

\$6.99 • ISSUE 153 • JUL/AUG 2022

TEACH

EDUCATION FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW



SUMMER
ESSENTIALS
2022 EDITION

NOTES

Summer is such a great time of year and needs to be fully appreciated, and for those of us in more northern climes, it is woefully short. That doesn't mean we should turn our brains off entirely during the summer, but perhaps we can allow ourselves to move at a slightly slower pace as compared to the rest of the year, particularly when kids are back in school.

With the warm weather also comes our annual Summer Essentials guide. This edition is all about health and wellness: from eco-conscious aromatherapy and body care products, to virtual fitness sessions, and even binge-worthy, healthy snacks!

On a more serious note, our feature article addresses the growing phenomenon of book banning. The practice of banning (and sometimes burning) books has occurred throughout history. What is concerning, however, is how the number of banned books has increased as education, like much else, has become more politicized and highly charged, often pitting teachers against parents. In this feature, writer Adam Stone lays out the issues and offers a variety of ways that educators can push back, while taking the "us" and "them" out of the equation. Those on each side genuinely believe they are protecting children through their actions, so it makes sense to try and find some middle ground in order to bring about a solution to this disturbing trend.

One thing that hasn't changed much over the years is the struggle of teaching Shakespeare. There can be something daunting about the Bard and his works for both students and teachers alike. Yet in

our Classroom Perspectives column, one teacher overcame her own doubts about teaching Shakespeare to high school students. She approached the topic from an innovative perspective and designed classroom assignments that set Shakespeare in a modern-day context. In this way, students could better connect with the plays, and also have fun while learning about one of the world's greatest playwrights.

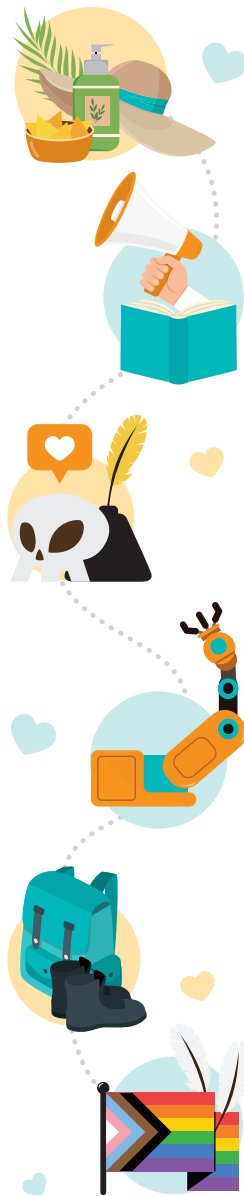
Our Bookstuff column focuses on inventors and their life-changing inventions. We present a list of books that position inventors as real-life characters who were motivated and inspired to make things that no one ever had before. It is our hope that these titles spark curiosity and wonder among students, and encourage any burgeoning inventors to keep creating so that they too can make their mark.

This issue's Field Trips column is all about walking. And walking, and walking, and walking. Follow along from such far-flung destinations as the Northwest Territories, to New Orleans, Morocco, Sicily, and the UN World Heritage Site of Edinburgh, among others. Time to break out the walking shoes and embark on your own summer adventure!

Finally, CURRICULA focuses on LGBTQ2S+ individuals and the challenges and roadblocks they face in coming out. The lesson plan will help students understand

what life is like for LGBTQ2S+ people around the world and how students themselves can be empowered to make positive change.

Until next time.



CONTENTS

FEATURES

04 | Summer Essentials:
2022 Edition

10 | How Educators Can Respond
to Book Burning Banning
Adam Stone

COLUMNS

20 | Classroom Perspectives:
Shaking up Shakespeare: Digital Tools
for Digital Students
Deanna Ratzki

08 | Bookstuff:
Inventors

14 | Field Trips:
Walking Tours and Trails

CURRICULA

16 | Global Issues: LGBTQ2S+
Jonelle St. Aubyn

AD INDEX 23



TEACHMEDIA

PUBLISHER AND EDITOR
Wili Liberman

MANAGING EDITOR
Lisa Tran

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Raenu Sarathy

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Kelsey McCallum

CONTRIBUTORS
Deanna Ratzki
Jonelle St. Aubyn
Adam Stone

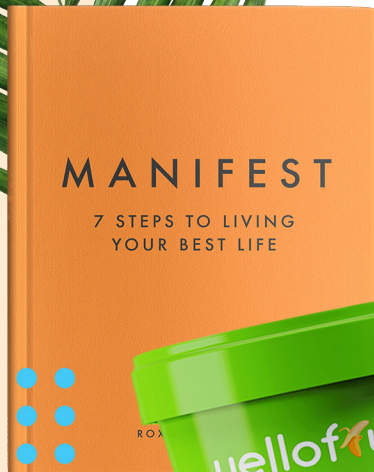
ART DIRECTOR
Pauline Lopez

JUNIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Amos Chin

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD
Bernice Slotnick
Teacher (Retired)

John Myers
*Curriculum Instructor,
OISE (Retired)*

Rose Dotten
*CEO and Head Librarian,
Shelburne Public Library*



Summer Essentials: *2022 Edition*

The start of summer break is finally upon us! Now is the perfect time to unwind after an undoubtedly busy school year and indulge in some me-time routines. Here are a few items that can help you relax and recharge as you sit back and enjoy this much-needed time off. Check out these teacher must-haves for the summer of 2022.



AROMATHERAPY & BODY CARE

Now that you finally have a bit of free time, treat yourself to a little self-care by incorporating some summer-themed scents and enjoy the therapeutic benefits to your body and mind.

[Wild Prairie](#)'s summer seasonal collection features soaps, lotions, bath bombs, and more, made with ingredients that are natural, ethically sourced, and sustainable. Wild Prairie also works with community service groups to supply soap to those in need, and has donated over 5,000 bars of soap to deserving agencies. [ShopEco](#) offers an eco-conscious summertime lineup as well, as does the [Island Man](#) series by Stirling Soap Co., which plants one tree for each item sold.

Unwind and Recharge



Wild Prairie

ShopEco

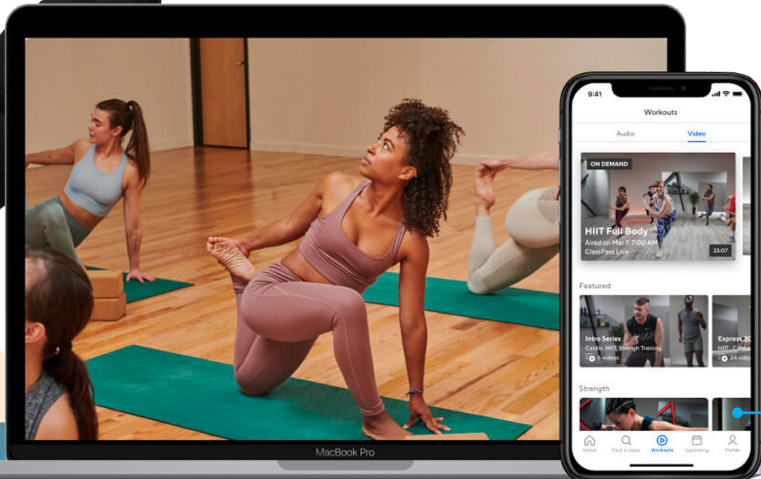
Stirling Soap Co.

VIRTUAL FITNESS CLASSES

Been eyeing some fitness classes but haven't yet taken the plunge? Virtual fitness classes are perfect for those of you who'd like to try many different ones, all from the comfort of your home—and at the pace and the time that suits you.

[ClassPass](#) has more than 4,000 on-demand online workouts spanning strength-training, cardio, yoga, barre, Pilates, meditation, and many more. You have the freedom to create your own custom workout by mixing and matching different fitness styles. ClassPass offers a flexible month-to-month commitment.

ClassPass



Indulge, Guilt-Free

BINGE-WORTHY SNACKS

Catching up this summer on all the shows you missed during the year might have you reaching for some chips or ice cream. But why not try some snacks you can actually feel good about eating?



Que Pasa

[Que Pasa](#) keeps it real with its organic tortilla chips that are made with just a few simple (non-GMO) ingredients. The company also works with food banks around North America, and has achieved zero waste at its manufacturing facility in British Columbia.

[FreeYumm](#) is a mom-owned business that creates crackers, cookies, and bars without any artificial fillers, refined sugars, or preservatives. Partnered with [Backpack Buddies](#), FreeYumm also helps to fill the weekend hunger gap for children. Each time you purchase a package of FreeYumm, you're helping feed a child in need.



FreeYumm



Yellofruit

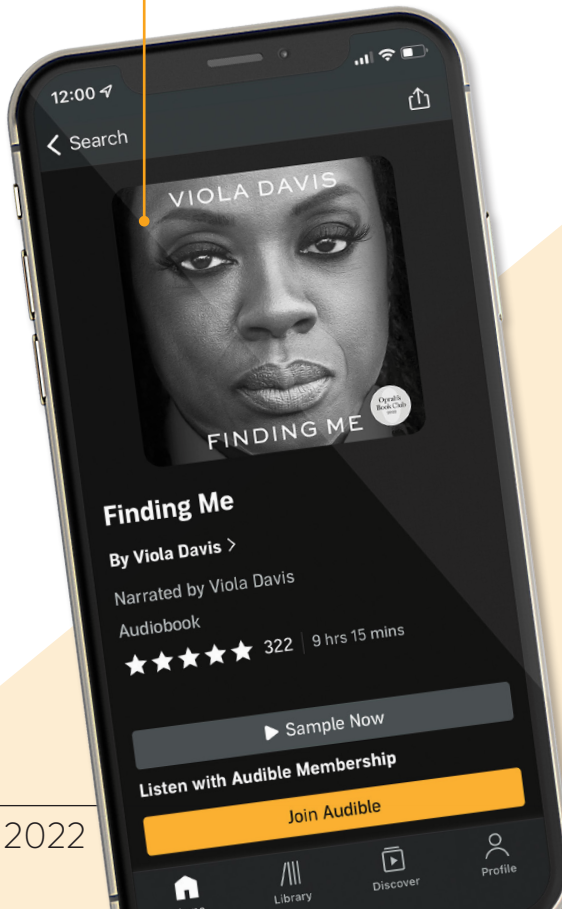
For an alternative to traditional ice cream, check out [Yellofruit](#), an award-winning frozen dessert that's made with all organic plant-based ingredients, and uses "ugly fruit" to help curb waste within the food supply chain.

No Time to Read?

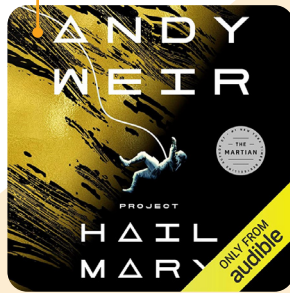
AUDIOBOOKS

Love books but don't have time to sit down and read? Audiobooks might be just the thing for you. Whether you're taking a leisurely walk, gardening, exercising, or passing time on a family road trip, audiobooks are the perfect way to help you squeeze in a few good reads.

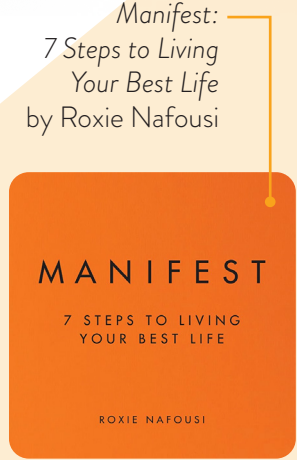
Some of the most popular audiobooks on [Audible](#) this year:



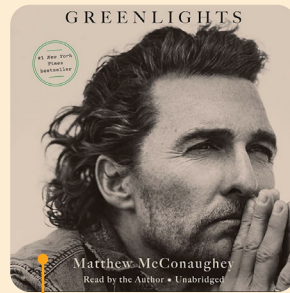
Finding Me by Viola Davis



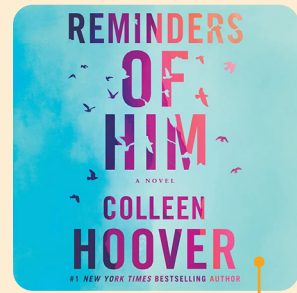
Project Hail Mary by Andy Weir



Manifest: 7 Steps to Living Your Best Life by Roxie Nafousi

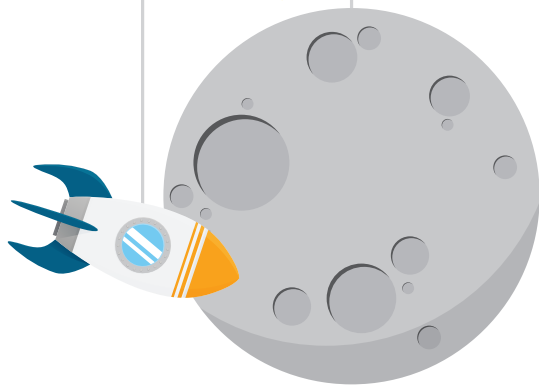


Greenlights by Matthew McConaughey

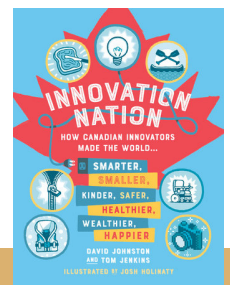
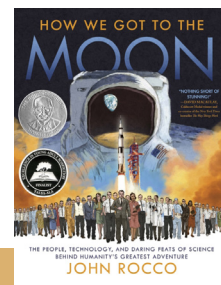
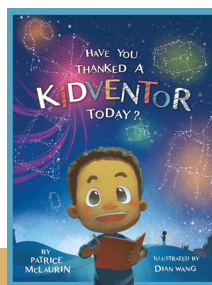


Reminders of Him by Colleen Hoover

Inventors



Inventors are often remembered for their milestones and contributions to human evolution, but there's a lot more to their stories than just finished products. Teaching students about inventors allows the opportunity to instill a deeper message—one that encourages kids to embrace their curiosity and pursue their own creative ideas. Here are some suggested reads about inventors that may spark your students' interest in all things building, tinkering, and creating. These books share inspiring stories about real-life inventors who were unafraid to dream big and think outside the box. They are also great for STEM/STEAM learning.



1 FRANZ'S PHANTASMAGORICAL MACHINE

BY BETH ANDERSON, ILLUSTRATED BY CAROLINE HAMEL

Kids Can Press (May 2022)

Grade Level: K–3

This uplifting picture book biography is about a humble Austrian farmer named Franz Gsellmann who spent 23 years building an apparatus known as the Weltmaschine (World Machine). The book teaches kids valuable lessons in courage and perseverance, while also exploring the concept of mechanical-kinetic sculptures.

2 HAVE YOU THANKED A KIDVENTOR TODAY?

BY PATRICE MCLAURIN, ILLUSTRATED BY DIAN WANG

Khemrah Publishing

(June 2019)

Grade Level: K–5

This empowering STEM read encourages youth to tap into their own genius by highlighting some of the least talked about inventors—kids! The book is written in rhyme, and even comes with fun science experiments to promote higher-level thinking.

3 HOW WE GOT TO THE MOON

BY JOHN ROCCO

Crown Books for Young Readers (October 2020)

Grade Level: 5+

This highly acclaimed, prize-winning novel takes an in-depth look at all the remarkable innovations and human ingenuity involved in the 1969 Apollo moon-landing program. Each challenging step in the space race is revealed with striking illustrations and unforgettable human stories.

4 **INNOVATION NATION**

BY DAVID JOHNSTON AND
TOM JENKINS, ILLUSTRATED BY
JOSH HOLINATY

Tundra Books (May 2021)

Grade Level: 3–7

From Indigenous inventions such as the canoe, igloo, and lifejacket to the latest groundbreaking advances in medicine, education, science, engineering, and the arts, this kid-friendly book explores the whys and hows of 50 brilliant Canadian innovations that have changed the world.

5 **MIMIC MAKERS: BIOMIMICRY INVENTORS INSPIRED BY NATURE**

BY KRISTEN NORDSTROM,
ILLUSTRATED BY PAUL BOSTON

Charlesbridge (July 2021)

Grade Level: 2–5

Mimic Makers offers a delightful introduction to the science and art of emulating nature’s best biological ideas designed to solve human problems. The book profiles ten scientists, engineers, and designers who imitate plants and animals to create amazing new technologies.

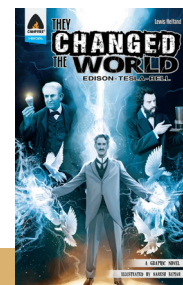
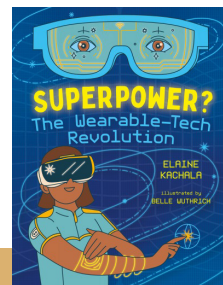
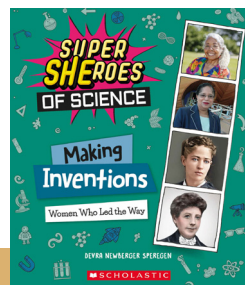
6 **SUPER HEROES OF SCIENCE: MAKING INVENTIONS**

BY DEVRA NEWBERGER SPEREGEN

Children’s Press (May 2022)

Grade Level: 3–5

Female inventors have made remarkable breakthroughs for centuries, but they haven’t always received credit for their work. Here, young readers will learn about various pioneering women who are behind many of the products and technologies used every day, from Kevlar to windshield wipers to the dishwasher, and more.



7 **SUPERPOWER? THE WEARABLE-TECH REVOLUTION**

BY ELAINE KACHALA, ILLUSTRATED BY BELLE WUTHRICH

Orca Book Publishers (October 18, 2022)

Grade Level: 4–7

With wearable technology being all the rage these days, this forthcoming book will help kids discover not only how electronic wearables can help people survive and thrive, but also the challenges and ethics surrounding this next tech frontier. Throughout the book, students will learn about the engineers and inventors working on these new technologies. They can even start brainstorming their own wearable inventions with the help of the accompanying *Superpower* [activity sheet](#)!

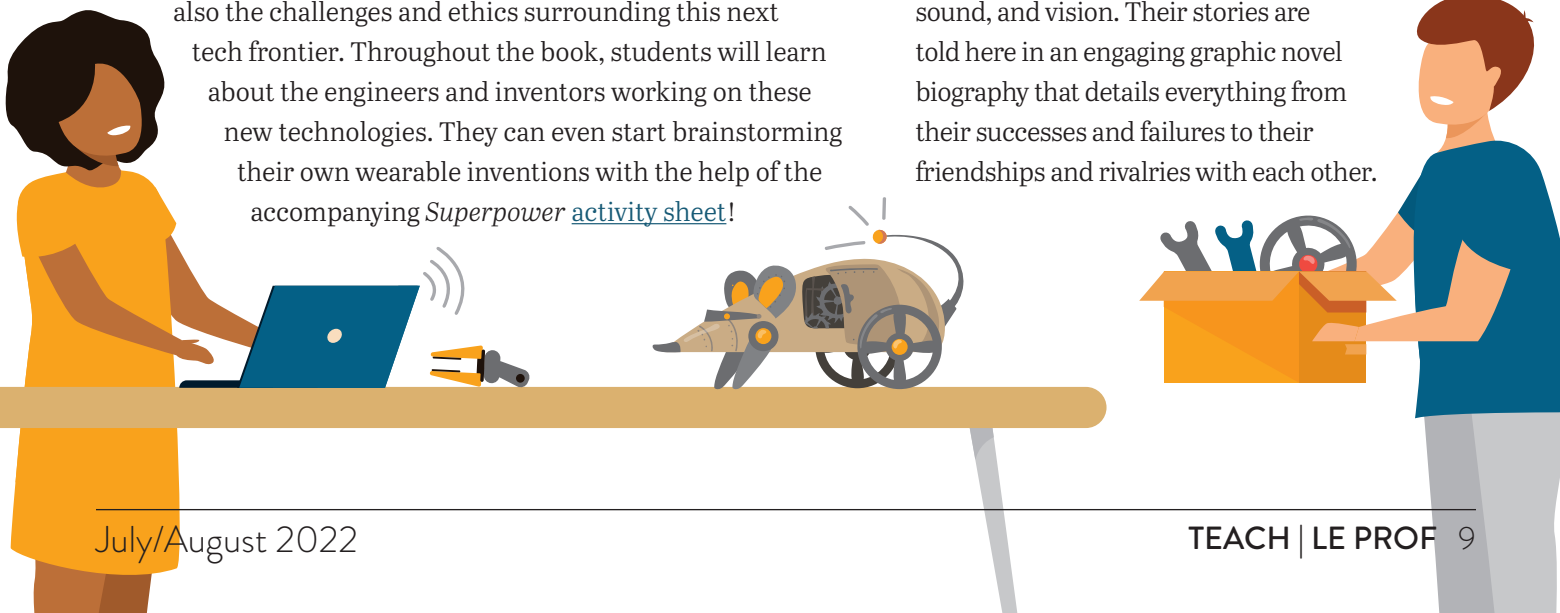
8 **THEY CHANGED THE WORLD**

BY LEWIS HELFAND, ILLUSTRATED BY
NARESH KUMAR

Campfire (June 2014)

Grade Level: 8–12

Edison! Tesla! Bell! These three legendary inventors revolutionized the fields of light, sound, and vision. Their stories are told here in an engaging graphic novel biography that details everything from their successes and failures to their friendships and rivalries with each other.





How Educators Can Respond to Book **Burning** Banning

By Adam Stone

The tide of intolerance is rising, and once again the reactionary camp wants to throw literature on the pyre, at least metaphorically.

As director of library services at Mercersburg Academy, a private high school in Pennsylvania, Alexandra Patterson worries about the long-term social impact of book banning. “Books can be a wonderful way to build empathy, and when we are cutting off access to voices from particular groups, we are creating larger divisions,” she says.

In recent months, some parents and school boards have ramped up efforts to exclude certain titles from classrooms and library shelves. Many experts say that teachers, librarians, and others have a key role to play in what they describe as a critical time for education.

THE BOOK BAN LANDSCAPE

“In the current environment, there is a movement to ban more and more books,” says Bruce Hanson, an education wellness expert and founder of the test-prep site [First Choice Admissions](#). “In 2020 the American Library Association [tracked](#) 156 attempts to remove books from school libraries and universities. In 2021 that number jumped to 729,” Hanson notes.

It’s part of a broader trend. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) [reports](#) that in 2022, 33 states introduced over 100 bills to limit discussion of race and gender in the classroom. “These attacks come at a time when various groups—including state lawmakers and local school board officials—are simultaneously pushing to ban books from school and public libraries,” the ACLU notes.

“In the fall of 2021 alone, the American Library Association received more than 330 book challenges, doubling the 156 challenges it received in 2020,” the ACLU reports. Some of the most frequently targeted books tackle issues around race, gender, and sexual identity, including Jonathan Evison’s *Lawn Boy*, Maia Kobabe’s *Gender Queer*, George M. Johnson’s *All Boys Aren’t Blue*, and Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*.

“These book challenges are focusing on and attacking students’ access to books that are by and about BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour], LGBTQ people, and other marginalized groups,” the ACLU says.

WHY EDUCATORS ARE CONCERNED

Teachers and other education professionals cite a wide variety of reasons to be worried about the trend toward suppressing books in schools. By limiting the books that students can read, some suggest, we limit their choices in life.

“Teachers and parents have the same fundamental job: to prepare our kids for this world by equipping them with tools for professional and personal success,” says Amina Akram, founder and CEO of the membership-based monthly book club [Ouraan](#).

“Book banning is driven by our innate instinct to protect and shelter our children—but we cannot both keep them in a bubble and successfully do our jobs,” Akram says. “Instead of protecting our children through book bans, we end up raising a generation of young adults [who are] inflexible when navigating new situations, lack empathy, and [are] ill-equipped to deal with the realities of the world.”

Others say book bans make it impossible for education professionals to fulfill some of their key responsibilities.

“We live in a time of information overload. A few clicks can get you more information on a topic than you could ever read. Part of a library’s job is to provide information about how to navigate resources and choose the ones that are best for a given situation,” Patterson says. “When books are banned, we are cutting off opportunities to look at all of the potential ideas.”

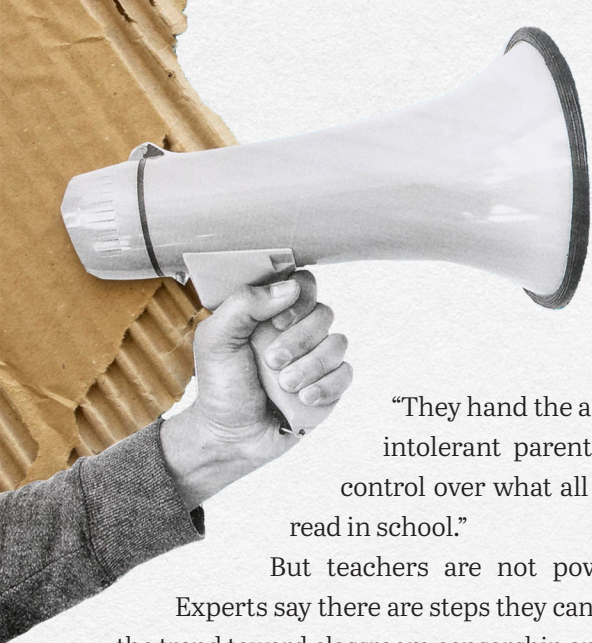
Limiting students’ access to certain books “really closes their worlds off in very unhealthy ways,” says Miah Daughtery, literacy director at the research-based not-for-profit [NWEA](#) (formerly the Northwest Evaluation Association), which supports students and educators worldwide.

“Access to diverse texts is important for students and for society,” Daughtery adds. Broad reading “builds empathy and allows students to see situations through the eyes of people who are different from them. It is also deeply affirming for students to be able to see characters who are like them.”

All of this has profound implications for educators who may find themselves struggling to cope in an increasingly hostile landscape.

“Teachers and librarians are undeniably being impacted by this climate,” says Jonathan Friedman, director of free expression and education at PEN America, and author of the [“Banned in the USA”](#) report.

“Book bans pit teachers and parents against each other, and parents against other parents,” he explains.



“They hand the angriest, most intolerant parents or citizens control over what all children can read in school.”

But teachers are not powerless here.

Experts say there are steps they can take to resist the trend toward classroom censorship and continue to teach effectively.

WHAT EDUCATORS CAN DO

Openly defying a book ban “is not only career suicide but it’s unlikely to make a meaningful change. But there are alternatives to push back,” says Bruce Hanson. Teachers can, for instance, take up political action against elected officials who push for book bans. “Unlike a parent, a public official can be voted out of office or succumb to political pressure to change their view.”

Political organizing and lobbying “may be the best recourse a teacher has to change the current momentum of book banning and create a longer-term political environment that is more tolerant,” Hanson says. “And while that might not be a quick fight, over time, sustained political pressure can produce enduring positive results.”

Others suggest that teachers can work directly with concerned parents to preempt efforts to ban books. For example, Amina Akram’s book club sends members a parental guide with each book to inform them about “sensitive themes and topics” and to give them “conversational tools for navigating those themes in age-appropriate, parent-led ways,” she explains.

“There is plenty of middle-ground between banning books and exposing our children to inappropriate content,” Akram says. “In districts where book banning is happening, educators and families alike could look to pair with organizations that curate age- and developmentally-appropriate books that provide thematically deep themes and educational value.”

Teachers can also “push back against book banning” by becoming a part of the wider dialog, Daughtery adds. They should “work in community with each other and the broader community to decide what is important and worth fighting for. Pushing back could look like partnering with the American Library Association, writing their elected officials, or weighing in on their district’s policies on text selection.”

Daughtery advocates more direct action to keep books accessible in communities where bans are taking a toll. Educators can pool together books or create lists of texts, for example, in order to expand young readers’ options.

Teachers should also be “building relationships with students’ families and hosting discussions,” she says. For example, after students have finished reading a challenged book, they can write testimonials that describe what they learned and why they think others should read the text, Daughtery explains.

Another option teachers can consider is allying themselves with larger organizations fighting to resist book bans. The ACLU for example has been active in this arena. It challenged a school board in Tennessee that voted to ban *Maus*, a Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel about the Holocaust, from its eighth-grade curriculum. The group also filed a lawsuit in Missouri, after which the school board voted to return *The Bluest Eye* to library shelves.

School librarians can play a role too, by ensuring their “book challenge” policies are up to date and publicly posted. And they can use those policies as a means to push back.

“Often, folks challenge books based on excerpts without having read the entire text,” Alexandra Patterson says. “Librarians might want to have a section on the challenge form that asks which pages are objectionable and if the challenger has read the whole text.”

Educators can also assist students with finding *their* voices in this conversation and advocating on their own behalf. The American Federation of Teachers has [lesson plans](#) available that help students learn about historical and present-day book banning practices, examine why books are challenged, and explore ideas for challenging book bans in return.

At PEN America, Friedman offers a number of other practical strategies. Teachers can:

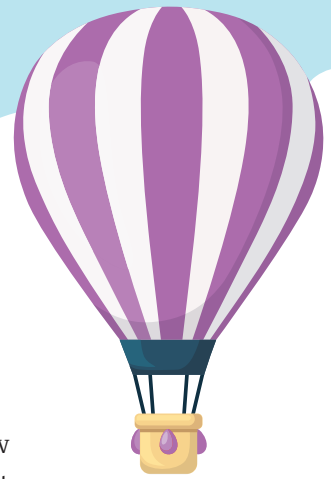
- Familiarize themselves with their schools' policies and procedures for curriculum and media challenges, and ask parents to follow the process.
- Support administrators in adopting best practice guidelines for challenges to curriculum and library materials.
- Advocate for students' rights to read in school libraries, and help the community to understand how open access to diverse literature is a part of promoting literacy among young people.
- Keep a folder of book reviews for the titles in the classroom library, in case it becomes necessary to defend the decision to include a particular book.

“When bans are being encouraged in districts, teachers should use what influence they have to support their students, and speak to the importance of access to diverse literature and to supporting diverse learners in schools,” Friedman says.

State and local lawmakers “are doubling down on their crusade against a complete, accurate, and inclusive education,” the ACLU warns. The group urges teachers, students, and parents “to support the fight against these classroom censorship attacks and book challenges. The battle is far from over.”

ADAM STONE is a seasoned journalist with 20+ years' experience. He covers education, technology, government and the military, along with diverse other topics.





Walking Tours and Trails

School's out for the season, but that doesn't mean that trips have to end as well. In fact, now is the perfect time to go on a field trip or two of your own! Perhaps you can even break out those walking shoes and embark on an adventure on foot. From mountains to coastlines, cities to villages, walking tours can be some of the best ways to explore a new place. They give you the chance to fully immerse yourself in the history and culture of your destination with every step.

There are many types of trips designed to suit walkers of all abilities and interests, whether urban or rural, easy or challenging, guided or independent. So lace up your shoes and check out some of these suggested global walking tours this summer.

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, CANADA

Home to an abundance of pristine rivers and lakes, along with sublime mountains and forests, the Northwest Territories is a nature lover's paradise. In the summer months, the sun never sets in this northern destination, allowing visitors extra time to enjoy leisurely walks around the lakes, day excursions just outside of town, or multi-day treks in the backcountry. Novice amblers and serious walkers alike can find excellent trails in and around [Hay River](#), [Inuvik](#), [Fort Simpson](#), [Fort Smith](#), and [Yellowknife](#). For more info, visit: spectacularnwt.com

NEW ORLEANS, UNITED STATES

Hit the streets of the French Quarter, famous for its busker brass bands, street performers, and historic architecture. Sites of interest include the 19th century Garden District, as well as world-famous cemeteries where you'll weave through a maze of ornate and eclectic above-ground tombs. The city also offers walking tours with a focus on the history of slavery, where you'll visit important sites like plantations and former slave markets. Then after the sun has set, enjoy a night out with a local guide to discover the city's vibrant jazz scene. For more info, go to: neworleans.com/tours/walking



SICILY, ITALY

Blessed with protected landscapes and thousands of years of rich heritage, Sicily is an attraction for both nature and history buffs. Much of Sicily is easily accessible on foot, so there are a wide variety of walking tours available. Whether you're meandering down the cobbled streets of old towns, exploring ancient Greek ruins and temples, getting up close with Byzantine mosaics, or discovering the unspoiled islands of Egadi, you're sure to have a blast on this beautiful island. Learn more at: visitsicily.info/en/discover/mini-guide-2/

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

All of Edinburgh is a UNESCO World Heritage Site steeped in centuries-old royal legacy. Walk along with an expert guide through Edinburgh's Old Town and explore medieval landmarks such as Edinburgh Castle, St Giles' Cathedral and Holyrood Palace—then head off into Edinburgh's 18th century New Town to admire its elegant gardens and Neoclassical architecture. A little ways out of the city, you can traipse through some of Scotland's spectacular landscapes, from the rolling countryside of [St Abb's Head Nature Reserve](#), to the peaceful [Hermitage Woodland](#), and the ruin-strewn [Fife Coastal Path](#)—all of which offer a variety of guided tours. For more info, visit: freetoursbyfoot.com/free-walking-tours-edinburgh

MOROCCO

Nearly untouched by Western civilization, Morocco is a place for all culture lovers. Venture into the bustling cities of Fez and Marrakech, where you'll uncover local gems and marvelous architecture such as medinas, souks, historic mosques, and palaces. You can also join an easy grade, [multi-day walking trip](#) among the foothills of the Atlas Mountains, leading to the Atlantic coast and then taking you across beaches, valleys, and rustic Berber villages. For more info, check out: visitmorocco.com

VIENNA, AUSTRIA TO PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

Have you ever dreamed of backpacking across Europe? Now perhaps you can try the next best thing by hiking all the way from Vienna to Prague. This guided or self-guided tour takes you along Czech Republic's "Greenways" of marked trails. You'll pass through the historic provinces of Moravia and Bohemia, and trek across the Carpathian Mountains amid orchid-filled meadows and picturesque villages. You'll wonder at magnificent architecture and explore archaeological sites—from Renaissance Telč to fairytale-like Český Krumlov—en route to the soaring spires of Prague. The tour covers 500 km of trails over eight days so it's best suited for experienced hikers. Find more details at: walkingcentraleurope.com/greenways-vienna-prague

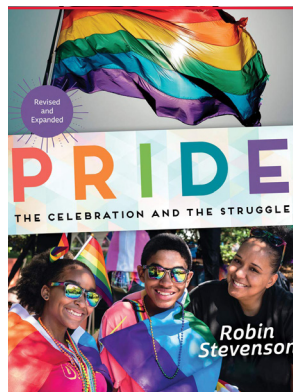


Global Issues: LGBTQ2S+

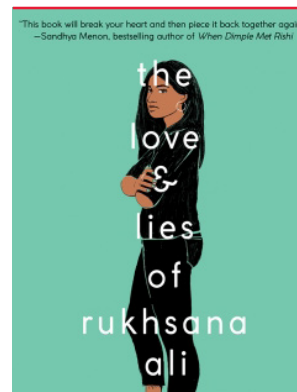
By Jonelle St. Aubyn



FEATURED BOOKS



Pride: The Celebration and the Struggle by Robin Stevenson (Orca Book Publishers, 2020)



The Love and Lies of Ruksana Ali by Sabina Khan (Scholastic Press, 2019)



LEARNING FOCUS

This novel study unit will explore:

- The challenges faced by LGBTQ2S+ people when coming out
- What life is like for LGBTQ2S+ people around the world
- Understanding the complexity of intersectionality
- Empowering students to make meaningful change for themselves and/or others



LEARNING EXPERIENCE

MINDS ON PROVOCATION

Using the K-W-L chart provided [here](#), watch the following videos about what LGBTQ2S+ life is like around the world: [This Is What LGBT Life Is Like Around the World | Jenni Chang and Lisa Dazols | TED Talks](#) and [We Resist: A Queer Muslim Perspective | El-Farouk Khaki | TEDxUTSC](#).

GRADE LEVEL:
SECONDARY (11-12)

THEME:
GLOBAL ISSUES

SUB-THEMES:
LGBTQ2S+

After you fill out the chart, consider the following question: What challenges/barriers might LGBTQ2S+ people face when trying to come out?

READ, PLAN, AND PRACTICE

Students will read *The Love and Lies of Rukhsana Ali* as either a book club or class novel. Given the length of the novel, this is a unit of study that will need to be done over the course of a few weeks in order to give students time to finish the novel and work through the follow-up activities provided.

Students will also read the following sections of *Pride: The Celebration and the Struggle* in preparation for their potential learning projects:

- From Chapter 2: Pride and Identity
 - What is Coming Out?
 - Being an Ally
- From Chapter 3: Celebrating Pride Today
 - Family Pride
 - Pride and Religion
- All of Chapter 4: Pride Around the World

These readings are great for class discussions in connection to the material that is covered in the novel. They will also help provide needed information as students complete the follow-up activities.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

These questions can be used for discussions with the class or students can complete them as journal entries either while they are reading the novel, or after the novel has been read:

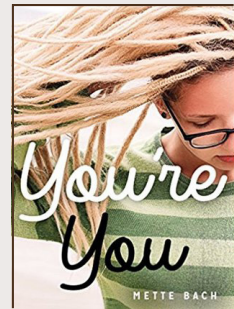
- Why did Rukhsana not come out to her family prior to getting caught with Ariana?
- Do you think it would have been more or less difficult for Aamir to come out than Rukhsana, given his position within the family? Explain your reasoning.
- What were some of the differences between the coming out experiences of Ariana and Rukhsana?
- Why did Rukhsana choose to repair her relationship with her family rather than just leaving after she came back from Bangladesh?
- What are some challenges that people in the LGBTQ2S+ community might face when coming out in different countries?

MAKE, TINKER, AND MODIFY

Students should select from one of the following options to demonstrate their learning. Although many options are provided, students should also be given the opportunity to come up with an option that works best for them.

Public service announcements: Either by poster, infographic, podcast, or short video, based on the information learned, students will seek to educate other high

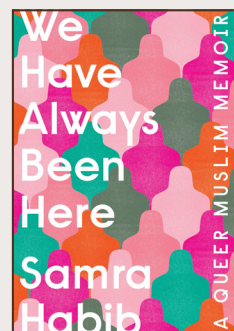
ADDITIONAL CANADIAN BOOKS TO SUPPORT THESE SUB-THEMES



You're You by Mette Bach
(James Lorimer and Company, 2017)



Kings, Queens, and In-Betweens by Tanya Boteju
(Simon Pulse, 2019)



We Have Always Been Here: A Queer Muslim Memoir by Samra Habib (Viking, 2019)



Fire Song by Adam Garnet Jones
(Annick Press, 2018)



school students about the challenges of coming out as a teenager and strategies to do so when ready.

A coming out blog or vlog: Students will conduct research and write of their findings about supports or community organizations that can help teenagers who want to come out. Students should try to provide a diverse list of organizations, taking into account the intersectionalities of those who want to come out.

LGBTQ2S+ activism: Many young people are leading the fight against homophobia and it is still illegal for people to be LGBTQ2S+ in many countries. Students will research what these activists are doing and come up with their own suggestions/solutions about what can be done to support people in these countries in their fight for equal rights. Students can also create a social media campaign to spread awareness and to share their ideas.

Religion and LGBTQ2S+: Many people fear coming out because they worry about losing connection to their faith or religious groups/organizations. Students will use Robin Stevenson's book to look at how religious organizations are supporting the LGBTQ2S+ community, then share their learning through a medium of choice (infographic, podcast, research report, film, etc.).

Creative art piece: Students can write a song or create a work of art that demonstrates the positive impact that coming out can have for an individual.

Social media campaign: Students will create a positive social media campaign to help educate others about the challenges of coming out and how to be a supportive ally. They will spread the word through Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and other social media platforms to demonstrate their learning and understanding.



REFLECT AND CONNECT

With the products that students have created, they are encouraged to share their learning in the following ways:

- A community presentation
- Educating classmates through class visits or an assembly
- A gallery walk
- Virtual presentations



BOOK LISTS

- [2SLGBTQ+ Resources for All Ages](#) (Another Story Bookshop)
- [List of LGBTQ Books for Kids and Teens](#) (The Canadian Children's Book Centre)
- [Read With Pride: K-12 Books](#) (49th Kids)



ADAPTATIONS FOR THIS LESSON

- *Like a Love Story* by Abdi Nazemian (Balzer + Bray, 2019)
This book also does an excellent job of looking at intersectionality within the LGBTQ2S+ community and could be used with Grade 9 to 12 classes.



MORE RESOURCES

- Sabina Khan and Robin Stevenson both do author visits! Contact Sabina at sabinawriter@gmail.com or Robin at her website: robinstevenson.com.
- [The Trevor Project](#): This website has a coming out guide that contains useful information and questions, as well as some excellent information about intersectionality, LGBTQ2S+ issues, and racial justice.
- [Healthy Relationships Plus Program](#) by The Fourth R: This is a great resource document that educators can use to teach students about the importance of healthy relationships, as well as how to be a good ally.
- [Living My Truth | Tru Wilson | TEDxEastVan](#): Discover the power that is found when a nine-year-old girl discovers who she truly is and decides to live as her authentic self—regardless of the Catholic school that denies her identity. Hear Tru Wilson’s journey of self-discovery and empowerment, in a world that sometimes doesn’t know what to do with her...simply because she was born a boy.



TEACHMEDIA

THE GREAT CANADIAN BOOK PROJECT

TEACH is excited to launch a new video series in collaboration with **Canadian School Libraries!** These videos showcase Canadian titles as valuable teaching tools to help engage students.

teachmag.com/great-canadian-books

Canada

Shaking up Shakespeare:

Digital Tools for Digital Students

By Deanna Ratzki



Unless you have an affinity for Shakespeare, there's a good chance that you wouldn't consider studying the Bard a highlight of your education. In the intermediate and senior classroom, there are always students who groan at the mention of even his name. Many of them dread reading Shakespeare out of fear of not understanding the words, or because they think his works have nothing to do with their 21st century interests.

It's easy to perpetuate such beliefs if you, too, dreaded studying this subject as a student, like I did, and now also dread teaching it. In both high school and university I avoided Shakespeare's works like the plague! Fortunately, in my case all it took was one BEd instructor who made it her goal to change my mind, and all of a sudden Shakespeare was transformed for me.

While pursuing my BEd, the Program Director, Stephanie Thompson, challenged my perceptions of Shakespeare, and ended up converting myself and fellow skeptical teacher candidates into some of the most effective teachers of his content.

In a two-part lesson dubbed "Shaking up Shakespeare," Professor Thompson provided the class with a myriad of resources to genuinely engage today's students with yesterday's plays. Professor Thompson even inspired me to create my own assignments that blend current social media trends with inquiry-based learning, allowing students to explore Shakespeare's relevance and enjoy themselves while doing so.

Below you'll find examples of these assignments, along with some digital tools I've used in my own classroom to approach Shakespeare in a contemporary and Gen-Z-friendly manner.

DIGITAL TASKS FOR DIGITAL AGE STUDENTS

Professor Thompson placed a great emphasis on having fun—yes, fun!—while teaching Shakespeare. She suggested that an effective way to gauge student understanding of his poetry is for kids to try out [Shakespearean insults](#). Show them a few of [these examples](#), and then have students use the generator at the bottom of the page to invent some insults of their own. In my experience, students have loved getting the chance to make an insult and not get in trouble for it.

Another way to assess student understanding could be to have kids create a rap about an area of Shakespeare's work that interests them. Students can perform their rap live, create a recording, or make an animated version with text-to-speech features. Pressed for time? Instead, have students analyze an existing rap like [this one](#) and try to identify as many references to the text as possible.

One assignment that really helped me connect to the humorous side of my students was asking them to create memes. I tasked my students with finding one aspect of the text that resonated with them and then creating an original meme about it. I opted to also assign a written reflection so that students could reference the example from the text and analyze the connection to their meme.

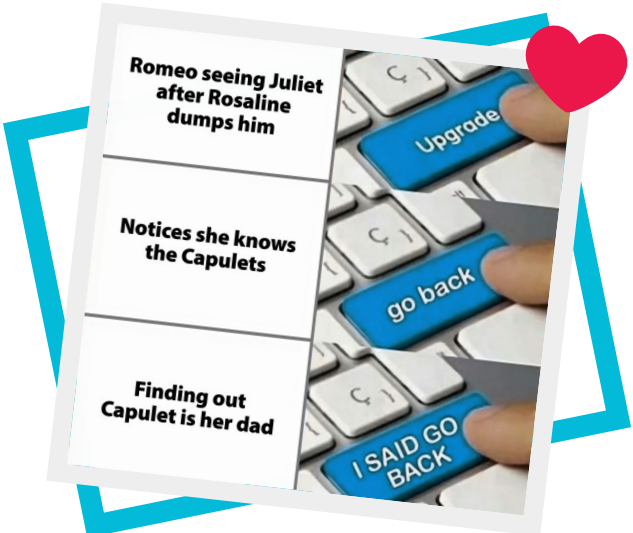
MY TIKTOK/REELS-INSPIRED ASSIGNMENT

One of my core goals in teaching is to always strive to make my content relevant and meaningful for my students. Over this past year, I realized that TikTok and Instagram Reels have become so ubiquitous in my students' lives that it would be a waste to not allow them to use their content creation skills for educational purposes.

So I came up with an assignment that asked them to develop an argument, like a thesis in a typical essay, but in a short video format instead. Students would begin by gathering as much evidence as



The text at the top reads, "Claudius thinking about his new step-son-nephew." The character is looking at an orange sign that says, "Revenge = Tragic Downfall" while the bottom text shows, "That sign won't stop me because I can't read."



This meme was made by one of my grade nine students. I think it perfectly captures the initial responses of most students to Shakespeare's works. But by the end, the student who created the meme found it was no longer relevant. In that way, the meme also serves as a reflection piece for students to consider how their perception of Shakespeare has changed over time.

possible that would support their argument. The evidence could range from quotes to details in the text, as well as comparisons to other representations of the text (i.e. films, graphic novels, songs, etc.)

Once they had formed their “thesis” and curated the supporting evidence, I asked my students to select their three best pieces of evidence and turn them into a script. I explained that a script is essential for creating any video because it will serve as a roadmap on how to translate their ideas into convincing visual content. During this time, I also implemented peer-review and teacher conference periods where students could receive feedback on their progress to ensure they were on the right track.

After the scripts were completed, students moved on to the actual video creation. I allowed my students choice in whether to use TikTok, Instagram Reels, or any other video editor they felt comfortable with. Ideally, the editor needed to be capable of adding voiceover, images, video, text, and a green screen if possible.

As inspiration for their videos, I showed my students appropriate “conspiracy theory” TikToks, as the goal of the assignment was similar to the intent of conspiracy creators: to convince viewers that something is true!

From here, students had complete creative freedom over how to create their videos. They could choose whether to appear on camera or not, and whether they would speak or use text-to-speech software instead. The flexibility in options allowed for greater accessibility.

THE RESULTS

One of the positive things about teaching in the “Digital Age” is that students continually amaze me with innovative ideas. Compared to the usual dull essay assignment, my students really took this task to heart and created some amazing content.

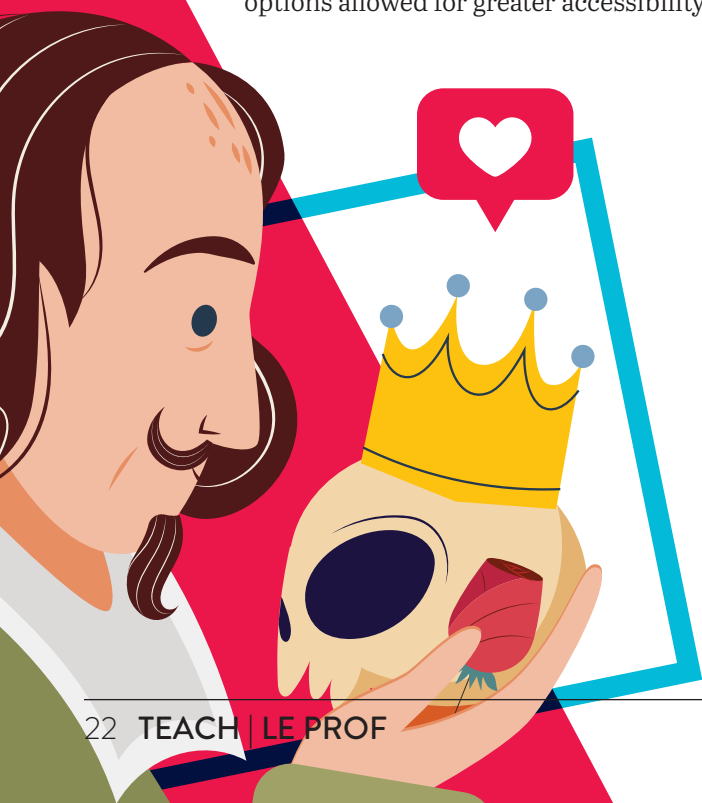
One student made a video about the role of women in *Hamlet*. The video looked at how the actions of male characters led to the downfalls of otherwise innocent female characters. The student used screen grabs from the Kenneth Branagh film version of *Hamlet* to better illustrate their evidence.

Another student decided to frame their video around the connection between Gavin DeGraw’s 2003 hit “I Don’t Want to Be” and the character of Hamlet. The video offered a close reading of two verses, with the lines linked to several moments in the play. The student used clips from DeGraw’s music video to create parallels between early-2000s relationships and the relationship between Hamlet and Ophelia.

Students worked extremely hard on making their videos. Finally, they were able to apply their outside interests directly to their everyday learning and were exceptionally proud of their work. Allowing students to share their videos with their peers was an added bonus, as it gave them a chance to explain the creative process, while also demonstrating understanding and analysis of Shakespeare’s work.

Based on the tremendous success of my assignment, I now firmly believe that implementing digital tools in teaching Shakespeare and other subjects should be considered as a new standard of teaching. Using platforms that are relevant to students’ lives will not only excite them about learning, but will allow them to connect with the material in meaningful ways.

DEANNA RATZKI has an honours degree from Toronto Metropolitan University. She is expected to graduate this year from the University of Ontario Institute of Technology and receive her BED.



NO REASON TO APOLOGIZE

The Resilient Legacy of Viola Desmond

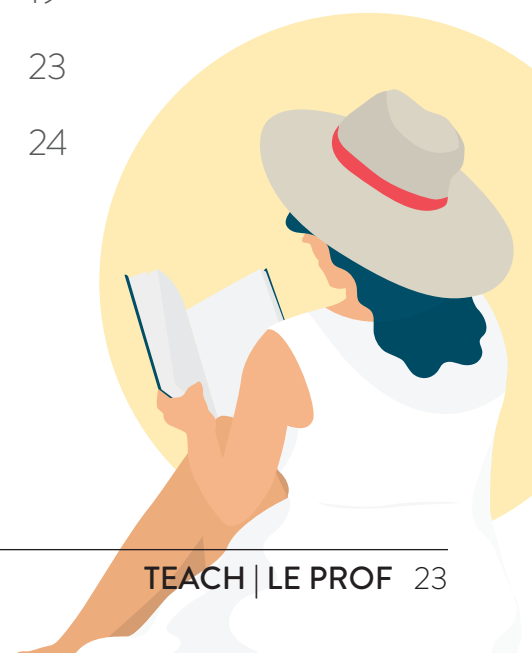
In 1946, when Viola Desmond refused to give up her seat in the whites-only section of a cinema, she took a stand against injustice and became an enduring icon for racial equality and human rights.

This **free digital** literacy title portrays her life and the aftermath of her actions.

TEACHMEDIA | Funded by the Government of Canada | **Canada**

AD INDEX

The Great Canadian Book Project	19
No Reason to Apologize: The Resilient Legacy of Viola Desmond	23
TEACH Magazine	24





This is not easily achieved, says Cassie Tabrizi, CEO of educational consultancy, Create-abilities. "It can be incredibly easy to treat lesson planning like a checklist. Objective: check. Standards: check. Activity: check," she says. Education experts say there is a better way. A thoughtful lesson plan can encourage exploration, freeing kids to speak in their own voices and infusing creativity into the learning process. Parents and teachers see the value in this: Gallup research found 87 percent of teachers and 77 percent of parents say teaching that incorporates creativity in the learning process has a bigger payoff for students.

FIRST STEPS

In order for students to find their own unique voices, they first need to feel their voices are valid. Before settling down to craft the lesson plan, teachers need to make an upfront investment in relationship-building.

"Whether it's through surveys or one-on-one interviews, you have to know who is in your classroom in order to create an environment in which they will take risks for self-discovery," says Rowena Shurn, senior policy analyst and program specialist at the National Education Association.

Shurn taught in Prince George's County, MD schools for 14 years, and found that this early effort paid dividends when she moved on to the actual lesson planning. "You take that information—who they are, what they are interested in—and you have that profile in front of you when you make your lesson plan," she says. "It's what allows your students to show up as their authentic selves."

Deborah Poulos is a teacher with over 27 years experience and the author of *The Conscious Teacher*. She studied every student's cumulative record files at the start of every year, and built that knowledge into her lesson planning. "I had strategies to individualize and differentiate so I could meet students at their levels," she says. "They knew I thought they were important."

PLAN FOR CHOICES

How to write a lesson plan that empowers those valued individuals to speak in their own voices? Step #1: Give them choices. Students learn in different ways, and the lesson plan needs to reflect that individuality.

When Wright gives out a persuasive writing assignment, for example, she keeps it loose. "It can't



always be five paragraphs, five sentences in each paragraph," she says. "You can get the same amount of information from them if you let them do it in different ways. They can create a commercial, they can create a blog, they can [create vlogs]. I just need to see that they can make a persuasive argument."

At The Avery Coonley School in suburban Chicago, second grade teacher Sarah Batzel even finds ways to make math an open-ended exercise. "Let's say I want to talk about fractions. I give them patterned blocks and ask them to build a figure that represents 'one-third.' They grapple with the concept, but there is more than one way of doing it," she says. "They make their own choices."

She did the same in science class, as kids designed their own glue. "We tested corn starch, we tested flour, then the children got to design their own mixture in their own way, using the data we had collected," she says.

It's that combination of data—of facts, information, and a clearly-defined end product—that keeps this kind of open-ended work from becoming a free-for-all. "Parameters foster creativity," Batzel says. "It's not just 'go make a shape.' There is real math in there, and they work within that."

Shurn builds her lesson plans on a tic-tac-toe approach: Eight ways of mastering the information (pick your own) plus a blank square if none of the others appeal to you. "Some people can demonstrate their abilities visually. Another student may be more kinesthetic, so

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

GET A 1-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION FOR ONLY \$12.99*

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION INCLUDES: 2 PRINT EDITIONS + 6 DIGITAL EDITIONS

SHOP.TEACHMAG.COM



*PRICE IN USD