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LE PROF

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Most parents believe that video games have few redeeming qualities apart from existing as escapist entertainment. Many believe that video games are harmful and certainly prevent some children, most of whom are boys, from getting outdoors to play. Not just video games, of course, but television and other social issues have had an impact on declining rates of physical activity among children.

And then comes along some research which stands conventions on its head and challenges the status quo. Lo and behold, some video games are beneficial. Some video games are instructive and help children to learn and learn with a deeper, more substantive understanding of a given subject.

Despite the video game critics and their opposite numbers, is there room to acknowledge the learning potential of this technology? After all, gaming and gaming theory have evolved into a very sophisticated discipline. But then, we are talking about fundamental skills development here, reading and writing and mathematics at its essence. Read Susan Murray's article and decide for yourself whether video games are instructive.

We are also pleased to present our Eleventh Annual Technology Supplement where we showcase new products and services designed to help teachers in their day-to-day classroom activities. You'll read short narrative descriptions and then decide for yourself what you wish to follow up. Remember to look for educational pricing on any products.

Our Futures columnist, Richard Worzel broaches a very important topic. That is, who makes the technology decisions in the school system and shouldn't there be a better way of deciding what platform or software to use before making a multi-million dollar decision that goes awry, as we have seen in the past? We also invite your input on this topic as we do on virtually everything that appears in these pages.

De nombreux parents estiment que les jeux vidéo ont très peu de qualités sauf, peut-être, celle de procurer une évasion. Pour eux, ces jeux sont nuisibles et empêchent certains enfants, notamment les garçons, d'aller jouer dehors. Les jeux vidéo, certes, mais aussi la télévision et d'autres questions sociales, ont fait chuter le taux de participation des enfants à des activités physiques.

Et voilà que des recherches viennent renverser les conventions et défier le statu quo. Certains jeux vidéo auraient effectivement des résultats bénéfiques. Ils seraient même éducatifs et permettraient aux enfants d'apprendre mieux, plus en profondeur.

Entre les détracteurs et les partisans de ces jeux, y a-t-il place pour reconnaître le potentiel de cette technologie appliquée à l'apprentissage? Après tout, le ludisme est devenu une discipline très sophistiquée. Nous parlons ici de l'acquisition des bases – lecture, écriture, calcul – de la façon la plus élémentaire. Lisez l'article de Susan Murray et jugez vous-même.

Nous avons également le plaisir de présenter notre onzième supplément technologique annuel, avec de nouveaux produits et services pour aider les enseignant-e-s dans leurs activités quotidiennes. Lisez les brèves descriptions et décidez lesquels vous aimeriez utiliser. N'oubliez pas de demander le prix spécial prof pour n'importe quel produit.

Richard Worzel, notre futuriste, aborde un sujet très important, à savoir qui, dans le système scolaire, prend les décisions d'ordre technologique et y aurait-il une autre façon de décider quelle plate-forme ou quel logiciel acheter avant d'engager des millions de dollars qui s'avèreront dépensés à mauvais escient, comme c'est déjà arrivé? Nous serons heureux d'avoir vos remarques sur ce sujet comme sur tous les autres traités dans nos rubriques.

Wili Liberman

Next Issue

- Why Boys Are Failing
- School Governance
- Futures, Curricula and more

TEACH

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With technology, top down won't cut it



By Richard Worzel

Who's the right person to select the technology educators will need for the future of education? Who's smart enough to see where the technology is going, as well as how it will interact with students in the classroom and with the budgets that school boards approve? Who has enough of an Olympian vantage point to see all the diverse strands of development in computers, communications, social interaction, and budgetary considerations, yet has enough knowledge of pedagogy and child psychology to be able to pick and choose from today's offerings, selecting only the best and most successful forms of hardware, software, and courseware for tomorrow?

In case you're wondering, it's definitely not me. And it's probably not you, either. In fact, I submit that there is no one smart enough to make these choices, and that for a school, school board, or ministry of education to set themselves to do this is a waste of resources. We're experiencing a period of great uncertainty, when many different factors affecting education are in play, changing on a seemingly daily basis, not least the technology and its capabilities. As a result, this is prime time for experimentation and entrepreneurship, not a time for high-forehead central planners to dictate development. We need, in fact, to let the education market decide what works and what doesn't, in much the same way that the authors of Mosaic (which later became Netscape)

didn't try to design what the World Wide Web would become or who would use it successfully. Instead, it became a green field development, open to anyone with an imagination.

We now know that many of the imaginations that gamboled in this green field were fevered and heavily laden with wishful thinking. But some developments, like e-mail, eBay and Amazon, plus all of the business-to-business applications that have, and are continuing to revolutionize the way companies operate, have stuck and grown into significant parts of our society and way of life. And, to a certain extent, that's what we need now in education: educators trying stuff, finding out what works and keeping that, while eliminating the stuff that doesn't work.

Yet, unlike the private sector, education cannot afford the costs of entrepreneurship, with billions invested on wild experiments, then discarded when the enterprises go bankrupt.

Bureaucrats will immediately respond by going back to what they know: central planning. But this is the command-and-control doctrine that drove the Soviet economy into the ground. It didn't work there, and it won't work in a quicksilver area like technology in the classroom. So, what to do?

There are two primary ways that organizations can operate: as hierarchies, or as markets. The traditional organization, especially ones involving social structures like boards of education, rely almost exclusively on hierarchies, with wisdom being handed down from the "smart" people at the top. But that won't work here, and will, in fact, lead to heavy investments in technological disasters. Remember all the TRS-80s schools purchased in the 1980s that were going to "revolutionize education"? Remember the Burroughs Icon computers that the province of Ontario invested in so heavily in the 1980s? These, and many other

examples, turned into disasters, brought on by people who thought they were smart enough to know where technology was going.

Markets, on the other hand, are messy and disorganized, but they lead quickly to formulas that are successful, while the unsuccessful fall away. Whereas "peace, order, and good government" is the slogan for a hierarchy, "nothing succeeds like success" is the watch-word for a market.

What I would propose, then, is the deliberate creation and support of a "market" or clearinghouse (not necessarily for profit) for education-related technology. There are thousands of teachers, all over the world, struggling to find answers to the same technological questions, and many of them are succeeding, to greater or lesser extents. Why not have a national (or international) Web site that offers two things to all comers: 1) donated freeware, shareware, or free software demos of things teachers have tried and found to work; and 2) posted reviews of these offerings, and on commercially-available new hardware and courseware, plus advice on how to do stuff that works. In this way, teachers can share experiences, advice, and feedback about what works, what to avoid, and why. And from such sharing gradually a range of offerings will emerge that are more popular than the others. They will be popular because they are useful to teachers. And from the more successful of such offerings, schools can later start developing standards on hardware, software, courseware, and technique, imposing the structure after that fact that makes hierarchies comfortable.

I'll go further. What we could also do is encourage people to donate software they've developed in their classrooms for the common good, under a license similar to that used with Linux, the open-source software that is storming the walls of Fortress Microsoft. The open source license concept is very simple: anyone

may use any open source software free of charge, and, further, may adapt, modify, or improve it provided that any changes are made available to everyone else free of charge.

This can also be done in combination with commercially available products. A teacher can use a commercial piece of software, and develop specific applications, lessons, or whatever, and make these available as open source offerings. Then anyone who uses the same commercial technology can use these freeware lessons (for example) under the open-source license, even though they have to pay the appropriate fee to the commercial vendor for its underlying technology.

These ideas raise an obvious question: Who will host such a central clearing house? Answer: anyone who's willing to do so. There are, however, some possible candidates already out there. The first, and perhaps most logical one is SchoolNet (www.schoolnet.ca), which is hosted and supported by Industry Canada,

an arm of the government of Canada. Remarkably, this federal initiative has gained widespread acceptance with the 10 provincial and 3 territorial governments, who, as we all know, are both jealous and suspicious of any federal incursions into provincial jurisdictions. Another, privately funded, non-profit site is Learning Village (www.learningvillage.com), supported by education consultant Dan Lang of Toronto. But at the end of the day, it doesn't matter who hosts the site, as long as they have the resources to do so. It could be a national teacher's union, a technologically advanced school board, or a provincial ministry of education. Or even TEACH magazine.

What matters is the acknowledgment that it's too early to pick winners and losers in pedagogical technology, and that this is a time to experiment, share results, and help each other cope with this fluid, rapidly changing field. If we do, everyone will wind up winning, even those who go down what turn out to be dead ends,

because they will be able to jump immediately to successful solutions. What won't work is for senior officials in calcified hierarchies to predict the future of such technology and pick only winners, or for educators to jealously guard their handiwork in hopes that somehow they will make millions from it.

We can succeed together by helping each other in a field as difficult to navigate as an ice thaw on a spring flood, or we can individually founder, each of us looking after our own selfish interests. Let me know what you think, and how we might foster this kind of success. And talk it up among your peers – this can't succeed in the dark. Thanks. ☺

Richard Worzel is one of Canada's leading futurists, and author of the new best-seller, 'Who Owns Tomorrow?' He lives in Toronto with his wife and two children, and volunteers his time to speak to high school students. You can reach him at futurist@futuresearch.com

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Pour les technologies, l'approche descendante ne marchera pas



par Richard Worzel

Qui peut aujourd'hui choisir les technologies sur lesquelles s'appuieront les enseignants de demain? Qui est assez clairvoyant pour prévoir dans quelle direction évoluera la technologie et pour savoir si elle cadrera avec les besoins des élèves et les contraintes des budgets approuvés par les conseils scolaires? Qui a le recul nécessaire pour entrevoir les axes de développement de l'informatique, des communications, des rapports sociaux et des budgets – tout en possédant des connaissances suffisantes en matière de pédagogie et de psychologie de l'enfant pour sélectionner, parmi les produits qui s'offrent aujourd'hui, le matériel, les logiciels et les didacticiels les mieux adaptés à demain?

Inutile de vous illusionner : ce n'est pas moi; et probablement pas vous. Je prétends d'ailleurs que personne n'est assez malin pour faire ces choix et qu'une école, un conseil scolaire ou un ministère de l'éducation qui tenterait l'aventure gaspillerait ses ressources. Nous traversons une période de profonde incertitude, où l'éducation est tributaire d'une foule de facteurs – dont la technologie et ses capacités ne sont pas les moindres –, qui semblent se transformer journalièrement. C'est pourquoi l'époque appartient aux pionniers et aux entrepreneurs, et qu'elle se prête mal à une planification centralisée d'intellectuels qui décideraient de la suite des événements.

Nous devons, en fait, laisser le marché de l'éducation décider de ce qui marche et de ce qui ne marche pas, à l'instar des concepteurs de Mosaic (le précurseur de Netscape) qui n'ont pas essayé d'imposer leur conception de la Toile ni le profil de ses utilisateurs. La Toile est au contraire devenue un champ vierge, ouvert à quiconque avait de l'imagination.

Nous savons à présent que de nombreux esprits qui ont exploré ce champ étaient des passionnés se nourrissant souvent d'illusions. Néanmoins certaines innovations se sont imposées et ont pris une place importante dans notre société et dans notre mode de vie. Pensons par exemple au courrier électronique, à eBay ou à Amazon, et à toutes les applications interentreprises qui ont révolutionné la gestion des entreprises et qui continuent de le faire. C'est dans une certaine mesure ce dont l'éducation a besoin aujourd'hui : il nous faut des éducateurs qui essaient les produits, qui découvrent ceux qui marchent et qui éliminent ceux qui ne marchent pas.

Or, contrairement au secteur privé, l'éducation n'a pas les moyens de mener ce travail de pionnier, qui nécessiterait l'investissement de milliards de dollars dans des expériences extravagantes, abandonnées en cas d'échec.

Les bureaucrates réagiront immédiatement en retournant à ce qu'ils connaissent : la planification centralisée. Or c'est précisément la doctrine des programmes contrôlés qui a mené l'économie soviétique à la faillite. Ça n'a pas marché en URSS et ça ne fonctionnera pas dans un secteur aussi évolutif que les technologies pédagogiques. Alors, que faire?

Les organisations connaissent deux principaux types de fonctionnement : la méthode hiérarchique et la loi du marché. Une organisation traditionnelle, surtout si elle englobe une structure sociale comme un conseil scolaire, repose presque exclusivement sur une hiérarchie

dans laquelle les idées proviennent des « têtes pensantes » au sommet. Une telle organisation serait inadaptée dans le cas présent et entraînerait en fait de lourds investissements dans des échecs technologiques. Vous souvenez-vous de tous les TRS-80 achetés par les écoles pendant les années 1980 et qui devaient « révolutionner l'éducation »? Ou, à la même époque, des ordinateurs Burroughs Icon dans lesquels la province de l'Ontario a tellement investi?

Ces exemples et bien d'autres qui ont mal tourné, sont imputables à des gens qui se sont cru assez malins pour savoir comment allait évoluer la technologie.

En revanche, bien qu'ils soient confus et désorganisés, les marchés génèrent rapidement des formules fructueuses tout en éliminant les approches moins efficaces. Alors que le mot d'ordre de la hiérarchie est « la paix, l'ordre et le bon gouvernement », le marché pour sa part estime qu'« un succès entraîne un autre ».

Je propose donc la création délibérée et la gestion d'un « marché » ou d'un bureau central (pas forcément rentable) des technologies touchant l'éducation. D'un bout à l'autre de la planète, des milliers de professeurs s'emploient à trouver les réponses aux mêmes questions sur la technologie, et nombre d'entre eux y parviennent avec plus ou moins de bonheur. Ne pourrait-on pas créer un site Web national (ou international) qui offrirait deux choses à tous ses visiteurs : 1) des logiciels, des logiciels contributifs ou des logiciels de démonstration gratuits de produits que les professeurs ont essayés et qui marchent; 2) des fiches techniques sur ces produits et sur les nouveaux matériels et didacticiels disponibles sur le marché, ainsi que des conseils sur les bonnes manières de procéder, les choses à éviter et pourquoi. Une gamme de produits plus populaires que les autres émergera progressivement

de ce partage. Ces produits plairont parce qu'ils sont utiles aux professeurs. Et à partir des plus utiles, les écoles pourront élaborer des normes sur le matériel, les logiciels, les didacticiels et les techniques, et imposer après coup la structure dont les hiérarchies raffolent.

J'irai plus loin. Nous pourrions aussi encourager les gens à faire don des logiciels qu'ils ont mis au point dans leurs classes afin qu'ils profitent à tous, en vertu d'un permis d'utilisation similaire à celui de Linux, le logiciel gratuit qui bat en brèche la forteresse Microsoft. Le principe du permis d'utilisation gratuite est fort simple : chacun peut utiliser gratuitement un logiciel et peut aussi l'adapter, le modifier ou l'améliorer *pourvu* qu'il mette gratuitement à la disposition des autres tout changement qu'il y aura apporté.

Cette utilisation est également compatible avec les produits disponibles sur le marché. Un professeur pourrait ainsi utiliser un élément d'un logiciel vendu dans le commerce et mettre au point des applications ou des cours spécifiques, ou autre chose, et offrir gratuitement ces produits. Tout utilisateur de la même technologie commerciale pourrait se servir de ces cours gratuits (par exemple) en vertu d'un permis d'utilisation gratuite, tout en payant au vendeur les droits qui s'appliquent pour la technologie sous-jacente.

Ces idées soulèvent une question évidente : qui abritera ce centre d'échange? Réponse : toute personne qui le souhaite. Cependant, nous avons déjà des candidats éventuels. Rescol (www.rescol.ca), le premier et peut-être le plus évident, est un site hébergé et administré par Industrie Canada, organisme du gouvernement canadien. Fait remarquable, cette initiative fédérale est en général très bien accueillie dans les administrations des dix provinces et des trois territoires qui, c'est bien connu, sont à la fois jalouses et méfiantes face à une incursion du gouvernement fédéral dans leurs aires de compétence. Learning Village (www.learningvillage.com) est une autre initiative sans but lucratif financée par le secteur privé, qui bénéficie de l'appui de Dan Lang, consultant en éducation de Toronto. Mais en bout de ligne, l'important n'est pas qui héberge le site, tant et aussi longtemps que cet hôte dispose des ressources nécessaires. Le site pourrait être hébergé par un syndicat national de professeurs, un conseil scolaire à la fine pointe des technologies ou encore un ministère provincial de l'Éducation. Ce pourrait même être *Le prof*.

L'important, c'est de reconnaître qu'il est encore trop tôt pour déterminer les technologies pédagogiques qui perdureront et celles qui disparaîtront, et que pour le moment nous devons faire des essais, mettre en commun nos résultats

et nous épauler les uns les autres pour nous adapter à ce domaine fluide en constante évolution. Ainsi, chacun y trouvera son compte, même ceux qui se seront engagés dans une voie sans issue, puisqu'ils pourront immédiatement adopter une solution qui marche. Le véritable échec serait que les cadres supérieurs de hiérarchies sclérosées prédisent l'avenir de ces technologies et en sélectionnent uniquement les gagnants ou que des éducateurs gardent jalousement leur travail en espérant pouvoir en tirer des millions.

Comme les marins naviguant pendant la débâcle printanière, nous pouvons rester à flot si nous unissons nos efforts, mais nous pouvons aussi couler si nous ne veillons qu'à nos intérêts individuels. Faites-moi part de vos idées et des moyens que vous envisagez pour réussir de cette façon. Discutez-en entre vous – nous ne réussirons pas si nous avançons dans le noir. Merci.

Premier futurologue du Canada, Richard Worzel compte parmi ses clients des sociétés comme IBM, Bell Canada, Ford Motor Company et Nortel. Il prononce bénévolement des conférences à l'intention des élèves d'écoles secondaires quand son emploi du temps le lui permet. On peut communiquer avec lui à l'adresse futurist@futuresearch.com ou par l'intermédiaire de son site Web, à www.futuresearch.com.



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Band Aid Program

Think your school's band could use \$10,000 in new instruments?

The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (producers of the annual Juno Awards Show) is looking for six deserving schools whose music programs are in jeopardy due to lack of funding.

The Band Aid program invites such schools to make an application before September 30 of each year, setting out the present state of the music program, the qualifications of the teacher(s) and a statement of his or her drive and dedication. The school should also be able to demonstrate a history of fundraising for their band programs.

The list of recipient schools is announced in early October.

CARAS created the Music Education Program in 1997 through proceeds made by the sale of the 25th anniversary Juno Awards CD box set. Donations from individual artists, and the Canadian music recording industry have ensured the reach of the Band Aid program for several years.

For more information, go to www.carasonline.ca or phone 1-888-440-JUNO (5866).

Noises Off

Students – including those in the back row – may soon be able to hear every word the teacher says, thanks to a computer software system created by a University of British Columbia acoustics expert.

ClassTalk – the first software of its kind – can assist architects, engineers and acoustical consultants to build classrooms that help students learn and save teachers from straining their voices.

Classroom noise is a recognized learning barrier for children with or without hearing problems, says software developer Prof. Murray Hodgson. According to specialists, children with normal hearing can miss one in four words spoken by the teacher, mainly due to poor classroom design.



The recommended level for classroom noise is 35 decibels, however, traditional classrooms often have levels ranging between 40 and 60 decibels.

Physical characteristics such as building materials, number of windows, texture of surfaces, fixtures and fittings all influence how a teacher's voice reverberates through the room to students. In addition, teachers need to be heard above the noise of heating and ventilation systems, student activity in the classroom and neighbouring classes, as well as outside noises such as traffic.

ClassTalk allows designers to predict and assess how the teacher's voice can be heard in different parts of the room. Hodgson and his group are now working on an acoustical virtual reality feature that will allow users to walk through the virtual classroom while listening to a teacher talking.

Free demonstrations of the software are available at www.flintbox.ca

Tablet PCs in the Classroom

An Ontario school has taken computers-in-the-classroom one step further by commencing a six-month pilot project to determine if Tablet PCs can improve the way students learn.

Northern Lights Public School in Aurora, Ontario, part of the York Region District School Board, partnered with several technology companies to bring Acer TravelMate C110 series Tablet PCs to the classroom.

The school's Grade 8 students were tested in September 2003 to determine a baseline by which teachers could compare their progress throughout the school

year. The students will be tested again at the end of the year to see if their ability to learn improved more than students in previous years.

All of the school's teachers, plus all the entire Grade 8 class, have been equipped with these devices, which cost the board approximately \$1,575 each. Students are allowed to bring the Tablet PCs home with them as the school board has set up home-based wireless access for them.

In the classroom, the Tablet PCs have essentially replaced paper and the way courses are structured. One teacher said that about 90 per cent of math, science and language classes and 100 per cent of history courses are taught through the device.

A recent project asked the students to divide into groups, or "corporations," design a logo, a company name, and choose a physical disability. Each corporation then had to build a robot that could assist individuals with the selected disability. The project used The Lego Group's Mindstorms software, and the company's robot-building kits.

So far, students have been generally positive about the new technology. But some feel that certain tasks, such as artwork and drawing, have been relegated to the computer. Another concern was that the handwriting recognition software – Microsoft's OneNote – didn't accurately capture their handwriting.



Next year, the board is aiming to advance its initiative to the next level by trying to replicate the Tablet PC project to one of its oldest schools – Stuart Scott Public School, built in 1923.

Kids' Take on Media

A new study suggests that, while children and adolescents whose parents supervise and discuss their media viewing are more likely aware of the negative impact of media violence, many children are on their own.

Kids' Take on Media, a national survey of 5,756 students in Grades 3 to 10, also indicated that many children are left to their own discretion. Nearly half the students surveyed say they receive no parental guidance on which television programs they can watch, and two-thirds report that no one says which video or computer games they can play, or for how long.

Students chose *The Simpsons* as their favourite television program, but also felt that it was inappropriate for younger children to watch. Many suggested that there should be tighter age restrictions on mature-rated video and computer games than on R-rated films.

The research found that about 75 per cent of children and adolescents chose their favourite television programs because of two qualities: "exciting" and "funny", while the "violent" component was the least favoured of all, ranking at the bottom of a list of possible attributes.

Based on the survey results, the Canadian Teachers' Federation has produced a resource list and special Bulletin for Parents with tips and information to nurture media literacy at

home (both are available on the CTF Web site: www.ctf-fce.ca). The CTF is also preparing a teacher/student Activity Guide based on the survey.

Playing the Market



Loretto Abbey Catholic Secondary School claimed the top spot at the 3rd Annual Stock Market Challenge, hosted by Junior Achievement of Central Ontario and the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX), earlier this year.

The team secured their win of the simulated trading challenge by building an impressive portfolio valued at \$886,511.

More than 100 students from Toronto-area high schools got a taste of the fast-paced, high stakes equity market as they bought and sold a variety of fictitious companies' shares aiming to build the highest value portfolio by the end of the trading period.

The winning team's portfolio represented a 77 per cent rate of growth. All

teams received assistance from CIBC World Markets traders Alex Rajic and Kevin Carter, on hand for tips and advice.

Junior Achievement is the world's largest organization dedicated to educating young people about business, economics and entrepreneurship. Its programs are taught by volunteers from the business community in Canada and 106 other countries worldwide.

ESL Study Released

Nearly 60 per cent of immigrant students enrolled in Vancouver high schools fail to complete the courses needed to get them into university because they do not have adequate understanding of English, a new study concludes.

Lee Gunderson, a professor of language and literacy in the University of British Columbia's education department, says most foreign students who enroll in Vancouver schools have only a limited reading knowledge of English, and that holds them back from completing courses in English, mathematics, science and social studies that are necessary for university admission.

According to Gunderson, the problem lies with the parents. Many parents of immigrant teens perceive their children's English skills as better than they actually are. Many parents then urge their children out of ESL programs and into mainstream high school course work, where they often struggle.

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Technology Products Services Supplement

Welcome to TEACH Magazine's Eleventh Annual Technology Supplement.

Over the years we have presented new products and services for you.

We carefully provide narrative descriptions only that do not qualify as a critical review or an endorsement. We give you enough information for you to make up your own mind about following up.

Make sure you inquire about educational discounts and pricing.

Some products come with teacher's guides.

Software



Adobe InDesign CS Pagemaker Edition

Adobe Systems Inc. has released a full version of Adobe InDesign CS software that includes a Page-

Maker Plug-in Pack. The plug-in pack includes designer templates, keyboard shortcuts and training materials that help users make the switch to InDesign CS.

The plug-in pack allows users to repurpose older layouts while being able to help convert PageMaker 6.0 documents and some Quark Xpress files. Users also have control over margins, gaps, bleeds, creep and crossover traps when printing. In addition, the plug-in pack offers more support for PageMaker users when switching to InDesign. Plus, there are over 80 new templates to help new users get started. The Plug-in pack comes with a specialized training DVD which aids in the migration from PageMaker to InDesign.

The software is sold through existing resellers. The software is available to licensed users of Adobe PageMaker at a suggested retail price of \$349 U.S. InDesign CS PageMaker Edition is available to

educators for a suggested retail price of \$219U.S. For more information, go to: www.adobe.com/products/indesign/pm_ind.html

CyberMatrix

CyberMatrix has released version 3.0 of Class Scheduler, a Windows-based software package for scheduling students' classes.

Class Scheduler is useful for schools that create class schedules. The software can be used by a single person or group of students. The software helps automate the class scheduling process and features automatic or manual scheduling, searching and customizable reports.

The new release contains automatic room and instructor assignment features, and block scheduling. Class Scheduler runs on Windows 95, 98, 2000, ME, XP and NT 4.0. System requirements include 16 MB RAM and a minimum of 10 MB hard disk space.

A single license costs \$100U.S. Educational institutions may get a 10% discount. A fully functional 30-day trial version may be obtained from www.cyber-matrix.com or call: 1-888-664-0383, or email: info@cyber-matrix.com



Macromedia

Macromedia has released Director MX 2004, the latest version of its multimedia authoring software. The latest version adds support for JavaScript, Flash, DVD-Video and allows the user to create projector files for Mac and Window platforms in one step.

Multimedia content can be deployed on CD, DVD, intranets, kiosks and the Internet. Director MX 2004 supports most major video, audio, bitmap, 3D and vector formats. Users can stream video files in DVD-Video, Windows Media, RealMedia, QuickTime and Flash formats. Users can embed, control and play back DVD-Video content within multimedia projects. Interactivity within projects can be scripted directly using JavaScript, Lingo or a combination of both. Content can be published to Mac and Windows platforms and the Internet, all in one step.

Suggested retail price is \$499 for qualified educators and students. It will run on Mac OS X or higher and Windows 2000 or Windows XP. For more information, visit:

www.macromedia.com/go/dirmx2004

Web



Cornell University

The Institute for African Development has launched its educator resources Web site which has links to original documents, current articles in English from more than 19 African newspapers and an array of information about Africa. Source materials include the speech Nelson Mandela gave when he was released from Robben Island prison; articles about the AIDS epidemic and favourite stories from Nigerian school children among many others.

The site fits with Cornell's outreach strategy and makes available to teachers more current resource materials about Africa. Links to the site are grouped in titles and relate to specific geography and global studies curricula. Topics covered include global interactions from 1200 to 1650, Africa and imperialism, The Cold War, the United Nations, ethnic tensions, independence movements, apartheid, economic issues, the environment, epidemics, women's movements and information on specific countries.

There is also extensive content exploring African arts and crafts, stories and language, nature and wildlife, games and links with school Web sites in Botswana, Ghana and Malawi.

To view the site, please go to: www.einaudi.cornell.edu/conf/2004/issi/

Education Gateway

The Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM) project is a collective effort to provide educators with quick and easy access to the substantial, but uncataloged, collections of educational materials found on various federal, state, university, non-profit, and commercial Internet sites. GEM (www.thegateway.org) is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education.

The Gateway is a free service, available to anyone with Internet access and provides links to free Internet materials, partially free materials, and to resources that require a fee or registration. These resources are accessible by browsing from a list of key-words and subjects; or by doing a traditional search. Before a search begins, the user must select from a list of subject terms, specify the grade (pre-K-Grade 12) or education level (higher education, community college, adult continuing education and vocational education), and state if they only want free resources. The site currently contains more than 38,218 education resources, from Action BioScience to *Zeeks.com*.



Go for Green

A new Web-based resource helps students in school get active encouraging more physical activity while incorporating a light-hearted learning experience.

Classes may register to participate in the Walking Tour of Canada. Each class logs the distances each student walks to school and in doing so, can collectively cover the entire span across Canada, some 18,000+ kilometers.

The Web site provides an interactive, animated map that tracks the class' progress. As students reach each provincial capital, you can download "passports" as recognition of each milestone reached. Other program features include information about each province and territory, safety tips and the benefits of exercise, and a travel mode calculator which compares how various modes of transportation impact climate change. To register please visit: www.goforgreen.ca

For more information, please call 1-888-822-2848 or email: asrts@goforgreen.ca



Hunt Corporation

Hunt Corporation is sponsoring the X-ACTO Science Fair Sweepstakes which provides the opportunity to both students and teachers across North America including Canada (but not Quebec) to win prizes.

The purpose of the promotion is to help students and teachers develop science fair projects from the initial planning stage through to completion of the final display.

Prizes include such things as a Dell 5150 Notebook computer and carrying case to savings bonds valued at \$700 and \$300 as well as Bunsen Bob T-shirts. All winners will also receive X-ACTO products for their science teachers.

Students must be 18 years of age or younger and enrolled in a science course. The competition runs until June 15, 2004.

To enter, please visit www.sciencehunt.com.

Newseum

Newseum is the interactive museum of news headquartered in Washington, D.C. Two new resources are now available on the Web site.



The first is: President Kennedy Has Been Shot, an online companion to a book examining behind the scenes of the media coverage of the assassination of President

Kennedy. The site includes more than 60 firsthand accounts from journalists, photographers, editors, and correspondents.

The Web site traces the tragic events of November 22-25, 1963 through photographs, video and audio files. Access to this site is available at: www.newseum.org/kennedy

The other addition to the Web site is called Newsmania, an interactive game show created for students aged 5-14. Players who visit the site are invited to test their knowledge of current events, headlines in history, sports, entertainment and general knowledge through three levels of difficulty. The site features a virtual game show host and players are challenged to answer ten questions from randomly chosen categories. On scoring 70 points or more, students are awarded an all-access "Press Pass" downloadable and printable from the Web. Newsmania contains a database of over 1,000 questions and new questions are added each week. Access to Newsmania, is available at: www.newseum.org/newsmania

The Smithsonian Institution

The Smithsonian has launched a new Web site for educators and students. The site features content from 16 museums, the National Zoo and the Smithsonian's research centres.

Content on the site includes: close to 1,000 educational resources searchable by grade, subject and museum, interactive activities that employ graphics and animation, lesson plans, activities and teaching tools.

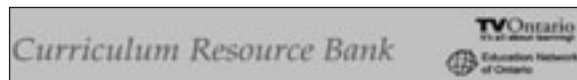
There are three primary sections of the Web site. The first houses free resources for educators, including lesson plans, access to publications, links to other Web resources, field trips and teaching tools. Listed too are professional development opportunities.

There is a portion of the site set aside for families and then another specifically for students. The student component includes such things as content about Apollo 11, a virtual journey back in time to explore historical events, behind the scenes stories of the Smithsonian's own history from the curse of the Hope Diamond to

the location of Smithson's bones. Students may view various Smithsonian collections and try their own collecting.

To visit the site, please go to: www.smithsonianeducation.org

TVOntario



TVOntario has made over 100 hours of programming available free of charge to Ontario-based educators. The site is called the Curriculum Resource Bank and consists of core-curriculum content in both video and print formats. Registered users can access fully indexed resources by subject and grade level which can be retrieved as full programs or from more than 20,000 individual learning objects.

The Curriculum Resource Bank also features downloadable teacher guides and lesson plans. Teachers may use the search engine to find resources or customize their own playlist. Some of the TVO programs featured on the site include Concepts in Science, Concepts in Math, Eureka, and Inquiring Minds. Teachers also will find utilization tips, online discussions and forums and a variety of Web links.

Content on the site can be searched by keyword, subject, grade level, or series title. The site was developed by TVOntario in conjunction with the Education Network of Ontario (ENO). Users must have either RealMedia or QuickTime installed on their desktops. Registration is available online and those educators with existing ENO accounts may use them to register. For educators outside of Ontario, the service is based on a subscription fee.

To visit the site, please go to: www.curriculumresourcebank.com



Waxing Poetic

In recognition of National Poetry Month in April, the League of Canadian Poets is setting aside a week of poetry-related activities for students and their teachers (April 12 to 16).

Through their youth Web site www.youngpoets.ca, High School students can sign on as young poets and list serv to have a poem evaluated by a published Canadian poet, free of charge.

The site will also post the winning entries from their annual writing contest, the Poetic Licence Contest for Canadian Youth, in the e-zine: re:verse.

Teachers can request a free copy of this year's National Poetry Month poster for classroom display. The poster features a suggested reading list of outstanding Canadian poetry books selected by the League's National Poetry Month Committee.

In other poetry news, the Library of Parliament is inviting members of the public to visit the Parliamentary Poet Laureate's Web site. The site was created by George Bowering, Canada's first Parliamentary Poet Laureate.



Each week, a new poem will be published on the "Poem of the Week" Web site. The poems come from poets all over the country and will be published in the original language of composition. Readers are encouraged to send in their comments concerning the poems.

After a week, the poems will be placed in the Poems Archive. Biographical notes on the poets and links to their published works will also be available. Teachers and students can then create their own anthologies for use in classrooms.

The "Poem of the Week" can be found at: www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/people/poet/poem-of-the-week/index-e.htm

For more information, please call: 1-866-599-4999.

Misc



LEAPS

Life Excelerator/Assessment of Personal Skills (LEAPS) is a comprehensive Web-based resource that enables teachers and counselors

to teach social skills on an individualized or group basis. School counselors and teachers use the assessment tools in LEAPS to identify specific individual or group skills issues and learn the appropriate steps to take to improve classroom performance. Documented research has demonstrated that the LEAPS system of skills increases attendance, reduces behavioral incidents, lowers dropout rates and improves teacher effectiveness.

The curriculum addresses 109 functioning, coping, and adaptive skills by providing teacher resources – lesson plans, student worksheets and reports – that are immediately usable by the teacher by downloading and printing from the Internet (PDF files). Each student's profile is a measurement of skill knowledge thru aggregate, categorical and individual assessments. The counselor version of LEAPS is \$500 (U.S.) and the classroom version is \$250 per year, per teacher. Volume discounts are available. For more information, see www.provenigroup.com.

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www.conferenceboard.ca/education/symposia.htm

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Introduction to Lessons:

It is important for youth to understand that part of being a Canadian citizen is contributing positively to our community and to our country in our daily thoughts, actions and decisions. Youth need to be encouraged to respect the rights of others, embrace diversity, reject intolerance, promote a culture of peace, and take care of each other and the environment. These are some of the core values that strengthen the roots of our citizenship.

In specific terms this could mean helping a neighbour, participating in volunteer work or community service, defusing a conflict, getting out and voting when elections occur, taking action against an injustice, understanding the legal system, writing a letter to the local newspaper or convening a symposium around an important issue.

To thrive as a nation, each of us as citizens needs to believe that our voice matters and that our actions can make a difference. Citizenship includes a commitment to ourselves, our neighbourhoods, our country, and our global community. Active citizenship means participating in activities that demonstrate our shared values of peace, respect, belonging and freedom.

The following lesson plans include one set of activities for junior and intermediate grade levels and one set of activities for senior grade levels. The lesson plans are designed to promote and encourage active participation in our communities. Activities in these lesson plans will encourage youth to understand the contributions they can make to building a Canada that values peace, respect, belonging and freedom.

► For resources that explore shared citizenship values in more detail, please visit: www.cic.gc.ca/english/celebrate.html (see Resources for Teachers and Youth Leaders)

Curricula

Reproducible Insert

The Active Citizenship Project

Minister
of Citizenship
and Immigration



Ministre
de la Citoyenneté
et de l'Immigration



Membership in the Canadian family is apparent in what we do everyday to enrich our life and that of others. As Canadians, we enjoy rights and freedoms unknown in many countries around the world. With these rights come responsibilities.

Being Canadian means actively participating in our communities. This can take the form of helping out at school, fundraising for a local hockey team, aiding a neighbour in need, or getting involved in local or national politics.

This special issue of TEACH magazine explores active citizenship. I encourage each of you to learn more about how you can get involved. I encourage each of you to play a role in helping Canada achieve its true potential.

Notre appartenance à la grande famille canadienne transparaît dans les gestes que nous faisons quotidiennement pour enrichir notre vie et celle des autres. En tant que Canadiens, nous jouissons de droits et de libertés dont sont privés de nombreux pays sur la planète. Ces droits s'accompagnent de responsabilités.

Être Canadien signifie participer activement à la vie de notre collectivité. Concrètement, il peut s'agir d'offrir ses services à l'école, de recueillir des fonds pour une équipe de hockey locale, d'aider un voisin qui en a besoin ou de s'investir dans la vie politique locale ou nationale.

Ce numéro spécial du magazine TEACH porte sur la citoyenneté active. J'encourage chacun d'entre vous à examiner de plus près les façons de vous engager, et à jouer un rôle dans la réalisation du véritable potentiel du Canada.



The Honourable / L'honorable Judy Sgro

Junior/Intermediate Lesson (grades 5-10):

Overview:

This lesson explores ways that youth can get involved in their community. Students will work cooperatively in small groups to conduct original research, take the information they have found and develop it into a program or an event that will benefit their community. Community can mean many things including : a school, a club, a neighbourhood, a municipality or even, a region. Each group will develop its program idea and present it to their classmates through the use of a bulletin board display, a story board, a poster or even, a Web site.

Objectives/Outcomes:

Students will learn:

- ▶ how to work cooperatively in small groups
- ▶ how to conduct original research
- ▶ to make a comprehensive oral presentation to their classmates
- ▶ to discuss their ideas and findings in class
- ▶ about the needs of their community
- ▶ how to put research into action
- ▶ the importance of good research
- ▶ what they can do to effect positive change in the community

Process:

Explain to your students that they are going to investigate the needs of their community or of a community. The description of the "community" should be flexible. It may consist of a household, a club, a Boy Scout/Girl Guide troop,

a nursing home, a hospital, a school, a distinct cultural group and so on.

You may continue by having a class discussion about communities, what the term means and have your students help you make a list of the possibilities. Write them on the board. After having that discussion, divide the class into small groups of three or four students and set them on the task of choosing their community. They must then agree on the

type of community they want to help. This process will involve some discussion back and forth and even, negotiation between the group members. The group must bear in mind the four core values (peace, respect, belonging and freedom) and see how they can be applied to their project.

Resources:

For ideas on how to be an active citizen, please visit the following Web sites:

- ▶ www.cic.gc.ca/english/newcomer/involve/index.html
- ▶ www.takingitglobal.org
- ▶ www.volunteer.ca
- ▶ www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizen/guide_2003_e/section2_activ5.html (see *Growing Tips at bottom of page*)
- ▶ www.cic.gc.ca/english/citizen/guide_2003_e/section2_activ6.html (see *Step 3 - Variations*)
- ▶ www.cultivatingpeace.ca/pdfs/CPCengPDF.pdf (see *page 55 - Projects*)

The projects might be as simple as shoveling snow for elderly neighbours, reading to young children in a daycare or pre-school, or helping maintenance staff pick up garbage in the school yard. The goals and execution of the project should be doable and realistic, within the capabilities of the group.

After the groups have determined what communities they will help, the next step is to find out what sort of help they need. First, they will need to come up with a list of questions to ask. You may wish to give some examples: Is there something in the "community" that needs to be done? How can we help? What is the most important thing you need right now? And so on.



Have each group of students draw up their list of questions. Now that they have decided on which community to help, the questions should be very specific. They should develop the list of questions into a short survey or questionnaire. You might bring in some survey samples to show. The group must then decide how to capture the information. Will they hand out the questionnaires to their community members to be filled out? Will they interview their community members and write down the answers? Will they record the answers on audio or video tape?

Who in the group will do what? It is an important part of the process to allocate roles and responsibilities for the work. Each group member must have a task and a deadline for completion. You must decide when the group will conduct its research, after school, on the weekend or during some allocated class time, if feasible. Give each group a deadline to complete the work.

After the research has been completed, discuss as a class what each group has learned through the process. Ask each group to appoint a spokesperson and make a brief report to the class. Again, reiterate the four core values (Peace, Respect, Belonging and Freedom) and ask the spokesperson to address them or as many as they can in the report.

Doing the Work

At this point, it is up to the group to put their community service project into action. Make it clear that the progress and the results of the project should be documented in detail and that this information will form a large part of their class presentation.

Complete the Presentation

Now that each group has done its research, made its oral report, and completed the project, it is time to work on the presentation. The group may select any of the following formats:

- bulletin board presentation
- audio or video
- Powerpoint
- story board
- Web site

Invite other classes and even parents to attend the presentation of the projects.



Assessment and Evaluation:

Assess students individually based on:

- cooperation and contribution to the group;
- research skills;
- presentation of the project;
- contribution to the group and class discussions;
- knowledge of the issue.



Assessment tools may include:

- checklist of cooperative learning skills;
- anecdotal feedback;
- observation of research and discussion skills;
- reflection paper about what and how they learned;
- test based on common learning from the lesson.

The group may be assessed on:

- completeness of the work
- organization
- visual qualities
- thoroughness of the research
- relevance to the core values
- effectiveness of the presentation.

Senior Lesson (grades 11-12):

Overview:

This lesson is designed for Grades 11-12 and asks students, working in groups, to participate in the election process, to hold a mock election in effect. To be most relevant, it would be very instructive to conduct this exercise just prior to the time when an actual election is taking place. In this way, elements of the real election might be incorporated into this project.

That is, students may identify the slate of candidates and the parties they represent and the policies each promotes. They may follow the media coverage and analyze it. They can discuss the appeal of the candidates and why they feel this person should get elected. They can anticipate the outcome of the election, explore the electoral process, how it is managed, controlled and the results reported and ensure that relevance to the four core values is included.



Objectives/Outcomes:

Students will:

- understand the electoral process
- learn how to use the media to interpret messages
- comprehend the importance of democratic principles as they affect citizenship
- incorporate the four core values of peace, respect, belonging and freedom into their work
- work cooperatively with classmates
- present orally and discuss in class what they have learned from their research and work

Process:

It is important for the class to have an overview and understanding of the electoral process. Begin with a class discussion about elections, their importance and how they are structured. Emphasize that it is the responsibility of each citizen to participate in the electoral process and why that is so vitally important in a democratic society. Have the class conduct research using the Internet and searching on the phrase "elections in Canada". You may refer the class to the following specific Web sites:

- www.elections.ca
- www.library.ubc.ca/poli/cpwebpr.html
- laws.justice.gc.ca/en/E-2.01
- www.tug-libraries.on.ca/gp/lep_canada.html

Please note: the four core values (peace, respect, belonging and freedom) should be addressed in the party platforms and the candidate's speeches. The pollsters can then ask the "electorate" questions relating to the core values and their importance in relation to a given policy. For example, if one party has a platform that is environmentally friendly, which core value is addressed? Within education for example, the idea of belonging to a community or freedom to attend school may be an integral part of a platform and speech and so on. Throughout the sets of activities, students should be

aware of the core values and the work they do should reveal how the values are represented.

Have each student summarize, in point form, what they have learned. Maximum length: one page. Call on a sampling of students to read their summaries. Jot the common elements down on the board so that you've got a general reference list for the class.

Divide the class into small groups of four or five. Each group will be given an assignment. There will be three political parties of your choosing and each will be assigned to a group. There will be one media group (which may represent a newspaper, a radio or television station—larger classes may have two media groups), a research/polling organization that takes the pulse of the "electorate" during the campaign, and the last group will form the electoral administrative team, those who organize the elections such as the electoral officers and staff.

Within each group, roles and responsibilities must be assigned:

Political Party

- decide who is the candidate, campaign manager, speechwriter/communications officer, administrator

Media Group

- decide who is the reporter(s), editor(s), cameraperson (if applicable), audio person (if applicable)

Pollster Group

- decide who will do the primary research, write up the research and report the research to the media

Election Staff

- decide who is the electoral officer, who will man the polling station, who will verify the voters lists, who will register those eligible to vote



Step One

Each of the political parties will establish their policy positions in three key areas: Healthcare, Education and the Environment. They must then communicate these positions to the “electorate”, i.e., other class members and/or those in the school. The parties need to provide news releases to the media groups, develop and launch an ad campaign that will notify the “electorate” and plan for a candidate’s debate.

After each step and whenever the parties release information to the public, the research/polling group must go to work and find out from the “electorate” their reactions to the information. It is up to the polling group to keep a running poll posted in the classroom that shows where the parties stand in terms of popularity, where the individual candidates stand and how the public has responded to the specific policy issues covered. Contacting some polling organizations such as Ipsos-Reid, EKOS or COMPASS might be useful as will looking at their respective Web sites. Clip any poll data from the newspaper of actual election coverage that you come across over the course of the school-based election campaign.

Step Two



The media groups will take the news releases and turn them into stories for their respective media organizations. This means interviewing the candidates and other members of the political parties to develop the stories. For balance, those with contrary views must also be interviewed. For example, when writing a story about one party’s education policy, at least one of their critics

should give an opposing view. The stories will then be circulated to the “electorate”. The media groups will also cover the candidates’ debate, write those stories and circulate them. All of which will help keep the “electorate” informed concerning the issues and the candidates respective positions. The pollsters will then find out what the public thinks in reaction to the media stories that have been released and how this affects the parties and candidates in the election.

Step Three

The election staff will compile the Voters’ list ensuring it is accurate and up-to-date. If there is an actual election ongoing, then a field trip to a polling station would be useful. The election staff must also design and create the ballots to be used, the voting booths and the ballot box. They will be in charge of counting the ballots and releasing the results of the election.

Timeline

The sequence of events should flow like an actual election campaign. Although most campaigns run over a period of roughly 28 days in this country, you can decide how much time you wish to allocate to this lesson, what is adequate for each group to complete their tasks.

Culmination

The lesson will culminate in the actual election where “citizens” or the electorate have the opportunity to cast their votes. This should follow closely on the heels of the candidates’ debate and the media stories that appear. Take some time in class to discuss the stories after they have been circulated or shown. Discuss too, the polling information and the influence this appears to have on how people decide to vote.

Run the election, have the ballots counted and announce the results. Throw a victory bash for the winner. Let everyone participate. The victory bash should include brief speeches from each of the candidates, those who concede the loss and the winner and what they hope to accomplish during their time in office.

Assessment and Evaluation:

Evaluate each group for:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| ▮ Completeness | ▮ Content |
| ▮ Organization | ▮ Thorough Research |
| ▮ Effectiveness of presentation | ▮ Teamwork |
| ▮ Effort | |

Assess students individually:

- ▮ knowledge of the electoral process and its importance in a democracy (written test)
- ▮ cooperation, decision-making and research skills
- ▮ presentation and discussion skills
- ▮ relevance to the core values



Citizenship and
Immigration Canada

Citoyenneté et
Immigration Canada



Introduction

Il est capital que les jeunes comprennent bien qu'en tant que citoyens canadiens, ils ont la responsabilité de participer positivement à la vie de leur communauté et de leur pays, que ce soit par leurs réflexions, leurs actions et leurs décisions quotidiennes. Il nous faut encourager les jeunes à respecter les droits d'autrui, à accepter la diversité, à rejeter l'intolérance, à promouvoir une culture de la paix et à faire attention aux autres et à l'environnement. Ce sont là quelques-unes des valeurs fondamentales qui renforcent les racines de notre citoyenneté.

En termes concrets, cela peut signifier aider un voisin, faire du bénévolat ou participer à un service communautaire, désamorcer un conflit, aller voter en période d'élection, agir lorsqu'on constate une injustice, comprendre le système judiciaire, envoyer une lettre au journal local ou organiser un colloque sur un problème important.

Pour que notre nation se porte bien, chacun de nous, en tant que citoyen, doit être convaincu que sa voix importe et que ses actions peuvent changer les choses. Être citoyen, c'est s'engager pour soi, pour son quartier, pour son pays et pour la collectivité mondiale. Être citoyen actif, c'est participer à des activités qui illustrent les valeurs que nous partageons tous : la paix, le respect, l'appartenance et la liberté.

Les plans de leçon qui suivent proposent un ensemble d'activités pour les élèves de la 5^e à la 10^e année et un autre pour le niveau supérieur (11^e et 12^e années). Ils visent à promouvoir et à encourager une participation active à la vie de nos communautés. Les activités proposées encourageront les jeunes à réfléchir à ce qu'ils peuvent faire pour bâtir un Canada où sont reconnues les valeurs de paix, de respect, d'appartenance et de liberté.

► Pour consulter des ressources qui étudient en détail les valeurs rattachées à la citoyenneté, visitez le site www.cic.gc.ca/francais/citoyen/celebrons.html (voir Ressources à l'intention des enseignants et des responsables de jeunes).

Curricula

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Projet pour une citoyenneté active

Pour les élèves de la 5^e à la 10^e année

Aperçu

Cette leçon propose quelques moyens pour permettre aux jeunes de s'engager dans la vie de leur communauté. Les élèves travaillent ensemble, par petits groupes, pour faire une recherche originale et réaliser, à l'aide des informations recueillies, quelque chose d'utile pour leur « communauté », que celle-ci soit leur école, leur club, leur quartier, leur municipalité, voire leur région. Chaque groupe développera son idée et la présentera aux autres élèves sous la forme d'un panneau d'affichage, d'un scénario-maquette, d'une affiche ou, pourquoi pas, d'un site Web.

Objectifs et résultats

Les élèves apprendront :

- à travailler ensemble en petits groupes,
- à mener une recherche originale,
- à réaliser une présentation orale approfondie devant la classe,
- à discuter en classe de leurs idées et de leurs conclusions,
- à découvrir les besoins de leur communauté,
- à concrétiser une recherche,
- l'importance de faire une bonne recherche,
- ce qu'ils peuvent faire pour instaurer des changements positifs dans leur communauté.

Méthode

Expliquez à vos élèves qu'ils vont analyser les besoins de leur communauté ou d'une autre. Ce terme sera entendu



dans un sens large, la « communauté » pouvant être une famille, un club, un groupe de scouts ou de guides, une maison de soins infirmiers, un hôpital, une école, un groupe culturel différent, etc.

Vous pourrez poursuivre en lançant une discussion avec toute la classe sur les communautés et le sens de ce terme, et demander la participation des élèves pour dresser une liste de possibilités, que vous

inscrirez au tableau. Après la discussion, répartissez les élèves en petits groupes de trois ou quatre et demandez à chaque groupe de choisir une communauté. Dans chaque groupe, on se mettra d'accord sur le type de communauté qu'on souhaite aider, ce qui supposera des échanges, voire des négociations. Le groupe se reportera aux quatre valeurs fondamentales (paix, respect, appartenance, liberté) et verra comment elles peuvent s'appliquer à son projet.

Ressources

Pour se renseigner sur la façon d'être un citoyen actif, visitez les sites Web suivants :

- www.cic.gc.ca/francais/vivre/participation/index.html
- www.benevoles.ca/index-frn.php
- www.cic.gc.ca/francais/citoyen/guide_2003_f/section2_activ5.html (voir *Trucs du jardinier, en bas de la page*)
- www.cic.gc.ca/francais/citoyen/guide_2003_f/section2_activ6.html (voir *Étape 3, Variations*)
- www.cultivatingpeace.ca/french/pdfs/cpccfre.pdf (voir *Projets, p. 55*)

Les projets pourront être très simples, comme déneiger pour des voisins âgés, faire la lecture aux jeunes enfants d'une garderie ou d'un centre préscolaire, aider le personnel d'entretien de l'école à ramasser les ordures dans la cour. Les objectifs du projet doivent être réalisables et réalistes, dans les limites des possibilités du groupe.

Une fois que les groupes auront choisi les communautés qu'ils souhaitent aider, ils devront dégager quel type d'aide est nécessaire, en dressant une liste des questions à poser. À cet égard, vous pourrez donner quelques exemples : Y a-t-il quelque chose dans la « communauté » qui a besoin d'être





fait? Comment pouvons-nous aider? Quelle y est la priorité actuelle?

Chaque groupe préparera sa liste. Les questions doivent être précises puisque les groupes ont maintenant choisi « leur » communauté. La liste pourra être un bref sondage ou un questionnaire; vous pourrez en proposer des exemples à titre d'information. Les groupes doivent ensuite décider de la façon dont ils vont recueillir

l'information. Vont-ils distribuer des questionnaires aux membres de la communauté pour qu'ils les remplissent? Interviewer des membres de la communauté et inscrire leurs réponses? Enregistrer leurs réponses sur bande vidéo ou audio?

Qui, dans le groupe, fera quoi? La répartition des rôles et des responsabilités constitue une partie importante. Chacun des membres des groupes doit avoir une tâche précise à effectuer, avec une date limite. Vous déciderez du moment où les groupes feront leur travail de recherche : après l'école, en fin de semaine ou, si possible, en classe pendant un temps réservé. Fixez la date à laquelle le travail devra être terminé.

Une fois le travail de recherche fini, discutez avec la classe de ce que les groupes ont découvert et demandez à chacun de nommer un porte-parole qui fera un bref compte rendu à la classe. Là encore, réitérez les quatre valeurs fondamentales (paix, respect, appartenance et liberté) et demandez au rapporteur d'y faire référence — à toutes ou à certaines d'entre elles — dans son compte rendu.

Le travail proprement dit

C'est le moment, pour le groupe, de passer à l'action et de concrétiser son projet de service communautaire. Dites bien clairement que le déroulement du projet et ses résultats devront être précisés sur papier et que tout cela constituera une partie importante de la présentation en classe.



La présentation

Après le travail de recherche, le compte rendu oral et le projet lui-même, il reste à travailler la présentation. Les groupes pourront choisir l'une des formules suivantes :

- ▮ tableau d'affichage ▮ scénario-maquette
- ▮ bande audio ou vidéo ▮ site Web
- ▮ diapositives en PowerPoint

Invitez d'autres classes ou même des parents à venir à la présentation.

Évaluation

Évaluez les élèves individuellement en fonction des éléments suivants :

- ▮ la collaboration et la participation au travail du groupe
- ▮ les compétences en recherche
- ▮ la présentation
- ▮ la participation aux discussions du groupe et de la classe
- ▮ la connaissance du sujet

Les outils d'évaluation pourront être notamment :

- ▮ une liste d'aptitudes pour l'apprentissage coopératif
- ▮ des remarques anecdotiques
- ▮ une observation du travail de recherche et des aptitudes à la discussion
- ▮ une réflexion écrite de l'élève sur ce qu'il aura appris et comment
- ▮ un test basé sur les connaissances fondamentales tirées de la leçon

Évaluez les groupes en fonction des éléments suivants :

- ▮ le caractère exhaustif de leur travail
- ▮ l'organisation
- ▮ les qualités visuelles de la présentation
- ▮ la profondeur du travail de recherche
- ▮ la pertinence de leur travail par rapport aux valeurs fondamentales
- ▮ l'efficacité de la présentation

Pour les élèves du niveau supérieur (11^e et 12^e années)

Aperçu

Cette leçon consiste à faire participer les élèves (11^e et 12^e années) au processus électoral. Ils se diviseront en groupes pour organiser une élection simulée. Afin de rendre l'exercice encore plus pertinent et instructif, il serait bon de le faire juste avant de véritables élections de façon à en incorporer des éléments dans le projet.



Les élèves pourront noter les candidats en lice, les partis qu'ils représentent et leur programme électoral. Ils pourront suivre la couverture médiatique et l'analyser, discuter de l'attrait des candidats et expliquer pourquoi, à leur avis, ils méritent d'être élus. Ils pourront anticiper l'issue des élections, analyser le processus électoral en voyant comment il est géré, qui le contrôle, comment les résultats sont communiqués et s'assurer que les quatre valeurs fondamentales y sont bien représentées.

Objectifs et résultats

Les élèves devront :

- comprendre le processus électoral
- apprendre à utiliser les médias pour transmettre les messages
- saisir l'importance des principes démocratiques et leur influence sur la citoyenneté
- incorporer à leur travail les quatre valeurs fondamentales (paix, respect, appartenance et liberté)
- travailler en collaboration avec leurs camarades
- faire une présentation orale sur ce qu'ils auront appris par leurs recherches et leur travail

Méthode :

Ce qui importe, c'est que la classe comprenne l'essentiel du processus électoral. Commencez par une discussion générale sur les élections, leur importance et leur organisation. Insistez sur le fait que chaque citoyen se doit de participer au processus électoral et sur la très grande importance de cette responsabilité dans une société démocratique. Votre classe effectuera des recherches sur Internet à l'aide de l'expression « élections au Canada ». Vous pourrez proposer les sites Web suivants :

- www.elections.ca
- www.realgame.ca/viewContent.cfm/group/9/article/261/lang/1
- lois.justice.gc.ca/fr/E-2.01/index.html
- www.elections.mb.ca/main/printer/Fedu_intro.htm

Remarque : les quatre valeurs fondamentales (paix, respect, appartenance et liberté) devront être évoquées dans le programme électoral de chaque parti et dans les discours des candidats. Cela permettra aux sondeurs d'opinion de poser aux électeurs des questions liées à ces valeurs et à leur importance relativement à une politique donnée. Si, par exemple, un parti propose un programme écologiste, à quelle valeur fondamentale se rattache-t-il? Dans le cadre de l'éducation, l'idée d'appartenance à une communauté ou de liberté de fréquenter l'école peut s'inscrire dans un programme ou dans un discours. Tout au long des activités, les élèves doivent être sensibilisés à ces valeurs et leur travail doit révéler comment elles sont représentées.

Demandez aux élèves qu'ils résument, individuellement, en style télégraphique et sur une page maximum, ce qu'ils auront appris. Proposez à quelques-uns de lire leur résumé. Inscrivez au tableau les éléments communs de façon à avoir une liste de référence pour toute la classe.

Divisez la classe en petits groupes de quatre ou cinq et donnez à chacun un projet. Choisissez trois partis politiques que vous assignerez à trois groupes. Un autre groupe représentera les médias (journal, station de radio ou de télévision — les classes plus grandes pouvant avoir deux groupes), et un autre représentera, un organisme de recherche ou de sondage qui prendra le pouls de « l'électorat » durant la campagne. Un dernier groupe constituera l'équipe d'administration électorale, qui comprendra les agents d'élection et le personnel électoral.

Au sein de chaque groupe, les rôles et les responsabilités seront assignés comme suit :

Parti politique

- Décidez qui sera candidat, directeur de campagne, rédacteur des discours, responsable des communications, administrateur.

Groupe des médias

- Décidez qui sera journaliste, rédacteur en chef, caméraman (le cas échéant), technicien du son (le cas échéant).

Groupe de sondage

- Décidez qui fera les recherches de base, qui rédigera les résultats et qui les présentera aux médias.

Équipe d'administration électorale

- ▮ Décidez qui sera agent électoral, qui sera responsable du bureau de vote, qui vérifiera la liste des électeurs, qui inscrira les votants.

Première étape

Chaque parti politique choisira son programme électoral dans trois grands domaines : la santé, l'éducation et l'environnement. Ils devront ensuite communiquer leur position à leur « électorat », à savoir les autres élèves de la classe ou de l'école. Les partis doivent envoyer des communiqués aux médias, organiser une campagne publicitaire pour informer « l'électorat » et préparer un débat public entre tous les candidats.

Après chaque étape et chaque fois que les partis transmettent des informations au public, le groupe de sondage intervient et se renseigne sur les réactions de « l'électorat ». Il affiche dans la classe les résultats du sondage, indiquant la cote de popularité des partis, la position des candidats et les réactions du public aux politiques proposées. Il pourrait être utile de communiquer avec certains organismes de sondage tels qu'Ipsos-Reid, EKOS, COMPASS ou de consulter leurs sites Web. Découpez dans les journaux des données de sondages tirées d'authentiques élections qui pourraient avoir lieu pendant la campagne électorale scolaire.

Deuxième étape

Le groupe des médias se servira des communiqués de presse pour préparer des articles à l'intention de chaque organisme-média représenté. Il lui faudra interviewer les candidats et autres membres des partis politiques. Par souci d'équilibre, il interviewera aussi des personnes d'opinion contraire. Si, par exemple, il fait un article sur la politique en éducation d'un parti, il devra donner l'opinion opposée d'au moins un candidat de l'autre camp. Les articles seront ensuite distribués à « l'électorat ». Le groupe des médias devra aussi couvrir le débat entre les candidats, écrire un article à ce sujet et le distribuer. Tout ceci permettra d'informer « l'électorat » sur les grandes questions et sur les positions respectives des candidats. Après diffusion des articles, les sondeurs chercheront à connaître l'opinion du public et ses répercussions sur les partis et les candidats aux élections.

Troisième étape

Le personnel électoral compilera la liste des électeurs en s'assurant qu'elle est exacte et à jour. Si l'on est réellement en période électorale, une visite à un bureau de vote pourrait s'avérer utile. Le personnel électoral doit aussi préparer les bulletins de vote, les isolements et l'urne. Il sera chargé de compter les voix et de proclamer les résultats.

Échéancier

Les événements doivent s'enchaîner comme lors d'une véritable campagne électorale. Bien qu'au Canada la plupart des campagnes durent environ vingt-huit jours, c'est à vous de décider combien de temps vous souhaitez consacrer à



cette leçon et d'octroyer à chaque groupe un délai suffisant pour qu'il puisse faire son travail en entier.

Pour terminer

Le couronnement de la leçon sera l'élection proprement dite, c'est-à-dire le moment où « les citoyens » ou « l'électorat » auront la possibilité de s'exprimer. Ceci se fera tout de suite après le débat entre les candidats et la publication des articles. Prenez le temps en classe de discuter des articles une fois qu'ils auront été distribués ou montrés. Discutez aussi des sondages et de l'influence qu'ils peuvent avoir sur les décisions des électeurs.

Organisez les élections, procédez au comptage des voix et annoncez les résultats. Organisez, pour le gagnant, une fête à laquelle tout le monde participera. Cette fête devra comprendre un bref discours de chacun des candidats : ceux qui acceptent leur défaite, et le vainqueur qui indiquera ce qu'il compte réaliser durant son mandat.

Évaluation

Évaluez les groupes en fonction des éléments suivants :

- ▮ le caractère exhaustif de leur travail
- ▮ le contenu
- ▮ l'organisation
- ▮ la rigueur de la recherche
- ▮ l'efficacité de la présentation
- ▮ le travail de groupe
- ▮ l'effort

Évaluez les élèves individuellement en fonction des éléments suivants :

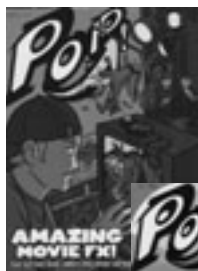
- ▮ leur connaissance du processus électoral et de son importance dans une démocratie (travail écrit)
- ▮ leur coopération, leur capacité à prendre des décisions et leurs compétences en recherche
- ▮ leurs compétences dans la présentation et la discussion
- ▮ la pertinence de leur travail par rapport aux valeurs fondamentales



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POP! Teachers Online helps educators make learning fun

To help students get the most from POP! magazine, educators can now register for POP! Teachers at www.popmagazine.com. This website offers additional supporting material that allows teachers to leverage the content found in POP! magazine while helping students learn about elements in the grades 4-6 curriculum.

The website offers standalone activity sheets, along with relevant links to other teacher-friendly websites, many of which include more in-depth activities.

In keeping with Canada's national privacy laws, registration information gathered on POP! Teachers Online is kept confidential. This provides educators with peace of mind that their information is secure.

Here are some of the activities featured in the Spring issue of POP! Magazine and on POP! Teachers Online.

Shrek 2 Once Upon A Fairy Tale: In this creative writing activity, kids will combine supplied story elements with their own imagination to conceive their very own fairy tale. They will be introduced to the characters of *Shrek 2*TM and will describe characteristics for both these and other well known fairy tale characters. This creative writing exercise is sure to be an enormous success with your students!

Students can also complete the Ogre Etiquette quiz in POP! Magazine, that allows them to discover how their own manners size up, sponsored by M&M's® chocolate candies.

Brother Bear – Celebrating Aboriginal Cultures

In POP! Magazine, the article entitled Animal Totem offers kids the opportunity to complete an art activity for a chance to win a Disney's *Brother Bear* prize pack! In this art activity, kids will create their own totems using animals that they feel best symbolize their own personalities.

To further extend the study of aboriginal cultures, POP! Teachers Online features a research report project that will let kids explore the history of Canadian Aboriginal

Peoples. Students will select an aboriginal group and will develop a report describing cultural elements such as territory, food, clothing, and traditions that make the group unique. Students can then compare and contrast the different aboriginal cultures as a class.

These and other contests and activities are all available on www.popmagazine.com.



Attention Toronto District School Board Teachers:

Great news! On April 19th, Mike and Christine from EZ Rock 97.3 FM kick off the TDSB's 2nd Annual **READ ON!** This weeklong literacy event is designed to encourage students to keep reading and to help raise money for at-risk students. Students are given in-class reading time and collect pledges for each page that they read. All money raised will go to help kids who need it the most.

For participating teachers, in recognition of your support for **READ ON!**, 10 gold memberships (good for 1 year) have been donated by Premier Fitness. As well, every participating student will receive an Ontario Place, 'Play-All-Day' pass and one participating class will receive a day at the CN Tower, including lunch and activities.

READ ON! Registration Packages were sent to schools in late February. For more information, or to register early, contact the TDSB's Fundraising Hotline at 416-397-3510 or email sharon.hill@tdsb.on.ca



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Game On: Games Take Learning to a New Level

By Susan Murray

Until a few years ago, University of Wisconsin education professor James Paul Gee was himself clueless about video games. He became interested when he watched his son, then 6 years old, play a game called Pajama Sam. Intrigued by his son's fascination, Mr. Gee wondered what a game for adults would be like. So, he bought a game called the New Adventures of the Time Machine, which was loosely based on the work of H.G. Wells. Floored by the length and difficulty of the game, Gee began to wonder why millions of people would spend \$50 or more on a game that may take them 50 to 100 hours to complete (i.e. win). As an educator, he was curious: Why can a child devote hours to challenging play and yet be bored after 10 minutes of learning algebra?

Higher learning institutions are taking notice of this youthful obsession – several are even devoting specific research to understanding what is behind the appeal and its educational potential. Believe it or not, video games may soon be coming to a curriculum near you. In an effort that resembles the enormously successful Children's Workshop of the 1980s (the creative genius behind several educational television programs, including *Sesame Street*), techno-savvy academics like Gee are joining forces to revolutionize both education and the ever-expanding gaming industry.

Over the past few years, electronic gaming has steadily crept up on mainstream media, growing to the point where analysts' reports show that annual revenue from console gaming – more than \$10 billion (U.S.) in the United States, more than \$1 billion in Canada – now exceeds movie box office receipts.

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, which included video games in 2003 for the first time in its annual report on the global entertainment and media industry, forecasts that the category will expand to \$35.8 billion by 2007, making it the fastest growing industry segment.

A new project being led by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Gee and fellow researchers at the University of Wisconsin, intends to tap into this popularity by bringing video games into the classroom.

The Education Arcade is an initiative that hopes to raise teacher awareness of the effectiveness of game-playing in education, encourage software developers to come up with new educational games and help to build markets for their products. An offshoot of a now-ended effort called the Games-to-Teach Project funded by Microsoft, the Arcade began in fall 2003 with a grant from the Electronic Software Association.

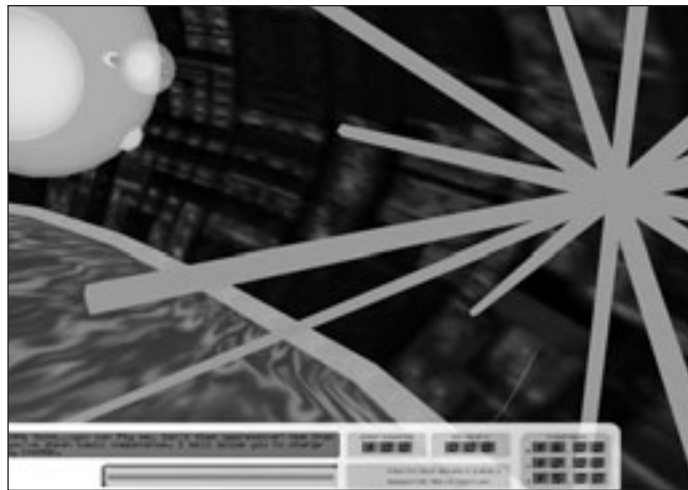
“Kids often say it doesn’t feel like learning when they’re gaming – they’re much too focused on playing,” Gee says, explaining how successful games are challenging enough to entertain, yet easy enough to solve – or at least easy enough for the player to feel like he or she is making progress.

According to Gee, who recently published a book called “What Games Teach Us About Learning and Literacy,” research indicates that people learn best when they are entertained, when they can use creativity to work toward complex goals, when lesson plans incorporate both thinking and emotion, and when the consequences of actions can be observed. Those needs, he says, are not met in school classrooms where students are often delivered the facts, told to memorize them, and expected to revisit them on tests or in essays.

Video games, Gee argues, immerse people in different worlds, make them rely on problem-solving skills and see the consequences of their knowledge, or their ignorance, as their scores climb or fall.



Gee uses the example of *Civilization III*, a “real-time strategy” computer game where players build societies from the ground up. When a group of middle school kids were invited to play the game during a recent project in Chicago, the majority of them chose to develop Native American societies, with full knowledge of the actual historical outcome – i.e. that they would eventually be colonized by Europeans. In an effort to alter this fate, the students consulted with reference materials to determine the reasons why natives were conquered by Europeans. When it came time to building their societies, they took this information into consideration, building a civilization that was impenetrable to a foreign takeover. “The power of games is in their interactivity; their ability to recruit your imagination,” he says.



The Arcade team has even developed some of its own games – *Supercharged!* is an electromagnetic simulation game in which players navigate through magnetically charged mazes, requiring them to understand how atomic particles work. Recently, the game was used in a science curriculum at a Massachusetts middle school and, in a final test of the main concepts, students who played the game outperformed those who used a traditional curriculum by 20 per cent.

“We’re not advocating removing real experiments or field trips,” says Henry Jenkins, director of MIT’s comparative media studies department and principal investigator for the Arcade. “We operate under the assumption that the game is a resource – you’re not going to understand anything by just sitting there.”

So far, Jenkins and his colleagues have met far less resistance than originally expected. For one, they are not suggesting to use *Grand Theft Auto* (a notoriously violent, yet popular game) to help kids learn about urban culture, (“that would be a tough sell,” he says.) Using relevant, intellectually-stimulating games in an educational context seems to go over well, particularly with younger teachers, many of whom grew up playing video games themselves. “The Nintendo Generation is taking over our schools,” he says.

The Arcade is not alone in its agenda. Curriculums dedicated to video-game criticism, game design, and education through games have already been established at many colleges, including Southern Methodist University, the Rochester Institute of Technology, and Carnegie Mellon University. The Digital Media Collaboratory, a technology lab at the University of Texas at Austin’s IC2 Institute, works with partners from the public and private sectors to develop computer games that can be used by schools, businesses and governments.

Bolstered by the success of a 1998 pilot project that taught entry-level job skills through digital role playing (two-thirds of the participants either found jobs or enrolled in school), the group began tailoring programs for different organizations. Versions of the program have since been used in the Dallas Independent School District, the University of Texas, at-risk community schools, and adult-learning centers and welfare offices throughout the state.

At Cornell University, computer science professor David Schwartz hopes to take advantage of the research and development in game design and incorporate it in today's classrooms. For years, Schwartz witnessed the enormous turnover rate of female students within his department, many of them switching majors after one introductory course. The reason? Many of them found the field to be both challenging in math and science and heavily dominated by men, he explains. The solution? Attracting a more diversified demographic to computer science – before they finished high school – by, not only playing video games, but understanding how they work and even designing them. “We need to get them while they're young,” he says.

Schwartz is currently talking with local schools and hopes to begin a pilot project for middle-school kids later this year. “Games

When it's presented for the first time it's cool ... But will it have the same impact once the novelty has worn off?

can be very creative, he says, referring to the opportunity for students to incorporate individual art designs and story lines into their own games. If the program is successful, Schwartz hopes to expand the teaching concept even further. “If the idea catches on, we would love to take it to a national or international level,” he says.

While open to using new technology to enhance existing learning methods, Charles Ungerleider, a professor of the sociology of education at the University of British Columbia, believes there are a number of factors that must first be addressed, including: the students who are using the technology (age, prior experience, technological awareness); the classroom conditions (how they play, if they receive feedback and where it derives from); the technology it is replacing (another activity, or style of instruction) and; at what cost.

“I'm reasonably skeptical about teaching intellectually complex things using technology, but I'm open to anything new,” he says. So are most young people. Because the technology is new, and because the games involve an element of play, children will likely be very enthusiastic for the program in the beginning – “the novelty effect,” as he puts it. “When it's presented for the first time it's cool,” he says. “But will it have the same impact once the novelty has worn off?”

To use games to their full learning advantage – in the classroom or at home – Gee emphasizes the need for both teachers and parents to stay involved when children are playing. Watching, comparing, explaining and playing the games with kids can all help to “accelerate cognitive growth,” he says. In response to criticism that video games are either too violent or lead to laziness and obesity in children, Gee makes his opinion clear: “People offload these problems to technology, but they are the responsibility of the family,” he says. “The game does not make you violent or fat – it's the culture you create in the home.”

Growing academic acceptance of video games is reflected in the creation of online journals dedicated to games, including

Game Studies (<http://gamestudies.org>). A handful of conferences dedicated to the topic also took place this fall: In September, Microsoft sponsored a symposium for academics exploring how game technology can be used to enhance learning. Two months later, New York Law School and Yale Law School co-sponsored a conference called “The State of Play,” which featured a discussion of the new social, psychological, and legal issues created by video games. Even more discussions are scheduled for the future: at the E3 video game trade show in June, two days are to be devoted to the issue of games in education.

In 2002, a U.K. study concluded that simulation and adventure games, such as Sim City and Civilization, helped develop children's strategic thinking and planning skills. Parents and teachers also thought their children's math, spelling and reading improved. Furthermore, the investigation into the habits of 700 children age seven to 16 also found that, far from being a solitary activity, children preferred to play games in pairs or groups.

Despite the success of such programs, the video-game industry has yet to be proactive with schools. Educational game sales make up only 7 per cent of the U.S. software market for console games, and computer titles have not generated enough sales to be ranked, according to the Entertainment Software Association. Many commercial titles offer basic drilling and practice lessons, which some experts believe defeats the purpose of using video games.



From downloading music and playing games to creating Web sites and communicating with friends, students of all ages are demonstrating the capacity to use media to their own ends. By harnessing this technological enthusiasm, many experts feel that new learning concepts can be developed, creating forward-thinking minds to manage the future. While the pedagogical value of video games may still face skepticism, one thing is clear. For today's children, it's Game On.

Art Edventures

<http://www.sanford-artedventures.com/play/play.html>

ArtEdventures is a series of seven art-centred, interactive, online games for teachers and intermediate students.

The newest game, The Art of Crime Detection, allows you to witness a crime and then be interviewed by the police to identify the culprit using a new police tool called the PDArtist. The game explores the workings of the left and right brain and the best ways to use your brain as an artist. The goal is to create a composite portrait to help identify the culprit.

Go West, Young Artist takes place in 1870. You travel westward and meet six landscape artists who teach you the basics of landscape composition.

Out of this World Design has you redesigning common earth objects for use by aliens. Learn all about industrial design while exploring new designs for familiar objects.

Be an Architect involves designing a house and learning about site, form, function, materials, floor plans and elevation. Recommended for sixth grade and up.

Leonardo's Workshop places you in Leonardo da Vinci's workshop as you search for clues to undo the changes someone has made to history.

Color Theory vs. Dr. Gray and his Dechromatizers, where the mission is to stop the evil Dr. Gray and his Dechromatizer from draining the color from fine art everywhere.

Face to Face with Portraits from the Past involves a time machine that brings five people from the past. They need to be identified and sent back. You can only use their portraits as a means to identifying them.

This is an excellent site for students to get exposed to art in a non-traditional way.

Zut!

<http://www.zut.org.uk/>

Zut! is an interactive French Web site created by Catherine Murphy of Llanishen High School in Cardiff, Wales.

Drawing on ten years of teaching experience, Murphy has created a comprehensive set of interactive activities for French teachers and learners. The site features more than 500 exercises, over 100 of which have audio samples of native French speakers. It is an easily navigated resource, organized for each year of study and also includes exercises for an interactive whiteboard.

Although the topics covered on the site are tailored to the British curriculum, they are an easy fit for any Canadian elementary and early high school curriculums. All you need to do is find a level (beginner, intermediate or advanced) and choose a topic such as numbers, time, classroom objects, grammar for the beginner level; everyday activities, personal and social life, the world around us, the world of work, the international world and grammar for the intermediate level, and les jeunes et leurs problèmes, les drogues, la formation et les carrières, les loisirs, le sport, les verbes, les pronoms for the advanced level.

The interactive exercises focus on the skills of writing, reading and listening. Exercises range from fill in the blanks, matching, putting words and sentences in the right order, crossword puzzles, to games such as Hangman and Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? The real benefit of this site is the instant feedback it delivers. Other features of this site include a newsletter and a very useful annotated list of links for other French language sites and resources.

SchoolNet News Network

<http://www.snn-rdr.ca>

Now in its eighth year, SchoolNet News Network (SNN) and its French counterpart, Rédaction de Rescol (RDR), have worked with students and teachers throughout Canada to promote student expression and to provide a vehicle for students' to publish their writing and multimedia work. SNN provides Canadian youth with an opportunity to be heard and a place to publish their work in an emerging media form. Students publish articles dealing with human rights, teen issues, stereotyping, their environment, their school, their community, their dreams.

The SNN Web site provides writing/reporting tools, story ideas, lesson plans and discussion forums for teachers and students. Students can use many media forms to express their ideas: print, photography, audio and video. SNN also connects young people with professional journalists who assist them with developing their writing, interviewing and investigative skills.

The SNN Student Magazine is published online the 25th of every month during the school year. Each month students from across Canada submit articles covering different news genres: current events, editorials/opinions, sports, profiles and entertainment.

Each year, SNN hosts a Student Journalism Award where students submit three samples of their writing/multimedia work. Submissions are reviewed by professional journalists and journalism teachers. Students can win up to \$500.

This is good motivation for students who are interested in writing, publishing and journalism. 🍷

Marjan Glavac is author of "The Busy Educator's Guide To The World Wide Web." He can be reached at marjan@glavac.com or <http://www.glavac.com>

Les jeux vidéo : un nouveau palier dans l'apprentissage

Par Susan Murray

Encore récemment, James Paul Gee, professeur de pédagogie à l'Université du Wisconsin, ignorait presque tout des jeux vidéos, jusqu'à ce qu'il voie son fils de six ans jouer à « Pajama Sam ». Intrigué par la fascination de l'enfant pour le jeu, il s'est demandé à quoi pouvait bien ressembler un jeu pour adultes. Il s'est donc procuré « New Adventures of the Time Machine », un jeu qui s'inspire librement du roman de H.G. Wells. Devant la longueur et la difficulté de l'entreprise, il a essayé d'imaginer pourquoi des millions de gens dépensent 50 \$ et plus pour un jeu auquel il faut s'atteler pendant 50 à 100 heures pour gagner. L'éducateur en lui s'est posé une question : si un enfant peut passer des heures à un jeu difficile, pourquoi s'ennuie-t-il au bout de 10 minutes d'algèbre?

Cette passion compulsive des jeunes a aussi retenu l'attention des établissements d'enseignement supérieur – plusieurs consacrent même des recherches spécifiques pour découvrir la source de cet engouement et son potentiel éducatif. Croyez-le ou non, les jeux vidéos feront peut-être bientôt partie des programmes de l'école de votre quartier. En effet, dans un effort qui n'est pas sans rappeler les très populaires Children's Workshop des années 1980 (les génies qui ont créé plusieurs émissions télévisées pour enfants, dont *Sesame Street*), des chercheurs calés en informatique comme M. Gee conjuguent leurs efforts pour révolutionner tant l'éducation que l'industrie en pleine croissance des jeux vidéo.

Ces dernières années, les jeux électroniques se sont progressivement taillé une place dans les grands médias et se sont développés au point que, d'après les études, les recettes annuelles provenant des consoles de jeux – plus de 10 milliards de dollars américains aux États-Unis et plus de 1 milliard au Canada – dépassent aujourd'hui les recettes des cinémas.

PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, qui pour la première fois en 2003 a mentionné les jeux vidéo dans son rapport annuel sur l'industrie mondiale des loisirs et des médias, prévoit que l'essor de cette catégorie lui permettra d'atteindre 35,8 milliards de dollars en 2007, ce qui en fera le segment le plus dynamique de l'industrie.

Un nouveau projet piloté par le Massachusetts Institute of Technology, M. Gee et des chercheurs de l'Université du Wisconsin compte exploiter cette popularité pour introduire les jeux vidéos en salle de classe.

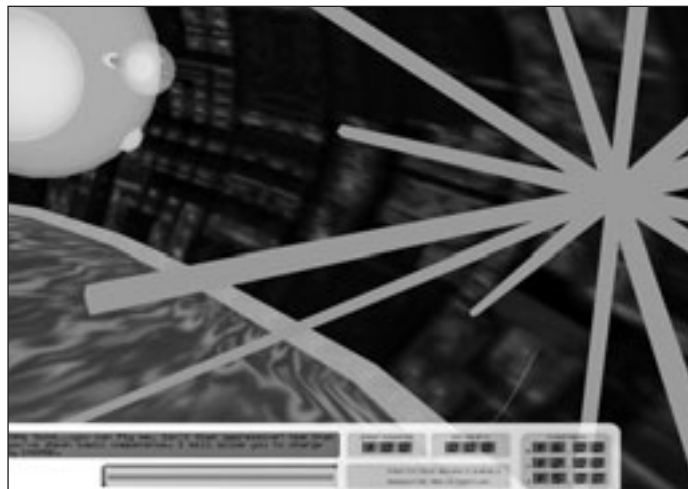
L'Education Arcade est une initiative qui espère aider les professeurs à prendre conscience de l'efficacité de ces jeux dans l'éducation, encourager les développeurs de logiciels à concevoir de nouveaux jeux pédagogiques et les aider à créer des marchés pour leurs produits. Issu des travaux aujourd'hui terminés du Games-to-Teach Project, un projet de deux ans financé par Microsoft, l'Arcade a vu le jour à l'automne 2003 grâce à une subvention de l'Electronic Software Association.

« Les enfants disent souvent que lorsqu'ils jouent, ils n'ont pas l'impression d'apprendre – ils sont trop concentrés sur le jeu », déclare M. Gee, soulignant ainsi que les jeux doivent être suffisamment complexes pour amuser les enfants, tout en leur offrant des problèmes assez faciles à résoudre – ou tout au moins assez faciles pour donner au joueur l'impression qu'il progresse.



Au dire de M. Gee, qui vient de publier un ouvrage intitulé *What Games Teach Us About Learning and Literacy*, les études montrent que les gens apprennent s'ils se divertissent, s'ils peuvent exploiter leur créativité pour atteindre des buts complexes, s'ils suivent un cours qui fait autant appel à l'émotion qu'à la réflexion et s'ils peuvent observer les conséquences de leurs actions. Selon lui, une salle de classe ne répond pas à ces besoins lorsqu'on demande simplement aux élèves d'écouter un cours, de mémoriser ses éléments et de les revoir pour les examens ou les exercices.

Il affirme que les jeux vidéo plongent les gens dans des mondes différents, où ils doivent compter sur leurs aptitudes en résolution de problèmes et où ils peuvent observer les conséquences de leurs connaissances (ou de leur ignorance), à mesure qu'ils gagnent ou perdent des points.



M. Gee donne l'exemple de « Civilization III », un jeu sur ordinateur en temps réel, où les joueurs créent des sociétés de toutes pièces. Un groupe d'élèves des classes intermédiaires a été invité à jouer dans le cadre d'un projet mené récemment à Chicago, et la majorité d'entre eux ont choisi de créer une société autochtone nord-américaine, en sachant fort bien quelle en avait été l'issue historique – une société finalement colonisée par les Européens. Pour lui éviter ce sort, les élèves ont consulté des ouvrages de référence afin de trouver les raisons pour lesquelles les Autochtones avaient été conquis par les Européens. Ils ont tenu compte de ces données pour créer leur société et ont conçu une civilisation absolument imprenable. « La force de ces jeux réside dans leur interactivité, dans leur capacité de solliciter l'imagination », souligne M. Gee.

L'équipe d'Arcade a même mis au point ses propres jeux, dont « Supercharged! », un jeu de simulation électronique qui propose aux joueurs de naviguer dans des labyrinthes dotés de charges magnétiques, ce qui demande une connaissance du fonctionnement des particules de l'atome. Récemment, une école intermédiaire du Massachusetts a inscrit ce jeu à son programme et, lors de l'examen final sur les principaux concepts, on a constaté que les élèves qui avaient appris grâce au jeu devançaient de 20 p. 100 ceux qui avaient reçu un enseignement traditionnel.

« Nous ne préconisons pas d'éliminer les expériences concrètes ou les sorties éducatives », indique Henry Jenkins, directeur du département des études comparées des médias au MIT et principal chercheur de l'Arcade. « Nous travaillons en partant de l'hypothèse que le jeu est une ressource – ce n'est pas en baissant les bras que nous comprendrons quelque chose ».

À ce jour, M. Jenkins et ses collègues se sont heurté à beaucoup moins de résistance que prévu. Bien entendu, ils ne proposent pas d'utiliser « Grand Theft Auto » (un jeu vidéo particulièrement violent et pourtant très populaire) pour initier les enfants à la culture urbaine (« le projet serait difficile à défendre »). L'utilisation de jeux pertinents et stimulants pour l'esprit dans un contexte pédagogique semble être bien acceptée, en particulier par les jeunes professeurs qui pour la plupart ont eux-mêmes grandi avec les jeux vidéo : « La génération

Nintendo est maintenant dans nos écoles ».

L'Arcade n'est pas seule dans son cas. De nombreux collègues ont déjà établi des programmes consacrés à la critique des jeux vidéo, à la conception de jeux et à l'éducation par le jeu, notamment l'Université Southern Methodist, le Rochester Institute of Technology et l'Université Carnegie Mellon. Pour sa part, le Digital Media Collaboratory, un laboratoire de technologie de l'Université du Texas à l'IC2 Institute d'Austin, travaille avec des partenaires des secteurs public et privé pour concevoir des jeux sur ordinateur qui peuvent être utilisés par les écoles, les entreprises et les administrations publiques.

Après le succès en 1998 d'un projet-pilote utilisant des jeux de rôle sur ordinateur pour enseigner les compétences des emplois de débutant (deux tiers des participants ont trouvé un emploi ou

La première fois, c'est excitant... Mais les jeux seront-ils encore efficaces une fois qu'ils auront perdu l'attrait de la nouveauté?

se sont inscrits dans une école), le groupe a décidé d'adapter ses programmes pour différentes organisations. Depuis, différentes versions ont été utilisées dans le Dallas Independent School District, à l'Université du Texas, dans des écoles communautaires pour élèves à risque, dans des centres de formation pour adultes et dans les bureaux de l'aide sociale de l'État.

À l'Université Cornell, David Schwartz, professeur d'informatique, espère tirer parti de la R-D en matière de conception de jeux et l'incorporer dans les salles de classe. Pendant des années, il a observé un taux élevé de roulement parmi les étudiantes de son département, qui changent souvent de spécialisation après un cours de base. La raison? Selon M. Schwartz, nombre d'entre elles sont rebutées par les exigences élevées en maths et en sciences et par la place prépondérante des hommes dans le domaine. La solution? Attirer vers l'informatique une population étudiante plus diversifiée – avant la fin des études secondaires – non seulement en encourageant les filles dans la pratique des jeux vidéo, mais aussi en leur apprenant comment ces jeux fonctionnent et comment on les crée. Selon lui, « il faut attirer les filles dès leur jeune âge ».

M. Schwartz est actuellement en pourparlers avec des écoles de la région pour lancer un projet-pilote à l'intention des élèves des classes intermédiaires. « Les jeux peuvent être très créatifs », dit-il, précisant que les élèves ont la possibilité d'incorporer à leurs jeux leur propre scénario et leurs propres illustrations. Si le programme porte fruit, il espère exploiter plus avant ce mode d'enseignement : « Si l'idée est acceptée, nous serions ravis d'élargir le projet à l'échelle nationale ou internationale ».

Bien qu'il n'ait rien contre l'idée d'utiliser les nouvelles technologies pour renforcer les méthodes d'enseignement classiques, Charles Ungerleider, professeur de sociologie de l'éducation à l'Université de la Colombie-Britannique, estime qu'il faudrait tout d'abord se pencher sur plusieurs facteurs,

dont les suivants : les élèves qui utilisent la technologie (âge, expérience préalable, connaissances en technologie); la situation dans la classe (comment les élèves jouent, si on commente leurs jeux et d'où viennent les remarques); la technologie que les jeux remplacent (autre activité ou mode d'enseignement); enfin, le coût.

« Je suis légèrement sceptique pour ce qui est d'enseigner des matières complexes à l'aide de la technologie, mais je suis ouvert à toutes les nouveautés », de dire M. Ungerleider. La plupart des jeunes aussi. Selon lui, au départ, le programme aura probablement un grand succès auprès des enfants – en raison de sa nouveauté – parce que la technologie est nouvelle et que les jeux sont amusants. « La première fois, c'est excitant, dit-il. Mais les jeux seront-ils encore efficaces une fois qu'ils auront perdu l'attrait de la nouveauté? »

Pour tirer pleinement parti du potentiel d'apprentissage des jeux – en classe ou à la maison –, M. Gee insiste sur l'importance de la participation des professeurs et des parents pendant que l'enfant joue. Selon lui, regarder l'enfant jouer, comparer, expliquer et jouer avec lui peuvent accélérer son développement cognitif. Aux critiques qui soulignent la violence excessive des jeux vidéo ou qui les rendent responsables de la paresse ou de l'obésité chez les enfants, il répond que les gens imputent ces problèmes à la technologie alors qu'ils relèvent en fait de la famille : « Ce ne sont pas les jeux qui rendent les enfants violents ou obèses – c'est la culture que l'on crée à la maison ».



Les jeux vidéo sont de plus en plus acceptés dans le milieu universitaire, comme l'atteste la création de revues électroniques consacrées aux jeux, notamment *Game Studies* (<http://gamestudies.org>). Plusieurs conférences ont été données sur cette question à l'automne. Ainsi, en septembre, Microsoft a parrainé un symposium à l'intention des chercheurs qui étudient les moyens d'utiliser la technologie des jeux pour améliorer l'apprentissage. Deux mois plus tard, la New York Law School et la Yale Law School ont coparrainé une conférence intitulée

« The State of Play », qui présentait un débat sur les nouveaux enjeux sociaux, psychologiques et juridiques suscités par les jeux vidéo. D'autres discussions sont prévues : en juin, la foire E3 sur les jeux vidéo consacrera deux jours à la question des jeux dans l'éducation.

En 2002, un symposium organisé au Royaume-Uni a conclu que les jeux de simulation et d'aventure, comme « Sim City » et « Civilization », aidaient les enfants à développer leur réflexion stratégique et leurs aptitudes en planification. Les parents et les professeurs estimaient en outre que leurs enfants s'étaient améliorés en mathématiques, en orthographe et en lecture. De

plus, une enquête sur les habitudes de 700 jeunes de 7 à 16 ans a constaté que, loin d'en faire une activité solitaire, les enfants préfèrent jouer à deux ou en groupe.

Malgré le succès de ces programmes, l'industrie des jeux vidéo n'est pas encore proactive vis-à-vis des écoles. Selon l'Entertainment Software Association, les jeux pédagogiques ne représentent que 7 p. 100 du marché américain des logiciels dans le cas des jeux sur console et, dans le cas des jeux sur ordinateur, les ventes sont insuffisantes pour être classées. De nombreux titres commerciaux proposent des exercices de base et des leçons de pratique, ce qui, selon certains experts, va à l'encontre du but recherché par l'utilisation des jeux vidéo.

Les élèves montrent qu'à tous les âges ils sont capables d'utiliser les médias pour leurs propres besoins – que ce soit pour télécharger de la musique, jouer à des jeux, créer des sites Web ou communiquer avec leurs amis. De nombreux experts pensent que nous pouvons tirer parti de l'enthousiasme engendré par cette technologie pour élaborer de nouveaux modes d'apprentissage et façonner les esprits visionnaires qui dirigeront le monde de demain. La valeur pédagogique des jeux vidéo ne fait pas encore l'unanimité, mais une chose est sûre : pour les enfants d'aujourd'hui, c'est le moment de jouer. ☺

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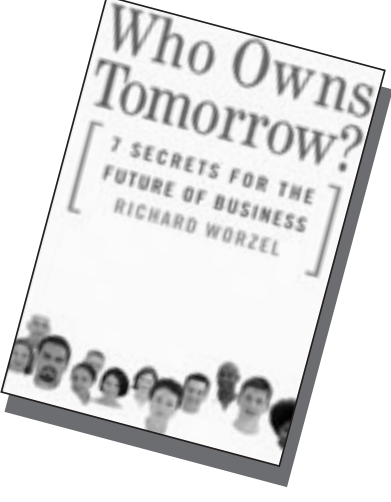
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Zoombinis Island Odyssey

By Dan Lang



The Zoombinis software programs are a unique series, designed to help kids learn and develop the strategies and processes that underlie mathematical problem solving and fundamental scientific inquiry. The ingenuity of the Zoombinis is found in its highly engaging story and mission adventure framework that surrounds the puzzles, keeping kids fully engaged and unaware that they are doing "math" or scientific inquiry.

The newest in the series, Zoombinis Island Odyssey has the Zoombinis returning to Zoombini Island and facing the challenging task of getting little animals called Zerbles to the centre of the island. The island is in ecological ruin. The only way to restore it is to create a new Zerble population and get them to the centre of the island.



You start with an expeditionary force of 12 Zoombinis (each of whom has one Zerble). Your task is to get your expeditionary force through seven challenging puzzle exercises that are part of the pathway to the centre of the island.

Your Zoombini expedition arrives at the landing to the island. To get them over the cliff, you need to catapult them by measuring the right sequence of mud balls and real rocks to get the gears to drop the rock on the catapult spring. This is a clever exercise in figuring out how the mechanism works, identifying the right sequence, and getting all Zoombinis over the cliff.

Each puzzle challenge has written instructions to guide you. Each time you



return to a specific puzzle, it changes slightly to create a new challenge. If you don't fully succeed on the first try of a specific puzzle, you still are able to advance in the game and return later.

The program has three levels of difficulty that you can set yourself or let the program automatically adjust upward as you improve. Once you get your first expedition of Zerbles through to the centre of the island, they start to procreate and the ecology of the island starts to restore. In order to continue the restoration, you need to get more Zerbles to the centre by beginning a brand new expedition.

The Zoombinis series is one of the most longstanding and treasured series in the field of learning software. Zoombinis Island Odyssey is an excellent program for children who enjoy the experience of trying to "figure things out," who are patient, and thrive on a challenge. Also, if you know someone like this and who "hates math," this is a very sneaky way to help them develop their capabilities around mathematical thinking without "all the numbers."

Zoombinis Island Odyssey is one of the relatively few programs for this age group that will appeal equally to boys and girls. It is also a great program for any adult with the same bent. The top challenge levels of this program will have bright minds of any age working overtime.

Like Zoombinis Logical Journey, Island Odyssey is an excellent program if you want to give your child or students a program that is not an overtly "learning"

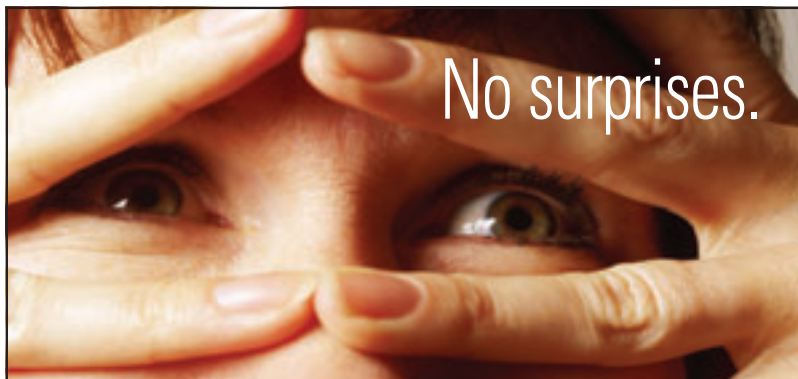
program, but does in fact develop very fundamental thinking and logic skills, which are very useful in our increasingly "mathematical" world. Island Odyssey has maintained the excellent qualities of its predecessors – Logical Journey and Mountain Rescue – and in certain ways has become a little better.

What we liked about Island Odyssey is its engaging introduction and rich story line which seamlessly introduces the challenges, making for a greater sense of progress as we "sweated our way through" some of the puzzles. We also liked the story line itself as it introduces players to some of the basic steps of the life cycle.

If you are new to the Zoombinis and you asked us where to start, we would probably suggest that you begin with the Logical Journey, as the activities, on average, are a little easier for a "first timer." If you have been exposed to Logical Journey and are coming back for more, it is a tougher call; both are good sequels to the original. Our preference may be to Island Odyssey because of the richer story line element in the overall experience. With that said, we are splitting hairs, as you can't go wrong with either program.

Dan Lang is a freelance writer based in Toronto and the founder of Learning Village. He may be reached at lang@dlang.com

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Find out what 4.5 million participants of the *Nonviolent Crisis Intervention* training program already know. With the right training, you can create and maintain a safe, respectful environment for everyone. For more information, call toll-free **1-800-558-8976** and a knowledgeable Training Support Specialist will be happy to assist you.

Join Us At An Upcoming Program!

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... parce que la crainte, la violence et l'apathie nous indignent tous.

Le projet **Cultiver la paix** élabore des ressources conformes aux programmes d'études et prêtes à l'emploi dans les écoles du Canada afin d'aider les enseignant-e-s et les responsables communautaires à éduquer au changement. Les documents créés encouragent les jeunes à accepter la diversité, à penser à l'échelle planétaire, à respecter les droits de la personne, à reconnaître l'injustice et à réagir aux conflits par des moyens autres que la violence.

NOUVEAU ! Dans les écoles au printemps 2004

Au printemps 2004, la deuxième ressource de la série **Cultiver la paix – Passer à l'action** – sera envoyée gratuitement aux écoles canadiennes inscrites.

- **Passer à l'action** propose des activités qui encouragent les jeunes à reconnaître le pouvoir de leurs attitudes, de leurs actions et de leurs comportements individuels lorsqu'il s'agit de soutenir une culture de la violence ou, au contraire, de bâtir une culture de la paix. Cette ressource montre comment chacun-e de nous peut instaurer le changement à la maison, à l'école, dans le quartier et dans la communauté mondiale.
- Les leçons comportent du matériel à l'intention des élèves, prêt à être photocopié, des instructions complètes pour les enseignant-e-s ainsi que des suggestions d'évaluation. La ressource s'aligne sur les programmes provinciaux de sciences sociales, d'éducation civique et d'histoire, de la 10^e à la 12^e année dans tout le Canada.

Vous voulez avoir des exemplaires de la première ressource ?

La ressource **Cultiver la paix au XXI^e siècle** a été envoyée, à l'automne 2002, aux écoles inscrites. Elle comprend un guide complet à l'intention de l'enseignant-e ainsi qu'une bande vidéo de l'Office national du film. Pour télécharger une version électronique de ce guide ou pour voir le matériel de soutien, visitez le site www.cultiverlapaix.ca.

Pour obtenir des renseignements, commander des ressources, vérifier si une école est inscrite pour recevoir gratuitement nos documents, ou demander une version électronique anticipée de *Passer à l'action*, veuillez prendre contact avec Le Chaînon scolaire (Classroom Connections) par courriel à info@classroomconnections.ca ou par téléphone au 1-888-882-8865.



LE CHÂNON SCOLAIRE

Le projet **Cultiver la paix** est une initiative du Chaînon scolaire, organisme à but non lucratif qui soutient l'éducation publique au Canada.
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