.socialthinking.com)) originally put forth by Michelle Garcia Winner, speech and language pathologist. By using movies to illustrate social interaction, Dr. Vagin enables the teacher to freeze a situation by pressing the pause button, and then invite participants to discuss the event to consolidate their knowledge.

In the appendix, twenty-four pages of visual aids are suggested for use with students covering a variety of topics: emotions strips, basic four feelings list, tracker templates to record ideas, opinions, events, thoughts, and lists of conjunctions, among others. ■



# Drawn to the Form

Diana Maliszewski

# Comics and the Dewey Decimal Classification System

I belong to a Yahoo Group called Graphic Novels for Libraries (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/gn4lib/>). I lurk more than I post, but it's a fantastic resource for librarians of all stripes with all levels of experience with graphic novels. There is a perennial question that constantly appears in the forums. Marcela Peres encapsulated the latest version of this most common request:

*It's the simplest question, and yet, so headache-inducing: how do you shelve your graphic novel collection (assuming like us, you give it its own section)?*

*Currently, we have our manga separated out (though differentiating between manga and some graphic novels has been annoying for our shelvees), and organized by series name alphabetically. Easy enough.*

*The graphic novels are another story. They're alphabetical either by title, OR by character (so, *Amazing Spider-Man* and *Ultimate Spider-Man* are both shelved under an "S" spine label). This system is less than ideal and things get mis-shelved all the time. I also worry that patrons are getting hopelessly confused.*

*Does anyone have a better way to do this? I've toyed with the idea of*

*separating series vs. single volume graphic novels, but I'm not sure if that would actually improve things. (gn4lib@yahoogroups.com - June 6, 2013)*

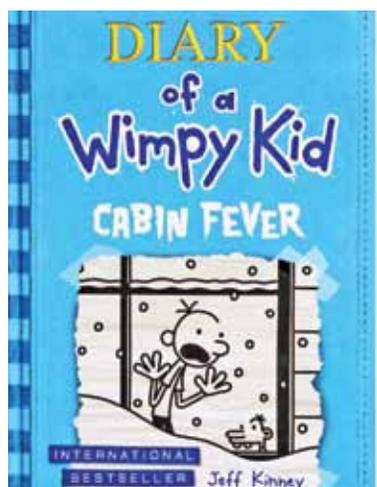
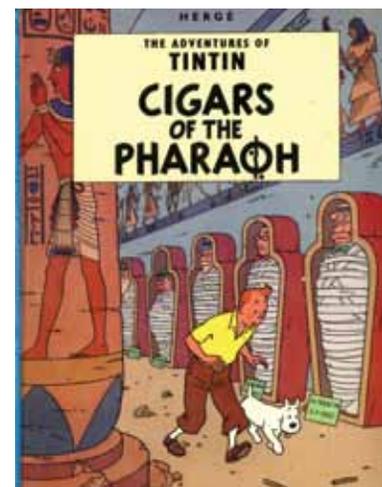
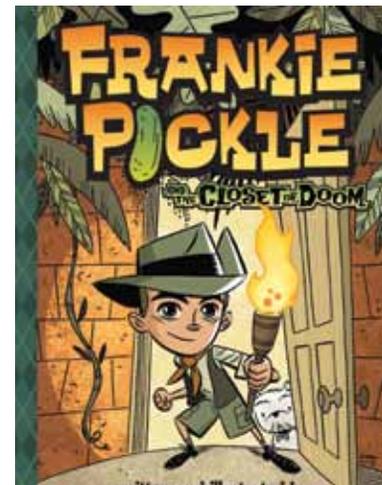
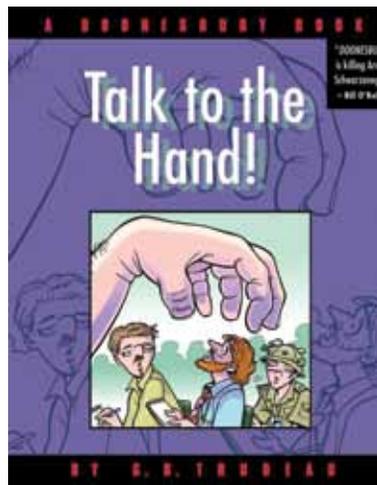
When Melville Dewey first invented his classification system, 741.5 was the section devoted to comic books, graphic novels, cartoons, and caricatures. The subcategories can get pretty complicated if you insisted on filing all our comics and graphic novels via Dewey's system: for instance, on [http://ddc.typepad.com/025431/2006/02/comicbook\\_conun.html](http://ddc.typepad.com/025431/2006/02/comicbook_conun.html) (a Dewey Decimal Classification System blog), the spine label for a Tintin comic would be 741.59493 and Garry Trudeau's *Doonsbury* series would be filed under 741.56973.

Most public and school libraries tend to give graphic novels their own unique section. This move doesn't always simplify things. Does your non-fiction graphic novel go with its non-fiction brothers or graphic novel sisters? Where do hybrid books, like the fantastic *Frankie Pickle* series by Eric Wight, belong? If the *Frankie Pickle and the Closet of Doom* book belongs in the comic section, does that mean Jeff Kinney's *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Cabin Fever* should join it? Or

what about *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* by Brian Selznick? There are no easy answers.

Knowing your school community's methods for using the collection and your own circulation goals can aid your shelving decisions. Contemplate conducting an experiment: consider where your books currently reside and try changing their location. Would sending your non-fiction graphic novels back to the non-fiction section mean that they get lost, or become valued/used as a resource similar to traditional non-fiction texts? Would keeping your non-fiction graphic novels with the other comics increase or decrease their circulation? In my own school, I notice that the graphic novel section is the most popular place for students, especially for reluctant readers. To encourage these youngsters to try some more non-fiction, I shelved some non-fiction graphic novels with our manga. Using graphic novel spine label stickers helps to identify comics wherever they are placed.

I'd also recommend asking the students themselves for advice. A couple of hula hoops and some sample titles would make for a fascinating lesson about classification and increase dialogue between you and your library users. Consult other school libraries in your area to see where and how they deal with placing certain titles, just like people do on GN4LIB. The question may never be answered to your complete satisfaction, but take comfort in the fact that you aren't alone. ■



# Ask Rita

## Resourceful



We welcome any questions you may have for Rita Resourceful. To protect Rita's identity, please email them to [tingleditor@gmail.com](mailto:tingleditor@gmail.com), with the subject Ask Rita, and we'll be sure to pass them along!

*Oh Dear Rita,*

In my school and in my library we are constantly battling students who limit their search for images as well as information to Google. They seem to believe that when 10 billion hits appear it must be better than other searches. How do we teach for better search results?

*Sincerely,  
Still Searching*

*Dear Still Searching,*

Ah yes, the Google Syndrome does have a strong hold on our learners. Many educators feel that online searching can be accomplished much more efficiently than with a Google search, especially when seekers don't know how to identify search terms. You might introduce your students to alternate search engines. I especially like Sweet Search ([www.sweetsearch.com](http://www.sweetsearch.com)). Even using a student friendly search engine requires students to identify appropriate search terms. I suggest identifying key terms for the subject being studied; next, have learners expand the search terms with synonyms; then get more specific by going to a smaller topic; then broaden the subject with larger topic terms; finally, search further using terms that are connected or overlap the original search terms connecting people, places, events and things. Of course once resources have been located students need to assess the validity, credibility and currency of the site and its information.

As far as images are concerned using the creative commons image search (<http://search.creativecommons.org/>) will offer

students a wide range of images from a number of different sources including Flickr, Fotopedia and Google. Selecting modify, adapt or build upon will limit results to usable images. But please note that students must always verify that the work is under a creative commons license by following the link and then give credit to the photographer.

*Dear Rita,*

I've been trying to help more of my readers successfully locate books for independent reading but when I ask them what they are looking for I usually get a blank stare and an "I don't know." Asking what type of book doesn't get me any further. How do we get the right books in the hands of our students?

*Sincerely,  
Directionless*

*Dear Directionless,*

I have seen those blank stares myself! Self-selection is (in some cases) a difficult process.

Here are some things I try before I grab a few examples off the shelves and do a quick book talk (more like a tweet...very short);

- I ask students if they've read a book in the past that they liked. Then I offer one like it.
- I ask if there's an author that they've heard of that they might like to try. Then I offer another title by the same author.
- I ask if a friend has read a book that looked interesting to them. Then I

- offer the book or one that is similar.
- And if these inquiries don't get me anywhere I ask if there's a genre in particular that might interest them.

If all else fails I will "book talk" books on display or pull a new book from my prep. cart. My readers love NEW books.

*Dear Rita,*

I have heard the term genre-fying used to talk about better library organization. I understand it helps students locate the books they want more easily but reorganizing my whole library seems like a daunting task.

*Sincerely,  
Lost in the stacks*

*Dear LITS,*

Aren't we always looking for ways to match a reader with the perfect book?

Genre-fication is a term used to describe the shelving of fiction library books according to genre. Non-fiction arranged by Dewey already organizes this way.

It is a big job to reorganize but according to Mrs. ReaderPants at [www.READERPANTS.net](http://www.READERPANTS.net) it is well worth the effort. There are several benefits. Circulation may increase and books can be found and reshelfed more easily. Also, collection mapping is possible to improve selection for purchasing.

If genre-fying your whole collection is too much to attempt immediately, when new books arrive add genre spine labels or colour code with spine tape and

create genre based book bins or displays of genre specific titles.

More information including step by step instructions can be found by going to [www.readerpants.net](http://www.readerpants.net) and then searching Library Genre-fication Project . You might need to get a team of avid readers to help with the "stickering" of the spines.

*Dear Rita,*

I have been asked to keep the library open during my prep time. I find that having the printer in the library already causes disruptions and I am concerned that I won't have any time for actual planning and preparation. Do we keep the library open during our planning time?

*Yours truly,  
I Need my Minutes*

*Dear Minutes,*

You have asked a question that we all struggle with. Does this space sit empty because we must have our planning time? Do teachers come in with their classes to access books and the space without a T-L present? Can volunteers use the library for small group programs? On a hot day will classes use the library as a cooling station when I am on my planning time?

As each school has a different culture which needs to be respected, it becomes the responsibility of the teacher-librarian to work with the teachers and administration to solve this dilemma. You must be both assertive if you require the space to work, and accommodating

if necessary. When a compromise (that's what it will be) has been agreed on, you must be clear in your expectations to both staff and students. Individual students requiring supervision might not be able to be accommodated during your preparation time. A sign 'CLOSED for PREPARATION TIME' can easily be hung on the door. ■



## Do We Flip Our Libraries?

**A**s teachers and schools wrestle with how to engage students and best use instructional time to apply learning, the idea of a “flipped classroom” has been gaining momentum.

The flipped classroom is an instructional method used to engage students through the use of video in effort to enhance the classroom experience by a more hands-on approach to learning (Erin Klein). In a “flipped classroom” the transfer of knowledge from the teacher to the student may take place outside of the classroom walls. Class time is spent on the application of knowledge, collaboration, discussion and knowledge construction. “Flipped classroom” strategies allow teachers to differentiate instruction and spend valuable classroom time supporting students and engaging them in rich learning tasks and activities.

With the plethora of easy-to-use Web 2.0 tools, rich virtual libraries, and endless opportunities for online collaboration, “flipping instruction” can be easily incorporated into any library program. Students today thrive on being social and gravitate towards online collaboration. Why not harness their natural desire to have this online presence and create engaging learning experiences? Imagine a “flipped library” where teacher-librarians collaborate with classroom teachers to develop resources, tutorials, book trailers and knowledge building activities that can be accessed by students anytime, anywhere.

Below are a few websites with ideas and tools for creating “flipped classrooms” to enhance teaching strategies and to contribute to the development of a dynamic library learning commons.

### FLIPPED CLASSROOM — CANADIAN SUCCESS STORIES

**Article: “Students, parents give thumbs-up to Flipped Classroom”**

<http://www.cea-ace.ca/education-canada/article/students-parents-give-thumbs-flipped-classroom>

In this article from “Education Canada,” students and parents from Kelowna, B.C. explain why and how a flipped classroom approach enhanced their

educational experience in biology and math.

**Article: “Biology teacher’s Flipped Classroom: ‘A simple thing, but it’s so powerful’ ”**

<http://www.cea-ace.ca/education-canada/article/biology-teacher%E2%80%99s-flipped-classroom-%E2%80%98>

[simple-thing-it%E2%80%99s-so-powerful%E2%80%99](http://www.cea-ace.ca/education-canada/article/biology-teacher%E2%80%99s-flipped-classroom-%E2%80%98)

In this article from “Education Canada,” a biology teacher from Kelowna, B.C. reflects on her experiences with “flipped classroom” and comments on her successes and challenges.

# FLIPPED CLASSROOM — WHAT IS IT AND WHY USE IT?

**Article: The Flipped Classroom: Pro and Con**

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/flipped-classroom-pro-and-con-mary-beth-hertz>



In this online article, Mary Beth Hertz describes what the “flipped classroom” is and what it is not. She discusses some of the pros and cons of this model and highlights the importance of the face-to-face instructional time with students, rather than the videos themselves.

**Blog: TechChef4u**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aGuLuipTwg>



This blog contains a number of short videos about how to and why to use the “flipped classroom” model of instruction. Katie Gimbar, a grade 8

teacher from the United States, explains how she flipped her classroom and the impact it made on her students. She focuses on using videos as a primary tool for flipping instruction, provides tips on video creation and offers ideas for addressing various issues and challenges.

**Blog: Kleinspirations**

<http://www.kleinspiration.com/2012/05/foundations-of-flipping.html>



Kleinspirations is a blog created by Erin Klein. In addition to tips and ideas about using technology in the classroom, Erin Klein shares her reflections and best strategies for using flipped classroom methodology and provides a number of examples of videos created by teachers using tools such as Camtasia and Educreations. She also shares her own experiences and offers links to resources where teachers can access video content.

**Flipped Learning Ning — Professional Learning Network**

<http://flippedlearning.org/FLN>

In this professional learning network, educators from around the world have an opportunity to connect, share

resources, network, and access the latest information about flipping the learning. Members of this professional learning community can join and participate in various discussion groups including a group for teacher-librarians.

**FLIPPED CLASSROOM — Resources**

**Khan Academy**

<http://www.khanacademy.org>



Khan Academy is a free library of lessons and videos that address various concepts and subject areas. In addition to videos and tutorials, this website also includes practice activities for students.

**Ted Ed**

<http://ed.ted.com>



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In this video library, educators can create and share lessons based on educational videos. In addition, users can search the vast database of lessons on various topics and customize them according to their needs.

### Neo K12

<http://www.neok12.com>



This collection of short educational videos, lessons, interactive diagrams and games covers a number of topics for students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Videos can be embedded into blogs or wikis. In addition, users have access to thousands of images and an option to create and share online presentations.

## FLIPPED CLASSROOM – Screencasting/Video Creation Tools

### Web Tools

#### Screencast-o-matic

<http://www.screencast-o-matic.com>

Capture the action on your computer screen using this free web-based application for recording videos using

Windows or Mac. Videos can be up to 15 minutes in length and can be published to YouTube, MP4, AVI and FLV movie. A paid version of this tool is also available.



### Jing

<http://www.techsmith.com/jing.html>



Jing is a tool for creating short screencast video recordings. This tool can be downloaded for free. Videos created with Jing can be shared through social media, email or uploaded to a website: <http://www.screencast.com>.

## iOs Apps (iPads)

### Educreations

<http://www.educreations.com/>



This is an interactive whiteboard app with voice recording features and with many options to animate the objects on the screen and include drawings, text and images. Lessons can be shared on the Educreations website or through social media, or embedded into wikis or blogs.

### Explain Everything

<http://www.explaineverything.com/>



This is a paid screencasting app. It allows users to narrate, annotate and import images and videos. No account is required for sharing videos created within this app. ■

Kate Edwards,

Program Manager, Association of Canadian Publishers

# Discovering Canadian Books

I'm of a generation that grew up with Canadian books in its schools. Before I started kindergarten I was read to frequently at home, but the books I remember best from this period were classic international titles — *Madeline*, *Babar*, and *Paddington Bear*. I suspect my parents gravitated towards books that they recognized from their own childhoods, before Canadian houses like Annick Press, Groundwood Books, and Kids Can were founded. It was only when I started school that Canadian books were added to my reading menu. In kindergarten I read *The Paper Bag Princess* and *Mortimer* by Robert Munsch, which were part of my teacher's classroom library. Our teacher-librarian started every library session by reading one or two poems from Dennis Lee's *Alligator Pie* — my classmates and I eventually learned all the words and recited the poems in unison. And in higher grades we were fortunate to have authors — all Canadian — visit our school regularly. These visits were thanks to the efforts of a fantastic teacher-librarian, who I now realize ensured that the library was well-stocked with an excellent selection of books by Canadian authors and published by Canadian

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**Teacher-librarians are among Canadian authors' greatest supporters.**

houses. For me, reading books with Canadian settings and characters was a regular thing rather than an exception, and though my own love of reading was sparked and fostered at home, the first place I had regular access to — and the freedom to discover — Canadian books was at school.

Teacher-librarians are among Canadian authors' greatest supporters. Surveys of teacher-librarians and library consultants conducted over the past ten years have consistently demonstrated that there is a strong desire to include Canadian books in school collections. When we consider the general population, 92% of Canadians agree that it's important for them to have access to Canadian books, according to a 2012 poll commissioned by the Department of Canadian Heritage. The numbers show that enthusiasm for Canadian books and authors is high, though in reality Canadian titles are not always purchased first. In part, this is due to the financial realities of the publishing industry; favourable economies of scale often results in books from the United States and United Kingdom having lower prices than Canadian titles.

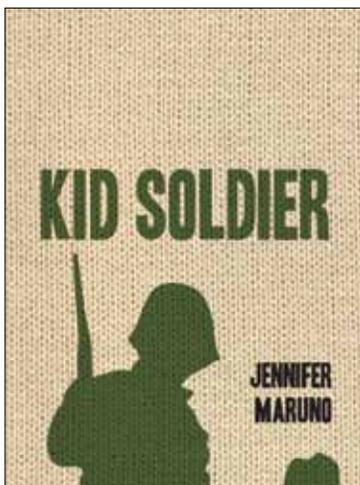
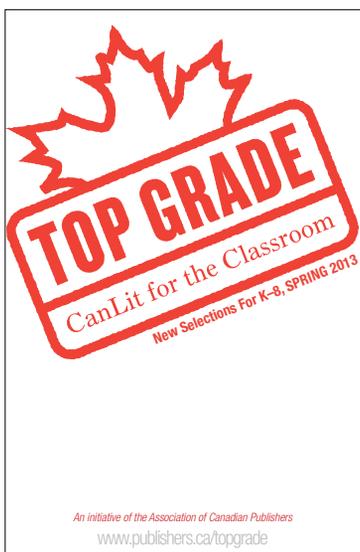
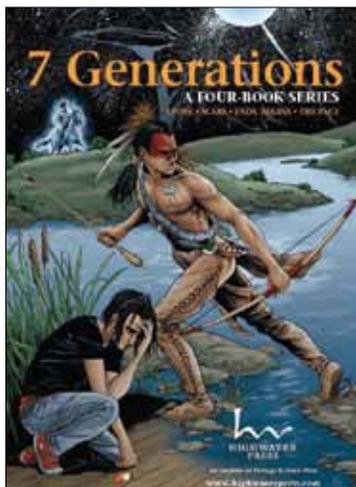
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Imported books are promoted heavily in the wholesale market, and offer an economical solution to schools that are stretched in terms of both time and money. Another factor is that books purchased for school collections must support teachers' delivery of curriculum, and in some subject areas, Canadian titles are under-represented. And with fewer and fewer schools having a full-time librarian on staff, the skills, expertise and time required to manage a collection effectively are no longer available.

Canadian publishers have few opportunities to meet face-to-face with teacher-librarians, and recognize the constraints of managing collections to ensure that a broad selection of relevant, quality materials are available to students. Members of the Association of Canadian Publishers (ACP), which represents Canadian-owned and -controlled book publishing houses, have sought innovative ways to effectively provide the right mix of information about forthcoming titles to these key customers. Knowing that teacher-librarians' time is precious, and the volume of information they receive from publishers and other vendors high, in 2011 the ACP set out to develop a program that would highlight the best new Canadian books, provide teacher-librarians with the information required to make effective use of their budget, and allow us to keep in touch with frontline customers throughout the year.

Enter Top Grade. Now in its third year, Top Grade ([www.publishers.ca/TopGrade](http://www.publishers.ca/TopGrade)) is a sampling and promotion program devoted to showcasing the latest Canadian-authored books suitable for school library and classroom collections. Close to 20 publishers from across the country participate in two mailings each year, which ensures a

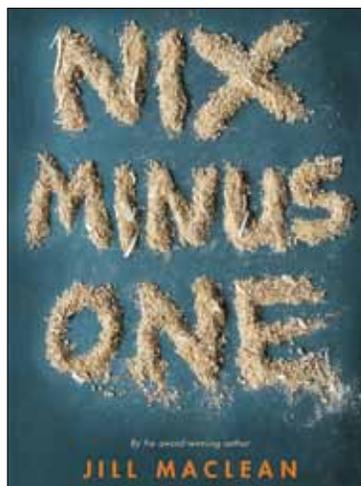
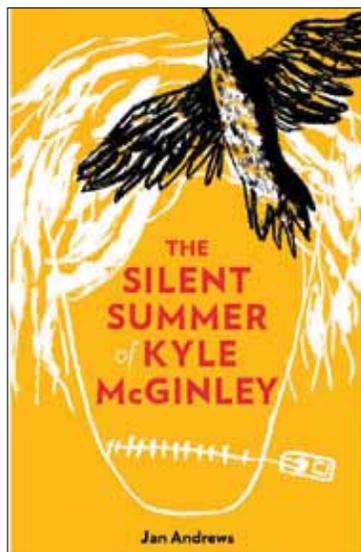
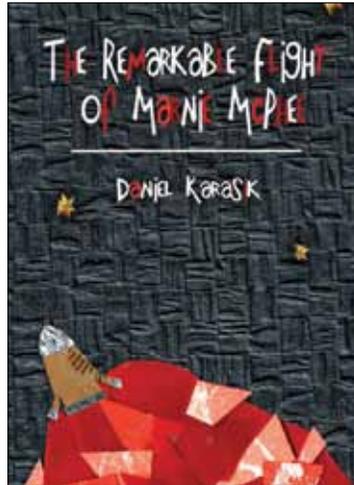


rich and diverse selection each season. In the Top Grade boxes, recipients find review copies, catalogues, teacher guides, and other promotional materials — bookmarks, posters, buttons, and other goodies that are often distributed at trade shows — which have earned the program the nickname of “Super Conference in a box.” We send boxes to 100 recipients who are primarily consultants or coordinators at the board level. The goal of the program is to inform decision makers about new Canadian books, demonstrate how they link to curriculum, and generate excitement around Canadian authors. There is no charge to recipients, and no obligation to purchase the books that are included in Top Grade mailings. The samples are recipients' to keep, and those that are interested in adding featured books to their collections are encouraged to place orders through their wholesaler or retailer of choice.

We encourage recipients to circulate the books and materials to their colleagues, and are always excited to learn about the creative ways librarians do this. Some set up displays in the staff room, library, or during a board PD day or in-service. Others circulate the books via inter-school courier, so that staff at a variety of schools can sample Top Grade's offerings. One consultant started a Top Grade book club, and assigned each of the books to a different teacher-librarian or technician in her board. After reading the books, librarians shared mini-reviews by email. Yet another asked students to preview the samples, and share their reactions to the books. Needless to say, the ways in which books are shared is impressive, and we are delighted to know that Top Grade is sparking discussion about Canadian books in schools and boards across the country.

As much as Top Grade is a vehicle for Canadian publishers to build buzz about forthcoming titles, the program also provides us with insight with regards to the types of books our customers are looking for. For example, following the first Top Grade mailing we received several comments from recipients that they can't meet the demand for books on Aboriginal topics and themes. This information was shared with participating publishers, and as a result, more books with Aboriginal subjects have been featured in subsequent mailings. In other cases, recipients who primarily work with students in primary and junior grades noted that they had forwarded some of the featured YA novels to colleagues at the local high school. This eventually led to the introduction of a Top Grade box for high school materials this past spring. In both cases, the program has benefitted from the feedback of those on the ground, and the ACP is happy to have opened this channel for communication with those who have first-hand knowledge of what teachers and students are looking for in the books they use in schools.

Top Grade highlights a few dozen titles each season, which represents only a fraction of the Canadian books available. For librarians and educators who are looking for a larger selection of books — or books on specific topics or themes — the 49th Shelf ([www.49thShelf.com](http://www.49thShelf.com)) is the place to be. A project of the ACP that is supported by the Department of Canadian Heritage and Ontario Media Development Corporation, the 49th Shelf is the only online discovery platform devoted exclusively to Canadian books. Visitors will find more than 60,000 Canadian-authored books for readers of all ages, and can build reading lists, rate and review books, or



browse selections recommended by the site's editor or guest contributors.

Though 49th Shelf has primarily been geared to general readers since its launch in February 2012, we are excited to be introducing a suite of features designed specifically for librarians and educators in the coming months. Improved search function will allow users to search for books based on grade or reading level, curriculum area, or theme. Reviews from the fine publications of the Canadian Children's Book Centre will be incorporated into title listings, and books reviewed by teacher and librarian users will be identified as such, offering trusted peer reviews to those seeking advice for books to use with their students. We hope that 49th Shelf becomes the one-stop-shop for those looking for Canadian books to use in their school libraries and classrooms, and to providing a forum for discussion about these titles. In the meantime, we have created a special sign-up form for librarians and educators who would like to stay on top of the latest developments from 49th Shelf: [www.49thShelf.com/librarians](http://www.49thShelf.com/librarians).

What links Top Grade and the 49th Shelf is that both programs get people talking about Canadian books and authors. Whether these conversations take place in the staff room or online, they help foster awareness and discovery of Canadian books, which ultimately helps get those books get into the hands of a new generation of Canadian readers.

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*How do you introduce your students to Canadian books? Tweet your suggestions to @49thShelf using the hashtag #ReadCDN for a chance to win a selection of Top Grade titles. ■*

Lisa Hascal

# Do We Really Need to Read?

**E**arlier this month, I finished reading *Everyday* by David Levithan and updated my Goodreads.com site to let my followers know. I immediately received a comment from a friend, whose son is in Grade 5. She wanted to know my thoughts about the book, as a Teacher-Librarian, since it was given to her son by his teacher. My friend chose to read the book while her son was reading it, so she would be able to discuss it with him. While this is common practice for her, she was particularly happy she had read this one, because apparently the teacher had not!

I chose to read the book, because I was planning on adding it to my school library in the YA section. I was a little surprised that the book was given to a Grade 5 student with no caveat about the content. His mom was not overly impressed with this selection and when she mentioned this to the teacher, he went beet red and admitted that he had not read the book himself. He said, “I got it at a book fair and thought it sounded like an interesting read.” Of course, it was an interesting read, but the underlying messages around

gender and sexuality were new to this boy and he found much of it confusing. Fortunately, he was able to discuss the book with his mom, who felt a little unprepared having to answer some of his questions.

This example, of course, illustrates the importance of reading the books in our school libraries, but there are many other reasons why it’s important for Teacher-Librarians to read.

After I’ve read a particularly good book, I cannot help but share my passion with others. I find after I’ve given an informal “book talk”, the students immediately want to sign out the same book. In this way, I feel I’m building a community in my library where we not only discuss books, but the bigger issues within the books. It becomes “in fashion” to read the same books to be able to join the discussion. As Cassandra Clare says, “People who know and love the same books as you have the road map to your soul.” In my role, I have the opportunity to spark these discussions and build an understanding amongst the students in our community.

“  
**People who  
know and  
love the same  
books as you  
have the road  
map to your  
soul.**

— *Cassandra Clare*

There are also times when recommending the right book “heals the soul”. A student of mine was feeling the effects of racism in his household and felt that the police were “out to get him.” He felt as though he would not be able to break out of the cycle of trouble in his family and was feeling down about his race. I was glad I had read *Stealing Home: The Story of Jackie Robinson* and was able to offer him this book. As he read it, we were able to discuss the lessons from this story and while the student still felt marginalized, it helped him to be able to talk about it through the lens of this story. After this, I was also able to tell him about the book, *The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates*. While he hasn’t read it yet, he greatly appreciated my synopsis of the book and having a point from which to continue our discussion about race.

But of course, where does a Teacher-Librarian find the time to read all these books? There are so many “adult books” I want to read, I certainly find it overwhelming trying to get through as many youth and children books as I can. During my first year as a Teacher-Librarian, I felt like I was doing a terrible job, because teachers and students would ask about books I knew very little about because I wasn’t the one who had purchased them. It made me realize that we do need to read regularly. To help with this daunting task, I’ve created a “to read” list in Goodreads.com and for every book I read from my “adult list”, I read a book from my school library. I set aside at least 20-30 minutes a day to commit to this task. Truth be told, this becomes one of the highlights of my day.

I just stocked my library shelves with two huge boxes of brand new books for the fall. Admittedly, some of the books on the shelves will not get read by me any time soon, but I do my best to know everything on the shelves. Many of my students requested the books that arrived, but I have only had time to get through some of them. While the students have told me the premise of the books, there is nothing quite like reading the book yourself. I tend to forget the books I’m told about, but I remember the books I’ve read very well. Reading the book is like living the book and I want to be able to share as many wonderful journeys as I can with my students. ■



# How can we strengthen Ontario's school libraries? Take action!

Ask your Member of Provincial Parliament to endorse designated library funding for every school in Ontario. Currently, funding for the school library program is at the discretion of each school and/or school board.

## A library is much more than books in a room

A properly resourced school library program includes a teacher librarian with library qualifications, a library technician, and support staff. It also includes access to a robust digital media centre, e-resources, and a current print collection.

## Did you know?

- \* Only 56% of elementary schools have a teacher-librarian and most are allocated part-time?
- \* Only 19% of elementary schools in Eastern Ontario and 10% of elementary schools in Northern Ontario have teacher-librarians, compared to 92% of elementary schools in the GTA.
- \* Some schools do not have a library or a library program at all.
- \* Students who are in schools without a staffed and properly resourced library program are not receiving the same education as students who have these advantages.
- \* There has been a dramatic decline in the percentage of Ontario students who report that they "like to read." However, in schools with teacher-librarians, students were more likely to report that they enjoyed reading.

For more information, facts, and resources on this issue,  
visit [www.accessola.com](http://www.accessola.com)



Natalie Edgar

# The need to weed — getting dirty and doing it!

## TO WEED OR NOT TO WEED... I THINK I MAY HAVE AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION!

**T**hree years ago I was offered my dream job as the teacher-librarian at one of the largest elementary schools in my board. While I had already been a teacher-librarian in another school with a much smaller student population, I knew that my new job would be much more demanding when addressing the needs of 1100 plus students and over 50 staff members. However daunting at first, I welcomed the challenge.

Before I had the chance to place my stapler, pens and tape on my new desk, I was told by the library consultant that she and my Principal had decided that there was going to be an extensive weed of the library that summer. The collection was the fifth oldest in the Board and a team of library technicians would be in to assist and guide the process. I was also asked if I'd be available to support them and of course, I agreed. I was told to wear nothing valuable, have a sturdy pair of shoes on my feet and pack a hearty lunch to keep energy levels up. I thought to myself, "I'm not going into the backcountry of Algonquin. How tough can this be?" Was I ever proven wrong!

The first day was spent analyzing data. What required attention? What was excruciatingly old and outdated? There were five of us that first day and we were all assigned a specific section of the Library to purge. While

I'm anything but a pack-rat, I was a little trepidatious at first asking questions like "Should we get rid of this? The illustrations are beautiful!" I came to see that "Ohhh, it's from 1963, it's time to let it go." As the days progressed, the process became easier. I was able to "let go" of items with much less resistance. By day five, we had successfully weeded 10,000 books, reducing the collection from 30,000 to 20,000!

Was the process seamless? Certainly not! There were glitches along the way. I was new to the process and the amazing team that assisted said that it was one of the largest purges they participated in. Were the sturdy shoes and hearty lunches a necessity? Absolutely! I have never left school so filthy and exhausted. Yet, I also left with a feeling of renewal, organization and a solid knowledge of our collection. It was an arduous five days, but would I do it again, without question.

As a follow up, it was recommended that a comprehensive inventory be done to give us an accurate reflection of our collection. We did the inventory over the following summer. Consulting with my Principal, post-weed, was paramount. My recommendation, if you're thinking about a full-scale or even a small-scale weed of your collection, is to meet with your administrative team post-weed to discuss the

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process and your vision. Whether you share a collection report or physically walk the around the shelves with them, communicate your needs. I'm lucky to have an administrator that sees the Library as the heart of our school. Her belief, like my own, is to have the most relevant and engaging resources available to our students. The following year, she gave me a substantial budget to replace many of the outdated items we'd purged during the weed.

Holding on to a limited, few, outdated, politically and/or culturally irrelevant titles is always wise. They can really showcase just how important weeding materials can be, particularly if you encounter resistance from colleagues and members of the community, which can often happen. These resources can also serve as teaching tools as they are often reflections of their time. They must be dealt with sensitively and thoughtfully, particularly when using them in the classroom but can serve as "teachable moments". Ensure that they are far from the shelves and are housed in a student-free section of the Library.

So to weed or not to weed, hopefully I've answered the question. Plucking outdated, culturally and politically irrelevant books is much like weeding a garden. When you stand back and admire the gems, you're amazed at what has colonized and taken over your shelves. The most bountiful resources should be ripe for the picking. ■



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# Margaret Scott Research Fund

Margaret Scott was one of the 20th century's true icons in school library development. She influenced several generations of librarians who were at the frontier of school libraries in the 1960s and 1970s. Her untimely death in 1976 was a huge shock to the community. The OLA Board at the time launched this Fund using the individual donations of OLA members given in honour of Margaret and her legacy. For years, the Fund was used to subsidize travel of school librarians to other schools and to specialized learning programs. The Fund now supports a scholarship to any school librarian who wishes to do research that will build the data needed to improve and enrich school library programs. The first awards were given in 1978.

**To be given to a person or group who wishes to do research in the field of school librarianship in Ontario.**

## **Criteria for selection:**

### **The proposal will include:**

- clear, well-articulated goals and objectives for research that will identify best educational practices in school libraries, lead to the improvement of elementary or secondary school libraries and/or programming within school libraries, or enhance in other ways the understanding of the contributions of school libraries to student success;
- a plan to conduct qualitative and/or quantitative research and to provide a conclusion or summary of findings, following accepted research methods and ethical guidelines;
- the intention to share findings through one or more avenues such as publishing findings in *The Teaching Librarian* magazine or presenting findings at OLA SuperConference.

Funding requests may range from \$500 to \$2000 depending on the scope of the project. Proposals requesting larger amounts may be considered.

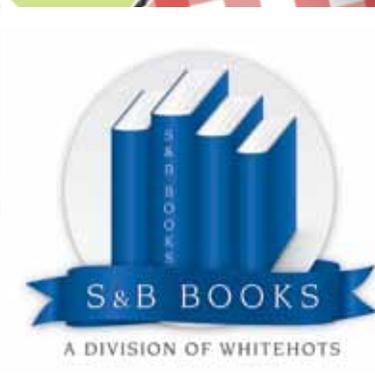
The Fund will also consider supporting larger-scale research proposals which may be requesting and receiving funding from a variety of sources. ■

# Take a Book break!

You never know  
what will happen...



Illustration by Mélanie Watt



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