

Live and Learn

Fall 2009

The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance

Raise-a-Reader Day Brings in Over \$10,000!



Photo courtesy of The Guardian

Here is the winning team of PEI Raise-a-Reader volunteers. They canvassed the Provincial Buildings on September 23 collecting donations. Each member received a stylish Guardian umbrella.

From left, back row: Susan MacKenzie, Marilyn MacDonald, Bill Whelan, Gordon Jenkins, Catherine O'Bryan, Joanne Lajeunesse, Shauna Sullivan-Curley, Jeni Mutch, Susan Myers. Front row, from left: Lori Johnston, Joey Seaman, Crystal Matheson, Claudia DeBlois.

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Live and Learn — Fall 2009

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The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance

Published by the PEI Literacy Alliance.

Edited, written and designed by Catherine O'Bryan, Norman Finlayson and Jinny Greaves.

We would like to hear from you if you have:

- learners' stories
- creative writing by learners
- articles or news about teaching adults
- upcoming events
- new resources for adult education

Please send your material to:

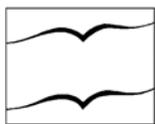
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**PEI
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Alliance**

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What's New

Ipsos Reid Study:

LITERACY AND SKILLS UPGRADING A HIGH PRIORITY Findings:

- 72% of working Canadians believe that the current level of adult literacy – that is reading, writing and mathematics skills among adults for whom English or French is their first language – is a ‘problem’.
- 21% of working Canadians do not ‘strongly agree’ that ‘if they were to lose their job today, they possess the necessary literacy skills to secure a new job’.
- 40% of managers ‘disagree’ that ‘if one of their employees told them they had challenges with reading, writing or math skills, their company could quickly get them the help they need’.
- Workers in Atlantic Canada (81%) are most inclined to believe that the levels of literacy in Canada are a problem, followed by those living in Quebec (75%), Alberta (75%), Ontario (72%), British Columbia (68%) and Saskatchewan and Manitoba (63%).
- Atlantic Canadians (86%) and Quebecers (85%) are most likely to ‘strongly agree’ that they possess the necessary literacy skills to secure a new job if they had to, while lesser proportions in Ontario (77%), Saskatchewan and Manitoba (77%), Alberta (77%) and British Columbia (75%) strongly agree.

Visit the Workplace Literacy section at www.abc-canada.org to check out the webcast of the Ipsos Reid announcement.

Immigrant Low Literacy Costs Canada Billions

Immigrants are not being used to their full potential, costing Canada's economy billions of dollars every year, says a new report from TD Economics by Craig Alexander. Poor language and literacy skills are at the heart of the problem.



About six in 10 newcomers have less than the desired level of literacy and the employment rate for those with poor literacy skills is almost 20 percentage points lower than for those with the desired level.

Immigrants with stronger literacy skills tend to experience shorter periods of unemployment, obtain more skilled positions and receive significantly higher pay.

Immigrants to Canada are increasingly coming from areas such as Asia where English and French are not native tongues. The economic wellbeing of these newcomers has been deteriorating over the past 25 years, with unemployment and poverty levels significantly higher among immigrants than Canadian-born citizens.

Newcomers currently make up about a fifth of our total population, and they are expected to make up all of Canada's population growth by 2022. It is imperative for government and corporations to address the literacy deficit head on.

"Language and literacy are major hurdles for newcomers and it might contribute between one-third to two-thirds of the earnings gap," the TD report states.

Many newcomers settle in "cultural clusters" that can further isolate them and prevent strong development of English or French.

There are a number of government programs aimed at improving literacy levels among newcomers to prepare them for the workforce. But more resources must be allocated toward evaluating the effectiveness of these programs. On the corporate side businesses should look beyond specialized software training to offer language training for new employees, a move that would increase output and profitability in the long term.

Excerpted from Megan O'Toole, National Post, September 26, 2009

New Board Members for the Alliance



Mary Burke - Mary is coordinator of PEI Volunteers for Literacy. She finds volunteers for school-based reading programs. Since 2008 she has trained and matched adult tutors with adult learners. Mary is a former Chair of the Alliance.



Shauna Fuller - is a board member of PEI Family Violence Prevention Services. Trained in research and evaluation, Shauna is an experienced facilitator. She works at the Atlantic Evaluation Group and has worked in youth care and adult corrections. Shauna has a Masters degree in Community Psychology



Tom Hilton - Tom is an MEd student at UPEI interested in promoting literacy. He is interested in social justice and equality issues and in developing community relationships with education and literacy oriented people. Tom says “Literacy is central to my personal and professional accomplishments. Literacy nurtures questioning mindsets that in turn promote change.”



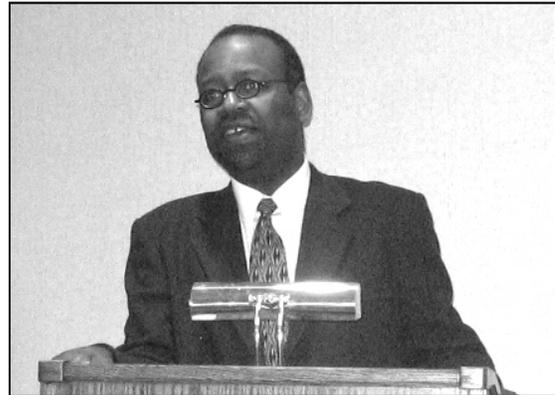
Trina O'Brien Leggott - Trina has been a librarian for more than twenty years in both academic and public libraries. She is both a Laubach literacy tutor and an ESL volunteer tutor. In the past she has been involved with many library and community literacy programs. Trina is a lifelong reader and loves nothing better than bringing people together with books.



Alaina Roach O'Keefe - Alaina works for the Department of Education and Early Child Development as an early literacy specialist. A past board member of LDAPEI she brings many skills to our board. She is interested in literacy from an intergenerational perspective. Alaina is a member of the PEI Family Literacy network.

Recent Alliance Activities

The dynamic **Robert Wright** was our guest at the Alliance annual meeting and a “Breakfast and Learn” session the next day. He gave a passionate speech about the links between literacy, poverty, injury and justice. About 75 people for breakfast to hear him speak in Memorial Hall at the Confederation Centre. **Holland College** and the **Raise-a-reader Campaign** helped fund this event.

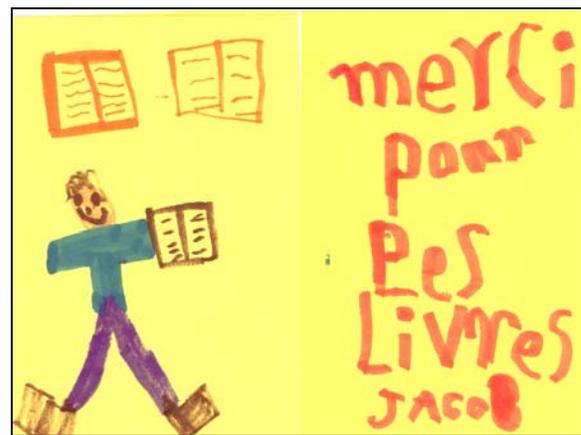


The Eagle Island singers and dancers were a special part of the entertainment for the banquet for our professional development workshop “**Igniting the Power Within.**” This aboriginal model works with essential skills and portfolio development to help instructors work with adults.



Thirty five people attended the first of four workshops in the series. The next session is in April 2010.

Our **2009 Summer Tutoring Program for Kids** hired 26 tutors and worked with 600 school-aged children. Tutors, mostly Education students, said that the work experience was valuable for their future training and career.



The children enjoyed the personal attention and were able to build on their skills for the new school year.

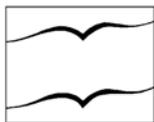
Each child received about five books donated by Scholastic.

Using Visuals for Health Literacy

Drawings, photographs, or real-life demonstrations are often much more helpful than just reading or talking about a healthcare concept. Pictographs, photographs, and diagrams are of course very helpful in print. They can be just as powerful when used in person. Here's how-to:

- **Find out how people like to learn.** This could be: seeing (such as watching TV or looking at photos); hearing (listening to the radio, audio tapes, or podcasts); reading (including books, magazines, and websites); talking (1-1 or small group conversations); doing (using demonstrations and models); or any combination of learning styles.
- **Present information simply and clearly.** When teaching about health, focus primarily on "need-to-know" skills, behaviors, and actions. Organize information in a logical way such as first steps to last, or most common to least. Then teach in bite-sized "chunks" that people can understand and master.
- **Illustrate key concepts.** Think visually about each "chunk" and how to illustrate it. You don't need to be an amazing artist -- usually a simple sketch will do. As an alternative, you can use pre-drawn illustrations often sold as tear-off sheets and add your own words and markings.
- **Supplement with words.** "A picture is worth a 1,000 words," is a common saying. But when it comes to teaching about health, a picture alone may not be sufficient. You can make messages more clear by adding a few words or a simple sentence.
- **Confirm understanding.** As with all forms of teaching, confirm that the other person understands. When using pictures you might ask, "What does this drawing mean to you?" Or "Tell me (show me) how you will do it."

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\$500 Bursaries for Adult Learners

The next bursary deadline is October 31, 2009.

For information and to get an application form, please visit our website at www.pei.literacy.ca or call us toll free at 1-866-827-3620.

Essential Skills for Health

Essential Skill	Used to:
Reading Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify important health information from many different sources Evaluate health information for credibility and quality
Document Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill out medical and consent forms Read warning signs Read food labels and Canada's Food Guide Read exercise diagrams Read medicine bottle instructions
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculate medicine dosages Determine body mass index (BMI) Determine a serving size of food
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep a journal of symptoms over time
Oral Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain concerns and symptoms accurately to health professionals Ask health questions Understand spoken medical advice or treatment directions
Working with Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop relationships with health professionals
Thinking Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate health information Make decisions about health Remember health and medical information Analyze relative risks and benefits Manage a healthy lifestyle and finding time to exercise, reduce stress, and eat well Manage a chronic disease Interpret test results
Computer Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search the Internet for health information and evaluate websites
Continuous Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is always more to learn about how to be healthy or how to manage a chronic disease

The Back Page

Back to School Homework Tips for Parents

1. To get homework done early and well, develop a daily homework routine.
2. Provide a quiet, well-lit place with basic school supplies for homework.
3. Understanding your child's style of learning will help you develop a personalized homework plan for your child.
4. It's not uncommon for kids to get overwhelmed with big assignments or projects. Help them break the project down into smaller steps. Work on pieces throughout the week and do the hard parts on the weekend.
5. Talk with your child's teacher and be aware of their method of teaching so when you help you use the same terms the teacher does.
6. Don't reserve learning to homework hour. Make learning a part of your daily life.
7. If your child gets frustrated or distracted with their homework, allow them to take a short break. If this frustration continues, talk with your child's teacher to determine if a tutor might be needed.
8. To reinforce comprehension and memory skills, take 10 minutes to talk about the stories you've read together.
9. Show your child that the skills they are learning are related to things you do as an adult. If your child is doing math, balance your cheque book with their help.
10. Teach your child to be independent. Help them with the hard homework you will need to do together and let them complete the remainder on their own.

<http://www.abc-canada.org/en/homeworktips>

Easy Tips to Help You Avoid the Flu

- Wash your hands properly
- Cover your coughs and your sneezes
- Stay away from people who may be sick
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way
- Stay at home if you are sick

Courtesy of the PEI Lung Association — www.pei.lung.ca