

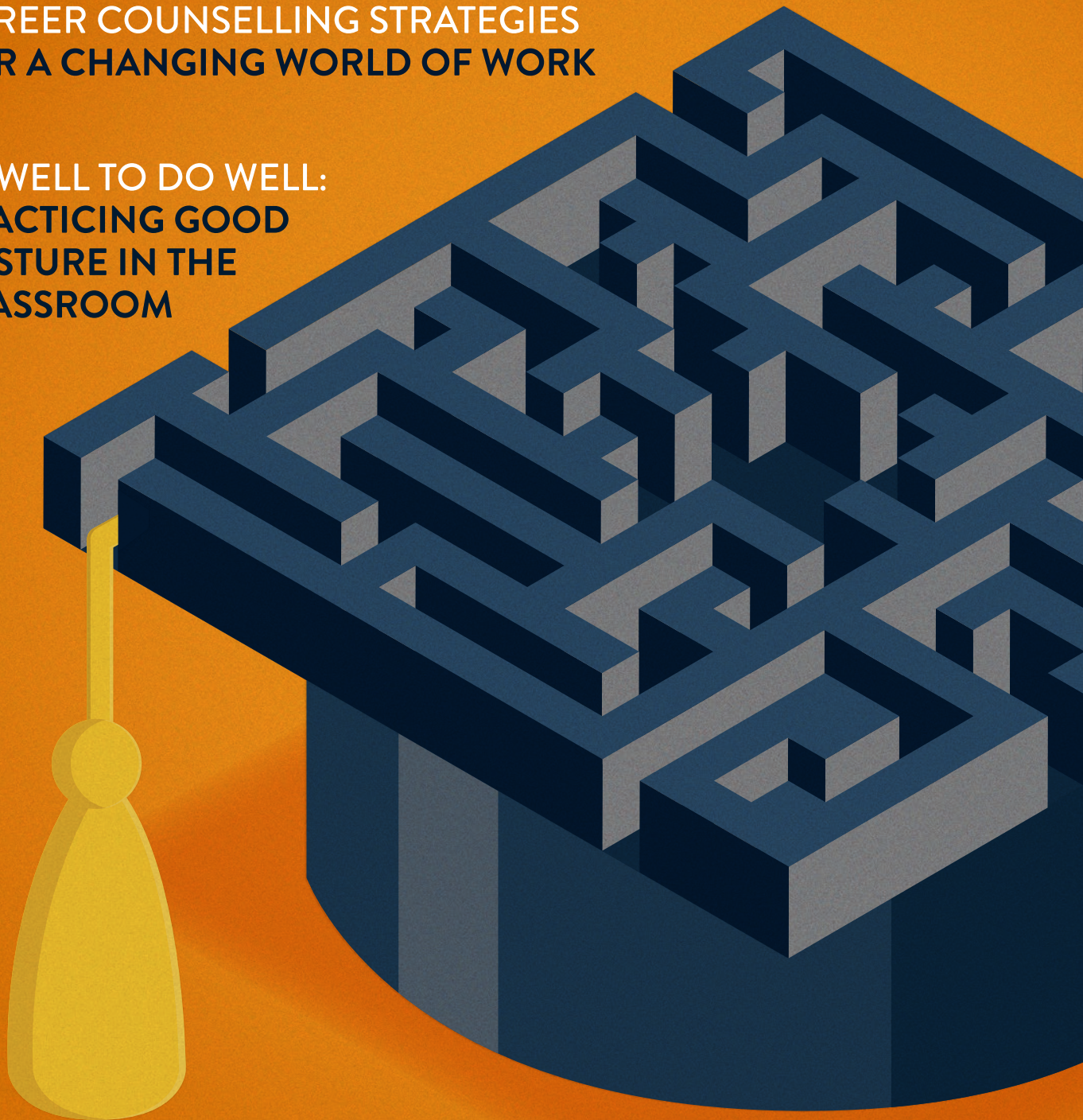
\$6.99 • ISSUE 152 • MAY/JUN 2022

# TEACH

EDUCATION FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

**CAREER COUNSELLING STRATEGIES  
FOR A CHANGING WORLD OF WORK**

**BE WELL TO DO WELL:  
PRACTICING GOOD  
POSTURE IN THE  
CLASSROOM**



# NOTES

For those of us who live in northern climates, spring is a relief. It is the harbinger of warmer temperatures and generally, more sunshine. It heralds the approach of summer and often means vacations and days of relaxation are just around the corner.

For students, however, spring also means looking for summer employment. In particular, employment that offers work experience to help shape future careers—whether through apprenticeships, internships, or jobs that provide both income and much-needed experience. One of this issue’s feature articles explores the world of school counselling and counsellors. This aspect of education is complex, and counsellors play a very important role in connecting and guiding students down viable career paths. Of course, counsellors do more than focus on careers, but for this article we cover that aspect of the profession. Gone are the days when counsellors merely coordinated student class schedules. Like the rest of the world, counselling has become far more nuanced and sophisticated. Take a look at Adam Stone’s piece on the subject to learn more.

Our other feature looks at an aspect of well-being that doesn’t immediately come to mind when thinking about teachers and teaching: good posture. Teachers are on the go all day, often standing for long periods of time, or like many of us, sitting for the same. Anyone who has sustained a debilitating injury can attest to how miserable that can be. Body awareness, along with expert physiotherapy, can

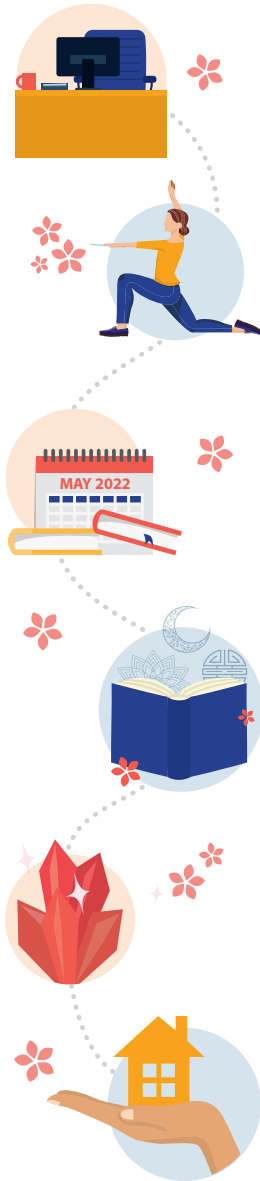
alleviate much discomfort as teachers work through their busy days. This article by Martha Beach includes sound, practical advice on how to keep our bodies in good shape for the long haul, which, in turn, will positively impact how teachers interact with students.

Two of our columns delve into Asian heritage and culture, which are celebrated annually in Canada and the United States during the month of May. Bookstuff shines a light on some new and upcoming titles by writers of Asian and Pacific descent, while Classroom Perspectives details how one high school educator developed an Asian American Literature course to meet the needs of a culturally diverse student population. Our Field Trips column explores the fascinating topic of geology, listing many options for in-depth visits either in person or virtually. Who knows? A field trip like this might spark some young minds to pursue a career in geology—which is something they may want to discuss with a school counsellor!

Finally, CURRICULA presents a lesson plan that explores the topics of housing insecurity and homelessness. What is “hidden homelessness”? Why do some groups of people tend to experience homelessness more than others? How are governments responding to these issues, and how should we as individuals view those who are struggling in this way? Read

through and find out.

Until next time.



WILI LIBERMAN  
PUBLISHER



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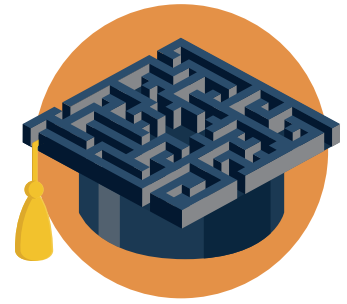
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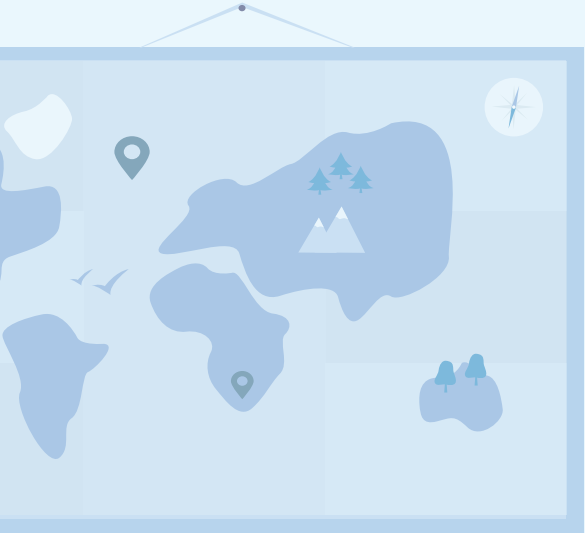
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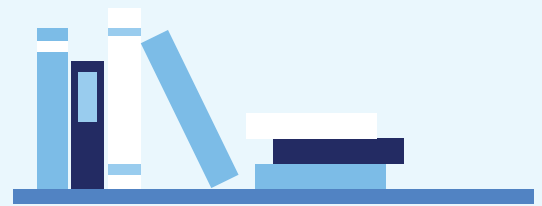


# Be Well to Do Well: Practicing Good Posture in the Classroom

By Martha Beach

Seven years ago, Kelly Krug, a high school business studies teacher with the Peel District School Board, hurt her right shoulder during a group exercise class. For weeks, Krug continued to teach and tried to take it easy as she let her shoulder heal. But she experienced a persistent tingling sensation down her arm and in her hand. Krug finally went to see a physiotherapist, who told her why her injury wasn't healing after all that time and rest: poor posture.

How we hold our bodies throughout our daily activities plays a huge role in our overall health and wellness. No matter if we are still or moving, awareness of our posture, patterns, and even our breathing contribute to keeping our bodies healthy and happy during long days of standing or sitting in a classroom.



Krug's physiotherapist helped bring attention to these issues. "She gave me exercises and she made me hyper conscious of my posture," Krug says. Now, Krug lives each day with this in mind: proud chest, shoulders back and down, breathe deeply, and take movement breaks often. It's something she even teaches her students. "In order for students and staff to do well, we have to be well," she says. It's the perfect recipe for a more comfortable day-to-day teaching experience.

"Teachers have a hard job—they're on their feet all day," says Surabhi Veitch, owner of [The Passionate Physio](#), a Toronto-based clinic that offers virtual services worldwide. She estimates that about 20 percent of her clients are teachers (particularly those who teach in the kindergarten to grade 6 range). They often complain of lower back, neck, and shoulder aches, largely due to physical tension, static posture, and lack of overall movement.

The good news is there are ways to ease the pain and incorporate changes into your daily routine.

First and foremost, Veitch recommends drinking more water and, by proxy, taking more bathroom breaks. It sounds simple, but in reality you can't always use the washroom when you need—so you hold it.

"That's not good for anybody," says Veitch. "If you're tensing the pelvic floor [to hold your bladder] it causes tightness in the lower back and core. Over the years, that takes a toll." All that tightness causes an aching lower back and diminishes your ability to breathe deeply, which in turn contributes to psychological tension.

"So drink more water, take the breaks. Call in the principal if you have to," Veitch urges. Water helps your muscles feel less sore. And taking a bathroom break gives you a couple minutes of activity while also relieving pelvic floor tension, freeing up your body for more easeful movement and breathing.

The next step is just that: breathing. "Practice deep, diaphragmatic breathing," Veitch says. She suggests five to ten deep belly breaths when each class switches over, or at the top of every hour. "Allow the belly, lower back, pelvic floor, shoulders, and neck to relax," she advises. This type of breathing stimulates the vagus nerve, which tells our brains to release rest-and-relax hormones, helping to reduce stress, anxiety, and physical tension.

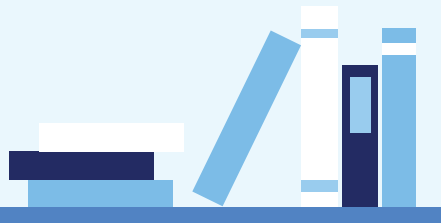
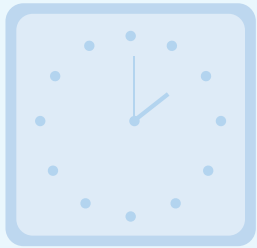
"If you're in a volatile, stressful environment, you tense up even more," explains Veitch. So, yes, your pelvic floor tightens (even if you don't have to use the bathroom!), your shoulders inch upward, your neck stiffens, your abdominals cinch up. But a few calming, deep breaths once an hour can do wonders to reduce that tension.

## MOVEMENT "SNACKS"

It's not about being perfect all the time—it's about adding movement "snacks" whenever you can. "It's impossible for anyone to sit up straight all day, that's why the breaks are so important," says Veitch. Try some of these quick exercises while doing your normal, daily tasks to add a variety of movements throughout your day:

- Pace the classroom
- Calf-raises in place
- Balance on one leg, then the other
- Lunge down on one knee, then the other
- Squat down desk-side
- Walk the halls or the yard
- Do the stairs twice
- Take the stairs up two-at-a-time
- Seated ankle and wrist circles
- Seated neck and shoulder rolls
- Cat/cow spinal stretch, on the floor or against the desk
- Figure Four stretch, seated or on the floor
- Seated gentle spinal twist





Krug is a big fan of deep breathing to relieve physical and mental tension. “I bring awareness to my body and I take a few deep breaths, do my belly breathing. It has helped me so much with stress, especially during the pandemic,” she says.

Shantelle Browning-Morgan, a high school ESL teacher with the Greater Essex County District School Board, also focuses on breathing to relieve stress. “For the first fifteen years of my career, I didn’t think this stuff was important at all,” she admits. But a bad bout of sciatica followed by a life-altering brain injury in 2016 completely changed her outlook. “Now, I have to do my breathing exercises to release tension in my body, otherwise I have physical pain. And it helps me change my posture, it reminds me to move.”

Mindfulness and breathwork go hand-in-hand with a physical strategy, which is less about sitting up straight and more about adding frequent movement. Krug gets straight to the point: “If you’re sitting for eight hours with bad posture, you’re screwed, and if you aren’t taking any breaks, you’re doubly screwed.”

She now understands the necessity of a good work station, good posture, and taking frequent breaks. “[My students and I] get up and walk around every thirty minutes, or do seated stretches. If we are in-person, we get up and leave the building and walk around the track,” Krug says. Similarly, Browning-Morgan does some kind of movement every 15 minutes, like walking, ankle and wrist circles, or neck stretches.

Krug and Browning-Morgan are on exactly the right path. “There is no perfect posture for teachers. You’re going to continue to hunch if you don’t move,” says Veitch. If you have a spare period, walk around the school or yard. Do the stairs a couple times, or do them two at a time. If you need to bend down, lunge on one knee, then the other, crouch, or squat.

Variety is key, Veitch reminds us. “If you’re right-handed and always turning one way toward the blackboard, switch it up so you’re challenging your body.” Stand on one foot to practice balancing, or stay in place and go up and down on your tippy-toes.

“If you’re worried about looking weird, just say to the students ‘I’m doing some calf raises, you can join me if you’d like,’” Veitch says. Involving students in your movement breaks is a very good strategy. “Including the kids is one of the most effective ways you hold yourself accountable,” adds Veitch.

Krug has found this to be true in her classroom. “My students love the stretching. They facilitate it. They all join in. And they even remind me. It makes a huge difference for all of us.” The students in Browning-Morgan’s classes don’t always do exactly what she’s doing, but they do use the opportunity to get up and move in some way.

Not only are the breaks good for our bodies, they’re good for our minds. “It helps you reset, gives your mind a chance to refocus,” Veitch explains. And a less stressed mind means a less tense body.

If this all sounds daunting, Veitch recommends starting small and working up.



“It’s all about habit formation. Work on one thing at a time,” she says. “This week, work on breathing breaks. Once you’re comfortable with that, add another element.” Simply use whatever strategies you can on any particular day.

The pandemic has showed us how important posture, breaks, and mindfulness are for our everyday work and learning environments. Browning-Morgan has learned it’s all intertwined. “I do weight-training, yoga, and Pilates. I use a podium while teaching and I sit at my desk with an ergonomic chair. All of it together—I feel healthier now at forty-four than I did at twenty-four!” she exclaims.

Krug tries to lead each day with her simple mantra: be well to do well. So, drink water, take breaks, breathe deeply, add a variety of physical stances and motions, and move your way toward a healthier work environment.

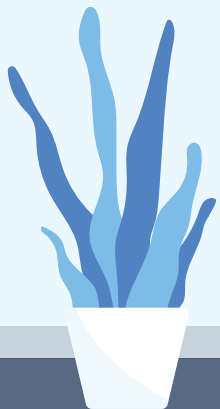
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**MARTHA BEACH** lives and works in Toronto as a freelance fact-checker, editor, and writer for a wide variety of publications. When she’s not working, you’ll find Martha on her yoga mat or hanging out with her daughter and husband.



## CLOTHING

- What you wear impacts the way you move and how your body feels. “Wear clothes and footwear that you’re comfortable moving around in,” says Veitch. Opt for tops and bottoms that allow for kneeling, squatting, and stretching.
- Footwear also affects your movement. Both Browning-Morgan and Krug used to wear heels daily, limiting their ability to stand comfortably or move easily, and for Browning-Morgan, causing knee and back pain. “Now I can’t remember the last time I wore heels,” Krug says. “I wear professional yet stretchy clothes, like slacks and a blouse and sneakers. I can move, I’m not restricted.”
- Today’s fashion focus is all about comfort and athleisure—so take advantage of the trend and find something that works for you.







# Global Issues: Housing Insecurity and Homelessness

By Jonelle St. Aubyn

**GRADE LEVEL:**  
MIDDLE (7-10)

**THEME:**  
GLOBAL ISSUES

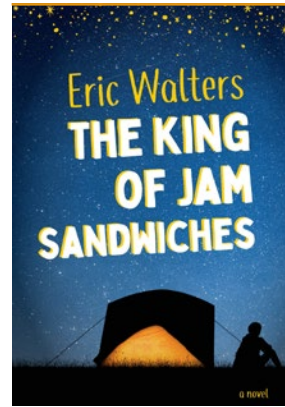
**SUB-THEMES:**  
PEOPLE EXPERIENCING  
HOMELESSNESS,  
HOME INSECURITY



## FEATURED BOOKS



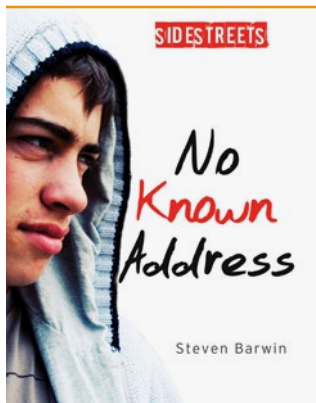
*Firefly* by Philippa Dowding (DCB, 2021)



*The King of Jam Sandwiches* by Eric Walters (Orca Book Publishers, 2020)



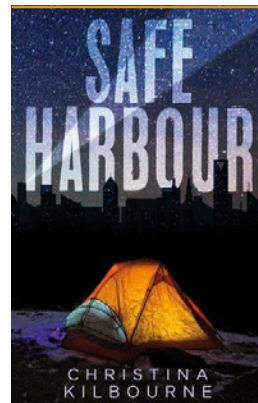
*No Fixed Address* by Susin Nielsen (Tundra Books, 2020)



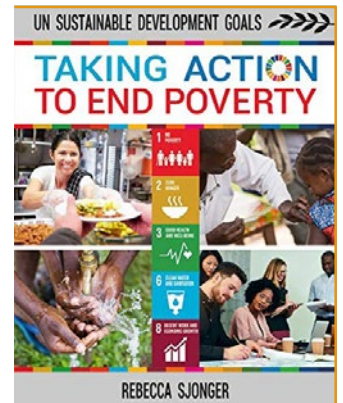
*No Known Address* by Steven Barwin (James Lorimer and Company, 2020)



*The Girl Who Was Convinced Beyond All Reason That She Could Fly* by Sybil Lamb (Arsenal Pulp Press, 2020)



*Safe Harbour* by Christina Kilbourne (Dundurn Press, 2019)



*Taking Action to End Poverty* by Rebecca Sjonger (Crabtree Publishing Company, 2019)



## LEARNING FOCUS

This novel study unit will explore:

- The meaning of the term “hidden homelessness”
- The factors that can lead to people experiencing homelessness
- Possible solutions to the problem of people experiencing homelessness

## LEARNING EXPERIENCE

### MINDS ON PROVOCATION

This can be done as a think-pair-share activity or a whole class discussion. Students are encouraged to consider the following questions and what the terminology means to them:

- Some people say that those who are experiencing homelessness are “invisible people” or are “hidden.” What do you think this means?
- Have you heard the term “no fixed address” before? What do you think it means?

Teachers can use the following videos to introduce the idea of the “hidden homeless” and what it means to have no fixed address. Students are encouraged to make note of the things that can lead to people experiencing homelessness.

- [No fixed address: Affordable housing is scarce in Toronto](#) – CBC reporter Shannon Martin and tenant advocate Bahar Shadpour discuss the precarious life of a renter in Canada’s biggest city.
- [Hidden Homeless – Day in the life of a homeless family](#) – Donna Pinault and her kids have been homeless in Vancouver since 2012. They have stayed with family, in shelters and in a tent. In this video, *The Columbian* followed Donna and her kids through a typical day.

### READ, PLAN, AND PRACTICE

Since there are so many great texts for middle grade students that look at the issue of people experiencing homelessness, teachers have the option of choosing one as a class novel, or allowing students to choose from the list of the novels provided. This lesson can be used with one or all of the novels. The non-fiction book was selected to help students learn about what youth activists are doing around the world to address the issue of people experiencing homelessness and to inspire them to be agents of change themselves.

### MAKE, TINKER, AND MODIFY

After reading the book(s), students will read the following article about hidden homelessness, [Understanding Hidden Homelessness](#), and they will make

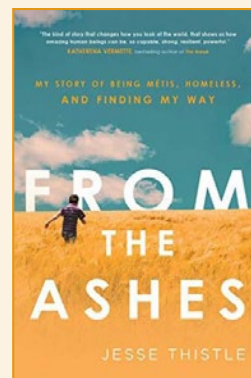
## ADDITIONAL CANADIAN BOOKS TO SUPPORT THESE SUB-THEMES



*Almost Invisible*  
by Maureen Garvie  
(Groundwood Books, 2018)



*Push Back*  
by Karen Spafford-Fitz  
(James Lorimer and Company, 2018)



*From the Ashes: My Story of Being Métis, Homeless, and Finding My Way* by Jesse Thistle (Simon and Schuster Canada, 2019)

connections between the article and situations of the characters that they read about in the novel(s). In a journal article, blog, vlog, or podcast, students will explain how the characters in their novel have become part of the “hidden homeless.”

Next, using the article provided, [Homelessness in Canada](#), all students will read the following section: “What Leads People to Become Homeless?” Depending on their novel, students will then look at the sections that apply to their character(s) (i.e. Indigenous populations, youth, women, mental health, or single men) and why those groups tend to experience homelessness more than others.

Students will then look at either the federal, provincial, or municipal response to people experiencing homelessness and determine the positives and negatives of the approaches that have been taken, and come up with an action plan of ideas that they think we should be taking. The book *Taking Action to End Poverty* can be used for this part of the lesson. Students are encouraged to do additional research for their action plan.



## REFLECT AND CONNECT

Once students have developed their action plan and have determined how they want to present their ideas, they are encouraged to share the plan with their classmates, community organizations, and government officials. They can even start a social media campaign if they choose. The goal is to empower students to be changemakers and to be aware that people experiencing homelessness are more common than we might think.

Once the lesson is complete and students have a better understanding of what people who are experiencing homelessness are going through, student are encouraged to complete an exit ticket with the following prompts:

- What are three things that you have learned in this unit?
- What are some additional questions that you have about people experiencing homelessness?
- What is one goal that you have to improve your learning about people experiencing homelessness?





## BOOK LISTS

- [Homelessness in Children's Fiction](#) (Goodreads)
- [40 Best Middle-Grade Books About Homelessness and Poverty](#) (Reading Middle Grade)
- [15 Books About Homelessness for Children](#) (Raising the Roof)



## ADAPTATIONS FOR THIS LESSON

Students are encouraged to go beyond the issue of people experiencing homelessness in Canada, and look at it from a global context as well. Make use of district-approved collaborative digital workspaces to pair up with a class in another school, region, or country to work on this unit.



## MORE RESOURCES

- [No Fixed Address: Educator's Guide](#) by Susin Nielsen  
Want to learn more about the author and the other books that she has written? You can find out more about Susin Nielsen and how to connect with her [here](#).





# 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](https://teachmag.com/great-canadian-books)

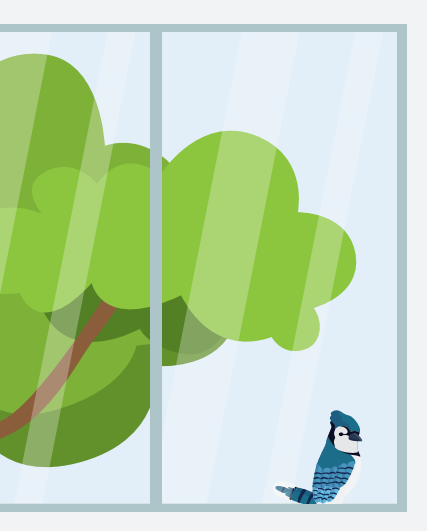












# Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Each May, Asian Heritage Month is celebrated in Canada, and Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month is observed in the United States. For both countries, this is a time to recognize the culture and achievements of people of Asian and Pacific descent, and honour their diverse stories. Several of those stories are reflected here, in this wide selection of books that shine a light on the experiences and histories of Asian and Pacific Islander communities and individuals.



**1 AMERICAN DESI**

BY JYOTI RAJAN GOPAL,  
ILLUSTRATED BY SUPRIYA KELKAR

*Little, Brown Books for Young Readers (Jun 21, 2022)*

**Grade Level: K-3**

As seen through the eyes of a young girl who is trying to figure out where she fits in, this book offers a powerful tribute to first and second generation Indian American children, while also celebrating the joys of being bicultural.

**2 BHARATANATYAM IN**

**BALLET SHOES**

BY MAHAK JAIN, ILLUSTRATED BY  
ANU CHOUHAN

*Annick Press (Mar 2022)*

**Grade Level: K-2**

A girl named Paro explores how her cultural identity intersects with a love of dancing in this stunning picture book. The story echoes the real-life friendship between Bharatanatyam dance icon Rukmini Devi Arundale and Anna Pavlova, the Russian prima ballerina.

**3 THE COLOR OF THE SKY IS THE**

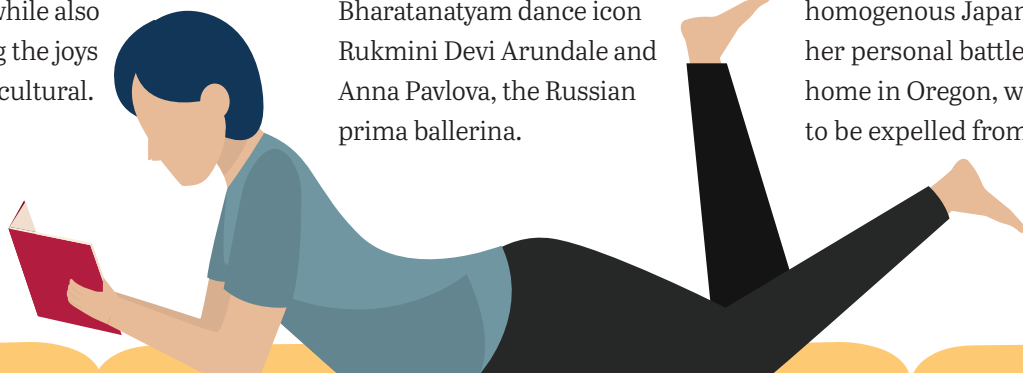
**SHAPE OF THE HEART**

BY CHESIL, TRANSLATED BY  
TAKAMI NIEDA

*Soho Teen (Apr 2022)*

**Grade Level: 7-12**

This newly-translated YA novel tells the story of teenager Ginny Park who has been fighting prejudice her entire life. Having grown up Zainichi (an ethnic Korean born in homogenous Japan), she continues her personal battles in her current home in Oregon, where she is about to be expelled from school—again.



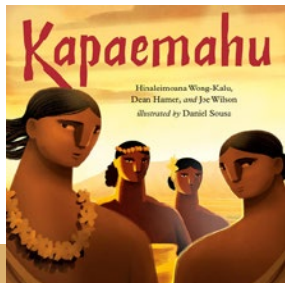
**4 IN THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY**

BY JANE KUO

*Quill Tree Books (Jun 14, 2022)*

**Grade Level: 3-7**

In this breathtaking novel in verse, a young Taiwanese immigrant is confronted with the reality that life in America is nothing like she imagined it would be. Inspired by the author’s own experiences, this lyrical story explores themes of courage, resilience, and the struggle to make a home for yourself in a new place.



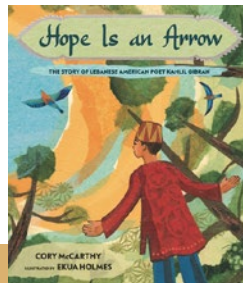
**5 KAPAEMAHU**

BY HINALEIMOANA WONG-KALU, DEAN HAMER, AND JOE WILSON, ILLUSTRATED BY DANIEL SOUSA

*Kokila (Jun 7, 2022)*

**Grade Level: K-3**

*Kapaemahu* tells the story of an Indigenous Hawaiian legend involving four mysterious stones on Waikiki Beach, and how the dual male and female spirits within them bring healing gifts to Hawaii. (Based on the animated [short film](#).)



**6 MESSY ROOTS: A GRAPHIC MEMOIR OF A WUHANESE AMERICAN**

BY LAURA GAO

*Balzer + Bray (Mar 2022)*

**Grade Level: 9-12**

Comic artist Laura Gao illustrates her coming-of-age story as a daughter of Chinese immigrants in this compelling graphic memoir. She also shares her experiences as a Wuhanese American during the COVID-19 pandemic.



**7 HOPE IS AN ARROW: THE STORY OF LEBANESE AMERICAN POET KAHLIL GIBRAN**

BY CORY MCCARTHY, ILLUSTRATED BY EKUA HOLMES

*Candlewick Press (Jun 14, 2022)*

**Grade Level: 1-4**

When Kahlil Gibran was forced to flee his homeland at the turn of the twentieth century, he was torn between his two identities. Could he be both Gibran Khalil Gibran, the Lebanese boy, and Arab American Kahlil Gibran? This beautifully-illustrated picture book dives into the history of the third-best-selling poet of all time and the inspiration behind his famous poetry collection, *The Prophet*. Don’t miss the accompanying [Teacher’s Guide](#)!

**8 STEALING HOME**

BY J. TORRES, ILLUSTRATED BY DAVID NAMISATO

*Kids Can Press (Oct 2021)*

**Grade Level: 4-7**

J. Torres weaves historical facts with fictional characters in this gripping graphic novel, which tells the story of the internment of Japanese Canadians during World War II through the eyes of a baseball-loving boy named Sandy Saito.

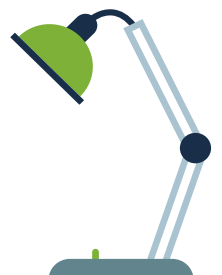
**9 THE SECRET DIARY OF MONA HASAN**

BY SALMA HUSSAIN

*Tundra Books (May 3, 2022)*

**Grade Level: 5-9**

Told over the course of a year through the diary of Mona Hasan, a Muslim girl growing up in Dubai, this middle-grade book follows Mona and her family as they immigrate to Canada in 1991, after the beginning of the first Gulf War.



# The Path to Equitable Education Through Hybrid Learning

By Brad Saffer



The past two years have presented a challenge for both students and teachers alike.

As schools transitioned to remote learning, some students fell through the cracks, while others excelled. As a former educator myself, I know firsthand how much learning styles differ between students. I also know that a flexible and engaging classroom can make all the difference.

With many eager for students to return to in-person learning to prevent more “learning loss,” there is something to be said about the opportunity that hybrid learning presents for a more equitable and accessible learning experience for all. Here are some of the ways that this model can help us get there.

## Breaking Down Barriers

While the value of in-person learning is undeniable, hybrid learning presents students with the ability to personalize their learning experience to best serve their needs. Whether a student misses class as a result of regularly scheduled doctors appointments, or if they simply learn better without the distraction of their peers, the accessibility of hybrid learning allows students to keep up with course materials while staying engaged.

Tools like [WebEx](#) enhance the learning experience by delivering teaching materials through multiple modalities. From visual learners, to auditory learners and everyone in between, tools provided through WebEx, such as video recording and transcriptions, allow students to engage with, and digest, course materials in a way that will best resonate with their personal learning styles.

For underserved students or ones living in rural areas, internet connectivity can present a challenge, making it harder for these students to engage in the immersive experience that can be offered through hybrid learning. Cisco’s solutions, like [digital canopy](#), have the power to increase connectivity for students who may not be well connected, further breaking down barriers to education.

## Securing Education

With the shift to online as a result of the pandemic, we’ve seen a rise in cyberattacks across schools and the public sector as a whole. As educators consider adopting a hybrid-teaching approach in a post-pandemic world, it is crucial that they partner with a trusted security advisor. Partners like Cisco offer a wide range of easy-to-implement security products, including [Cisco Umbrella](#), [Cisco AnyConnect](#) and [Cisco Duo](#), that help protect students, teachers, and their devices from bad actors.

## Supporting Educators Through the Transition

The pandemic has revealed the need for schools to rethink the ways in which they operate. There has been a shift in both teaching and learning, and the resources offered to both students and teachers need to reflect our reality.

Investing in teachers’ professional development is necessary for student success. Teachers must be equipped with the tools and resources needed to thrive through this transition and beyond. From a teaching perspective, interactive tools like polling questions or breakout rooms allow teachers to engage with students and gain insight on the class’ level of understanding. In turn, teachers can tailor lessons to address the needs of the class, fostering ongoing student engagement even for those learning remotely.

Experts in teaching and learning, and former educators like myself, look at everything we create for education through the lens of our personal teaching experience. Our expertise and feedback lead to the development of practical easy-to-use solutions that will best support teachers as they inspire the next generation.

With the right tools, hybrid learning has the power to democratise the learning experience for all. School boards that make the investment in a multitude of hybrid services, from hybrid work to teaching and learning, will be able to provide a better experience for staff and students alike.

As champions of both education and hybrid work, Cisco has a breadth of services available to support teachers in the hybrid world. From making education more accessible to future-proofing the classroom for the next crisis that suspends in-person learning, hybrid learning ensures that students are engaged and continue to have access to their right for education.



Between curiosity  
and knowledge,  
there's a bridge.



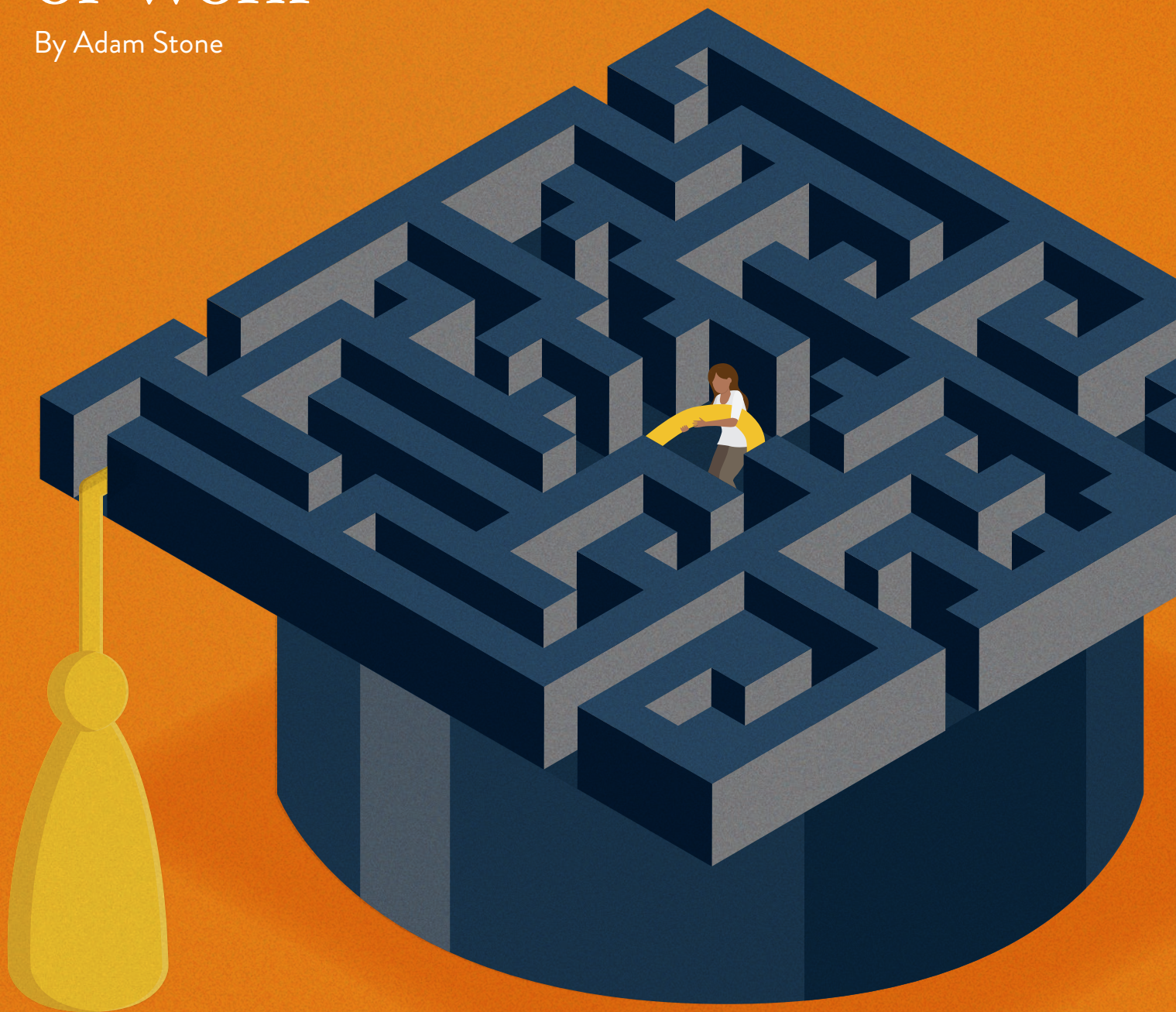
The bridge to possible





# Career Counselling Strategies for a Changing World of Work

By Adam Stone





Even before COVID, school counsellors had their hands full trying to steer students toward future success in a rapidly evolving workforce. Now, in the wake of the pandemic, society as a whole is rethinking what it even means to have a job (witness the [Great Resignation!](#)) At the same time, students perceive college and future employment as highly competitive.

“They are feeling a lot more pressure. Students put a lot of pressure on themselves, and they feel pressure from their families to succeed,” says Matthew Berry. A counsellor at Husky Academy in Overland, MO, and a 2022 [American School Counselor Association](#) (ASCA) School Counselor of the Year finalist, Berry notes that COVID has further complicated the counsellor’s task by limiting opportunities to engage face-to-face with students.

Counsellors’ efforts are also hindered by a staggering workload. ASCA recommends that schools maintain a ratio of 250 students per school counsellor. Yet across all schools, the average student-to-counsellor ratio is 415-to-1, the association [reports](#).

In this challenging environment, there are practical steps that school counsellors and teachers alike can take to help prepare students for success after graduation.

## MANAGING THE WORKLOAD

Before we look at the key messaging and tools needed to steer students down their future pathways, let’s address the more immediate problem: time management. Given the staggering student-teacher ratios, school counsellors need to enlist allies in support of their efforts.

“Counsellors need to look at collaboration, finding partners to help you to deliver the message,” advises Vanessa Goodman Barnes, senior administrator for secondary school counselling in the Wake County (NC) Public School System and an ASCA 2020 Counselor of the Year finalist.

“The colleges have always been an excellent resource,” she says. “They will send in admissions officers to talk to students about majors and programs—and careers. That doesn’t cost anything, except the little bit of time it takes to call and schedule it.”

The local business community is another key resource. “They can help students to find job shadowing opportunities, apprenticeships, internships—you can’t get any better than that,” Goodman Barnes says. “They also talk to students about resumé writing, doing mock interviews to prepare them for going out and getting those jobs.”

Within the schools themselves, career technical education teachers can also be powerful allies. “My own child took health science courses while she was in high school and was able to do an internship,” Goodman Barnes adds. “She combined that with her college-level courses, now she’s in nursing school.”

Leveraging partnerships not only eases the workload on counsellors, it can also open students’ eyes to the possibilities.

“It’s important to stress the significance and value of seeking out older professionals as mentors, as they can teach, inspire, and connect students with great opportunities,” says Cindy Chanin, founder of [Rainbow EDU Consulting & Tutoring](#).

With collaborative partners supporting their endeavours, counsellors can free themselves to focus more on efforts to get students career-ready. But what exactly should those efforts look like, and how best to make them happen?

## KNOW WHAT’S ON OFFER

In the current job market, formal credentials aren’t everything. Employers are looking to certificates and other modes outside traditional college as they make their hiring decisions. Counsellors need to keep pace with these changes, says Marianne Matt, a counsellor at Capital High School in Madison, WI.

“Companies are offering paid training to attract young people. There are now apprenticeships in IT. Many health care facilities offer training to become medical assistants or nursing assistants for free,” she explains.

“This means that we school counsellors have to keep learning and growing ourselves,” Matt adds. “I am learning more about the new apprenticeships and I am also learning how to help students to create a plan that helps them to navigate these new and exciting careers and the careers that will be in the future.”



Some say we are at a crucial moment in this regard. “This is the most critical time for school counsellors to be participating in professional development for career-focused education and honing their craft,” says Bill Stiles, former guidance counsellor and Manager of Strategic Partnerships at [American Student Assistance](#).

## START AT HOME

Most students have a ready example of what the world of work looks like: their parents. That can be a starting point for counsellors.

“I encourage [students] to talk about what this looks like in their own families,” Berry says. “What do the people in your family do? What do your parents do? I’m amazed by how many kids don’t have that conversation sometimes with their families.”

With this approach, “you’re starting with something familiar,” he explains. “And we know that sometimes what your family does may also be an interest of yours.”

## BUILD SELF-RELIANCE

Employers are looking for “dependable, reliable, and trustworthy employees. I help [students] explore ways they can bring out these characteristics in themselves, whether it be through attendance, community service, [or] task completion,” says Jennifer Kline, EdS, a school counsellor at Festus High School in Missouri.

Her approach is to empower students “to set attainable goals and find strengths to build on. When they are struggling or failing, I help them see what they are doing well, even if it is not the outcome they want. Then we find ways to build on those strengths and improve their weaknesses,” she says.

“The more students see that people recognize the ways they are successful, the more their employability skills grow and their responsibility improves,” she adds.

## GET THEM ENGAGED

A key piece of career readiness involves getting the students to do their own research: sending them out to discover the options for themselves.

“Part of that is about them developing those skills, learning how to do that work independently, because they

are going to be doing independent work in the future,” Berry says. “When they do their own research, you’re promoting critical thinking and building on creativity.”

In addition, he says, having students do their own research gets them more engaged in the process of planning for the future.

## ENCOURAGE SELF-EXPLORATION

In order to fully realize their career options, young people need to understand not just what’s out there and available, but also what they can bring to the table. Internal exploration drives focus, and can help alleviate the pressure that comes with facing an unknown future, Chanin says.

“Rather than students asking themselves, ‘Am I smart enough?’ or, ‘Am I good enough?’ they can be encouraged to ask themselves, ‘How am I smart, creative, impactful?’” she says. Counsellors can seek out opportunities “for students to lean into *their* strengths, giving them more agency to pick and choose courses that are more aligned with their talents, interests, skills, and values.”

## MAKE IT TANGIBLE

To make current-day career opportunities more real for his students, Berry has them attend local job fairs—not to apply for work, but to observe and interact with employers.

“They need to hear other people talking about the world of work and what they do,” he explains. “When students go to a career fair, they actually see different people, they listen to what they do, and have tangible examples of what that looks like. They walk away from that with a better sense of where their interests lie, and they can connect their learning to the world of work.”

## THE TEACHERS’ ROLE

School counsellors aren’t in this alone. Experts agree that classroom teachers also have a pivotal role to play in supporting their efforts.

“The responsibility to help children prepare for the world of full-time work shouldn’t be on the shoulders of guidance counsellors alone,” says Byron Adams, K-12 education strategy leader at [Qualtrics](#), a software company.

“Teachers are at the front lines of helping kids learn, grow, and prepare for working life one day,” he says. “In

classrooms, kids not only gain valuable knowledge, but they also learn how to work with others, tap into their own creativity, and accomplish hard things.”

In the even bigger picture, educators need to align their classroom strategies with modern realities, explains Lindsey Wander, founder and CEO at [WorldWise Tutoring](#). “Many of our schools are still operating with the industrial age mentality of memorize and repeat. This is simply not relevant to the rapidly changing, innovative, and multi-faceted world in which we currently live,” she says.

“Instead, we should be teaching children how to think critically, creatively problem-solve, advocate, and lead,” Wander explains. “Society needs to shift its perspective to realize that the purpose of education is not to get high marks, but to actually learn the necessary life and career skills.”

In practical terms, “it’s important to give students the opportunity to encourage a culture of collaboration within a classroom setting,” Chanin adds.

“Learning to engage with others at a young age is very valuable and can translate years later to interpersonal skills that will help young adults effectively navigate the working world,” she says. “Teachers can help foster this culture by creating a space in which students feel confident and comfortable sharing their ideas and thoughts with others, while also teaching them how to listen and further expand upon their peers’ thoughts and ideas.”

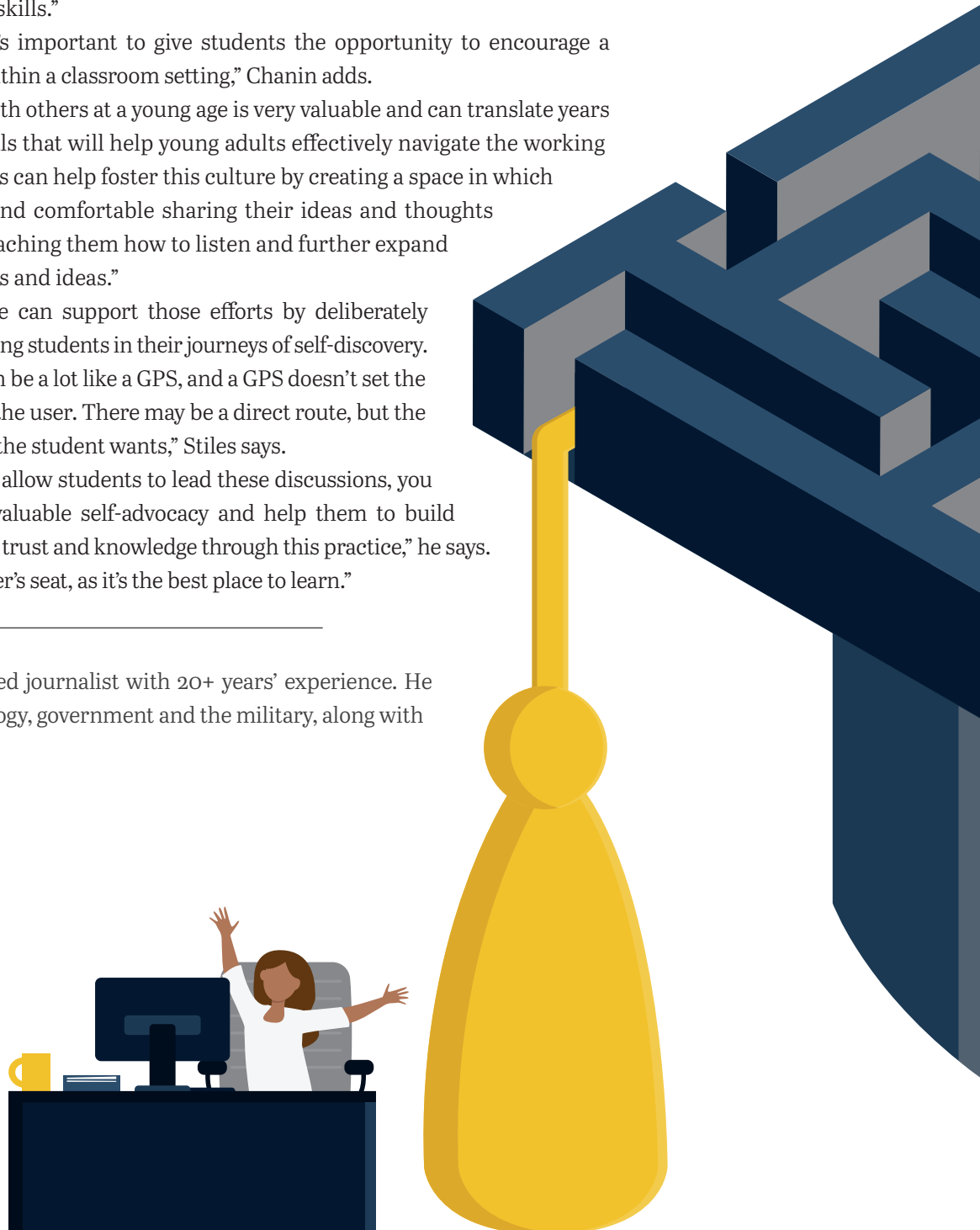
Counsellors meanwhile can support those efforts by deliberately following, rather than leading students in their journeys of self-discovery.

“School counselling can be a lot like a GPS, and a GPS doesn’t set the destination. That is up to the user. There may be a direct route, but the scenic route may be what the student wants,” Stiles says.

“As a counsellor, if you allow students to lead these discussions, you also provide them with valuable self-advocacy and help them to build confidence. You also build trust and knowledge through this practice,” he says. “Keep students in the driver’s seat, as it’s the best place to learn.”

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



# Geology

**G**eology, the study of the Earth, is sometimes a forgotten branch of science compared to biology, chemistry, and physics. Yet, it bears significant importance to matters of everyday life. For example, geology is used in determining building placement, detecting natural hazards, assessing water resources, and remediating environmental problems. Everything we see and interact with relates to geology. It's never too early to get students interested in this vast and complex field of study. Here are some field trips that can help!

## ASHEVILLE MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

**Asheville, NC, USA • Grade Level: K-8**

The Asheville Museum of Science offers four different geology-focused field trips. Delve into the world of minerals and how to identify them, using authentic scientific tools, in the Mineral Detectives program. Or explore the properties of soil, and how it acts as a filter, through the Soil Savers program. Younger students can even make their own chalk in the Mini-Rologists program!

## DYNAMIC EARTH

**Sudbury, ON, Canada • Grade Level: K-12**

Each class visit to Dynamic Earth includes an underground mine tour, a short theatre experience, and up to 2 school programs. Educators can choose from programs such as Crater Maker, which teaches kindergarten students about meteorites; Mineral Madness, where students in Grades 4-6 are shown how to identify common minerals; or Sudbury's Green Story, a program for secondary students that looks at the city's unique geology. Dynamic Earth's website also contains plenty of free [resources](#) for teachers.

## FUNDY GEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

**Parrsboro, NS, Canada • Grade Level: 1-12**

Discover the unique features of Nova Scotia's Fundy region at the Fundy Geological Museum. Educators can choose from a tiered level of day or overnight trips, all of which come with tours of the museum's exhibition gallery. Additional features include activities (such as making a geological timeline or creating personalized rock and mineral ID cards) and beach tours, where students can travel to different beaches near Parrsboro to collect minerals, discuss plate tectonics, and more! Note that the museum offers virtual [programs](#) and [resources](#) as well.



## GLACIER NATIONAL PARK

Glacier County, MT, USA • Grade Level: 5-9

Students have the opportunity to explore Glacier National Park and its geological features on this exciting outdoor field trip. Over the course of the trip, students will learn about the three main rock groups and the rock cycle, while also practicing how to spot evidence of glaciation, weathering, and erosion. Each field trip comes with a curriculum guide that includes pre- and post-visit lessons as well.

## MINERALS ED

Vancouver, BC, Canada • Grade Level: K-12

The main role of this British Columbia-based educational organization is to encourage the teaching of Earth science and mineralogy. They offer several classroom workshops, along with a variety of [digital resources](#) to support student learning. MineralsEd also facilitates free virtual visits from real-life geologists—check out their [Guest Speakers](#) page to learn more.

## PHILIP J. CURRIE DINOSAUR MUSEUM

Wembley, AB, Canada • Grade Level: K-12

Learn all about the rock cycle, fossils, glaciation, and more at the Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum! The museum's wide range of geology and palaeontology programs are designed for students of all ages and offer connections for Alberta science and social studies curriculums.

## HARVARD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Cambridge, MA, USA • Grade Level: K-12

The Harvard Museum of Natural History has a wide selection of in-person and virtual field trips to choose from. Students can investigate mineral samples, interpret geological models, act as mineralogists in a lab, and more. Teachers can also access free [resources](#) for use in the classroom or while visiting the museum.

## NATURETRACK

Santa Barbara County, CA, USA • Grade Level: K-12

NatureTrack provides free outdoor field trips for kids in the Santa Barbara County area. Students can see a 100 million-year-old fault first-hand, or view real-life examples of geo-markers such as pillow lava, blueschist, serpentinite, and more. Each trip can be customized to supplement in-class units of study, and 14 virtual field trips are also available.





# The Value of Diversity: A Poetic Celebration of Asian Heritage Month

By Leighton Suen

When I was a student in high school, I never saw myself in any of the books I read. In fact, I don't recall reading a single work by an Asian or Asian American author. It was only when I went to college and specifically took an Asian American Literature class that I began to discover books by authors from that region. Stories set in many countries all over Asia—from China and Japan in East Asia, to Uzbekistan in Central Asia, to Vietnam in Southeast Asia—captured my imagination and filled a literary void I didn't know I had.

Today, I am a dual-licensed ELA and ENL teacher at Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in Brooklyn, NY, where I've taught for the past six years. The school has about 3,400 students and almost 35 percent of them are Asian. Despite this relatively large percentage, when I first started teaching there, I was surprised to see that no books by Asian or Asian American authors were being taught. It seemed not much had changed since the days when I was a student.

Fortunately, here in New York City, there has been a recent push for more culturally diverse books and curriculum. In the spring of 2019, my former assistant principal and I came up with the idea of creating English elective courses that would reflect the identities of our students.

By the start of the next school year, I had developed an Asian American Literature class that ended up generating enough student interest for two separate sections. Now in its second year, even more students have signed up for the class, which serves as an English credit for both English learners and native English speakers, and I am currently teaching three sections. I'm astounded by how popular this elective has become. Even students who don't have any Asian heritage are taking it.

In the class we only read books, short stories, and graphic novels by authors of Asian heritage—which currently includes authors of Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Uzbek, and Iranian descent. Some books that we've read this year include the novel *Crossing* by Andrew Xia Fukuda, the graphic novel *Level Up* written by Gene Luen Yang and illustrated by Thien Pham, and the short story "The Stone Guest" by Hamid Ismailov.

I love seeing my students' experiences, as well as my own, represented in the stories, and enjoy delving deeper into them during every class. Along with each text, we discuss relevant aspects of the Asian American experience, which includes themes of coming of age, dealing with racism or discrimination, and feeling empowered in their identities.

In honour of the upcoming Asian American Heritage month, which is celebrated every May, I tasked the students in my three Asian American Literature classes with a special project: they were to read "The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus, the poem that is inscribed on the base of the Statue of Liberty. I chose this poem because it is written directly to immigrants, and since many of my students are new Americans themselves, I wanted to hear their responses to it.

After reading the poem, students were asked to rewrite it based on *their* experiences. Many students chose to keep the spirit of the original poem, while others decided to go off on their own paths and write about different themes. Next, I wanted my students to translate their poems, which were originally written in English, into another language. They also recorded themselves reading those poems in both languages. Students chose to do their poems in a plethora of languages, including Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Bengali, and Russian, among others.

I asked the students to translate and recite the poems as a way of affirming and empowering their identities as multilingual learners. Many of my ENL students were not confident speaking in English in front of a large class. By pushing them to record themselves in English, this gave students a chance to improve their speaking skills. Having them also read the poems in their native languages was my way of showing that I value those languages as well.

For native English speakers, writing and reading the poems in a second language was a challenge. If they didn't have a second language at home, I asked them to use the foreign language they'd been learning in school,







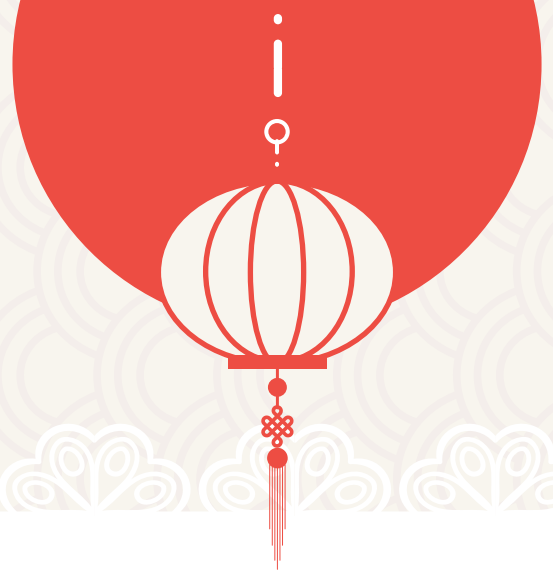
which at Franklin D. Roosevelt is either Spanish or Chinese. At first, many students balked at this seemingly monumental task. But as I encouraged them and gave them examples of other poetry to read, their responses gradually changed from hesitancy to pride in their work.

At the end of the project, I was so proud of my students' finished poems that I wanted to share them with my school's community and beyond. With the permission of my students, their parents, and the school, I published the poems [online](#). Each student was given their own page on the website, where they could upload their individual poems, along with a few accompanying pictures. I thought that several students might refuse to have their work displayed online, but surprisingly, all of them turned in their permission slips. Some even linked their website pages on their college resumés.

I think this project will strengthen the language skills of any student, whether they are an English Learner or a native English speaker. But above all, I hope that sharing my experience has shown the value that diversity can bring. When I was in high school, I wish I could have read texts and completed assignments that celebrated my identity. Now that I am teaching Asian American Literature as a class, I have the opportunity to give my students what I was missing. Even though creating a new class or elective may not be possible at every school, I would still encourage all teachers to incorporate diverse texts into their lessons, and to value their students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

---

LEIGHTON SUEN is in his 6th year as a dual-licensed ENL/ELA teacher at Franklin D. Roosevelt High School in Brooklyn, New York. He received his Master's in TESOL from Teachers College, Columbia University in 2016.



**Here are excerpts from my student Danxing's poem in English and Chinese:**

"I will take you away from the battlefield,  
And protect you like a mother protecting her baby.  
I will not let the gleam of hunger rise in your eyes,  
And provide you with a safe place to live."

"我会带你离开战场，  
并像妈妈保护她的孩子一样保护你。  
我不会让饥饿的光芒在你眼中升起，  
并为你提供安全的住处。"

**Here are excerpts from my student Huy's poem in English and Vietnamese:**

"I come from a country of Southeast Asian  
From a country with more than 4000 years of history  
With historic victories against foreign invaders  
From a tropical climate and rains all year round  
From a vast and fertile plain"

"Tôi đến từ quốc gia thuộc Đông Nam Á  
Từ một đất nước với hơn 4000 năm lịch sử  
Với những chiến thắng lịch sử trước giặc ngoại xâm  
Từ vùng khí hậu nhiệt đới gió mùa và mưa quang năm  
Từ vùng đất rộng lớn và màu mỡ"

# CAREER QUIZ FOR GREEN JOBS

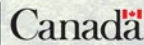
The quiz matches existing skills, learning style and interests to dozens of jobs in the forest and conservation sector.

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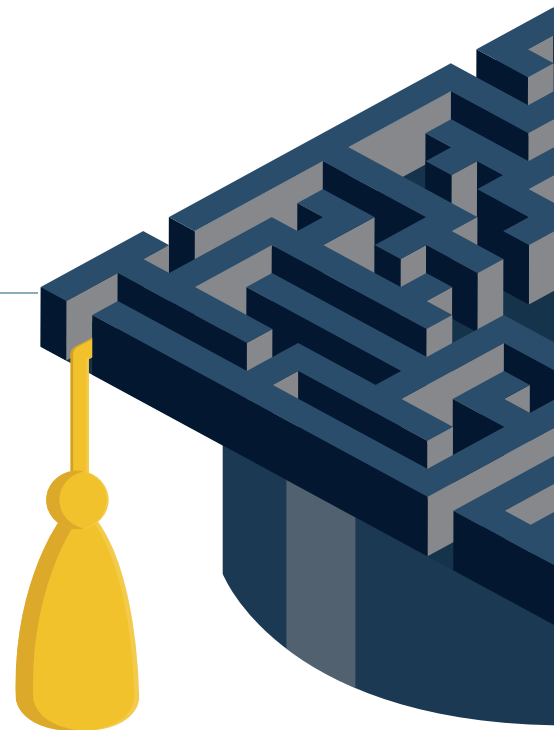


Funded in part by the Government of Canada under the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy

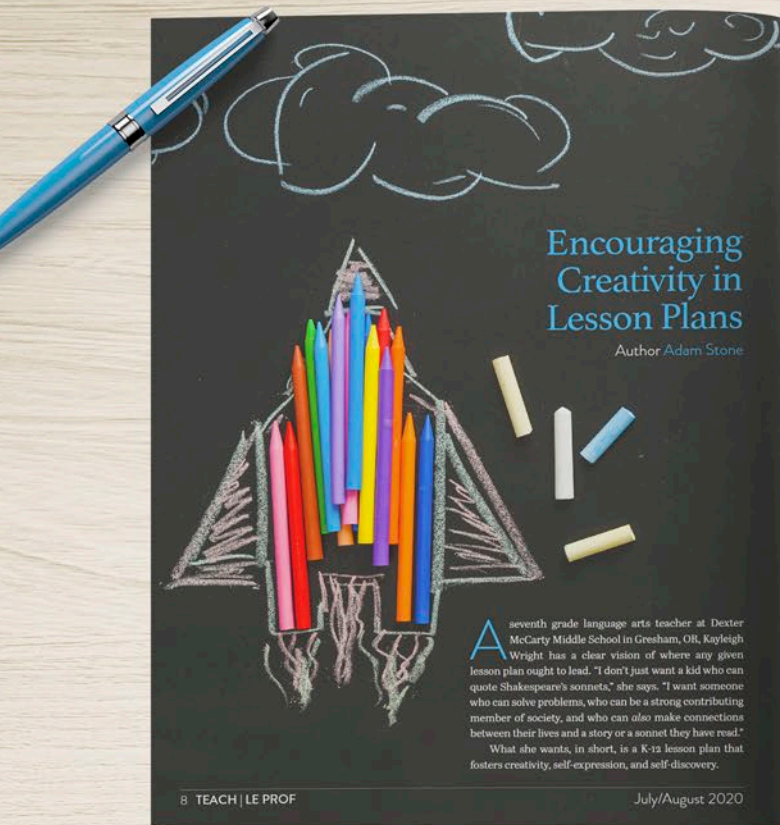


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This is not easily achieved, says Cassie Tabrizi, CEO of educational consultancy, Create-abilities. "It can be incredibly easy to treat lesson planning like a checklist. Objective: check. Standards: check. Activity: check," she says. Education experts 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, their 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 37 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

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