

# VOICE

Fall 1999 vol.2 no.1

A Kindergarten  
Literacy Environment

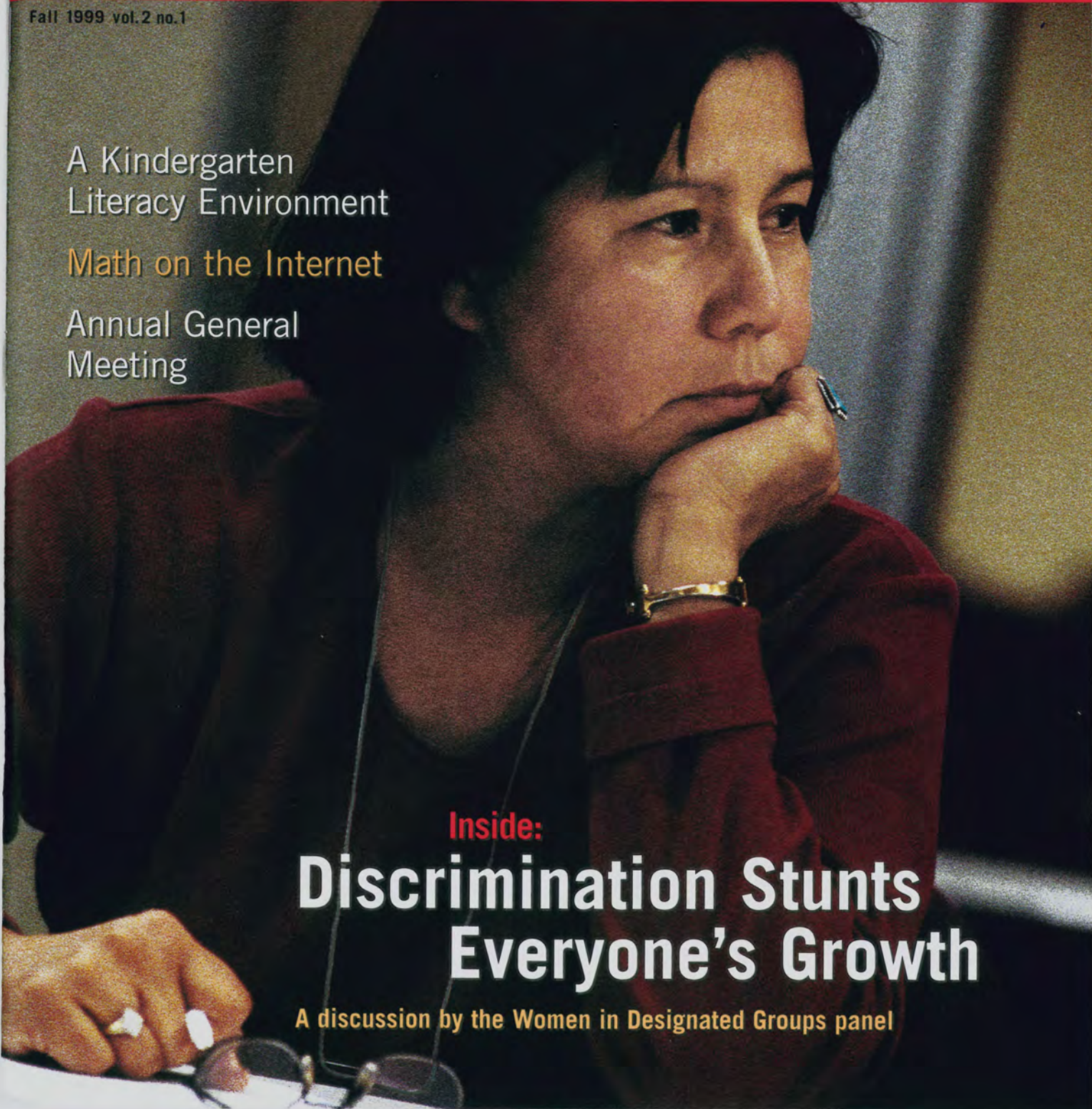
Math on the Internet

Annual General  
Meeting

**Inside:**

## Discrimination Stunts Everyone's Growth

A discussion by the Women in Designated Groups panel



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Perhaps there are no bottles labeled "Drink Me" and no wild tea parties here. But every day is like a birthday in Alice's world.

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## Contributors



Jim Giles



Marilyn Millar



Joan Barrett and Joan Littlefield



Trevor Brown

**Joan Barrett's and Joan Littlefield's** workshop "Looking at the Kindergarten Program" was one of the highlights of the 1999 Summer Institutes. Their books, published by Scholastic Canada, are a must for kindergarten teachers.

Toronto Consultant **Trevor Brown** makes mathematics enjoyable for all. Solve for yourself! Download his tried and tested problems for all grades and ages. Your students will never be short of a math challenge again.

Peel teacher **Jim Giles** believes in the joy of teaching and the wonder of childhood. A rigid curriculum and standardized tests make school a dreary experience for teachers and students alike.

**Marilyn Millar and Vanessa Rabinowitz** were determined to encourage girls to become comfortable with technology. Their innovative program is now in its second year at 16th Avenue Public School, Richmond Hill.

Parent **Barbara Ritson's** excitement about what she saw happening in her child's school impelled her to write a feature-length article about a fantastic teacher. Catch the magic of Alice Mitchell's program at General Brock Public School, Toronto.

**Joël Bernard** (cover and feature story) has been a commercial photographer for twenty years. His commitment to photography includes teaching Advanced Studio Lighting at Ryerson Polytechnic University.

Editor **Charlotte Morgan** has years of experience working on federation publications. Her priority is for members to see themselves and the work they do reflected in the magazine.

Women's Issues Editor **Carol Zavitz** will ensure the publication reflects an appropriate balance of articles. Your submissions, letters and feedback are welcome!

## voice

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## From the President



Phyllis Benedict, President, ETFO

A cloud hangs ominously over the heads of educators in Ontario. It has no discernible shape, content or time of arrival. What it brings is concern, stress and anger to an already overburdened profession. Its name is “teacher testing.”

Every teacher I meet asks the same questions — what? when? how? and why? There are no answers — other than this government says that there will be teacher testing in Ontario.

Some believe that if we stay really quiet, teacher testing will go away. Some believe that individuals who know nothing about our profession should be left in charge of the testing regime. Neither of these ideas will benefit our members.

We have been told that all the stakeholders — teachers, school boards, parents, students — have a role to play in the consultation about and the development of these tests. We believe in a holistic evaluation which recognizes all aspects of teaching performance and self-directed professional development. A paper and pencil test on curriculum knowledge doesn't measure up.

We know that there will come a time when we will have a critical decision to make as members of this union. But for now, we wait.

I want to thank all of you for the work you do. I also want to assure you that your work does not go unrecognized where it really counts — in the hearts and minds of your students.

## From the General Secretary



Gene Lewis, General Secretary, ETFO

Ontario teachers have subsidized the public education system for nearly a decade; their salaries have stood still while their living costs, work loads, and stress have escalated.

For elementary teachers there can only be one millennium project: to regain the economic status that has been stolen from us by a series of unjust government attacks on our collective bargaining rights and on our profession.

Climbing back won't be easy. It will demand a strong commitment from each of us. Every member must make it clear to the employer that real salary increases will be expected and will be mandatory to maintain labour peace in Ontario's education system. The need is clear; teachers need real salary increases to signal the start of the new millennium. As many in the profession approach retirement, what better way is there to ensure that the brightest and the best young people are attracted to this profession?

## From the editor

Welcome to the new *Voice*. Members have told us they prefer to receive our professional publication in magazine format. As a result, we redesigned the *ETFO Voice*. Now, we are proud to present Canada's premier magazine for elementary educators. The publication will reflect the many facets of our new Federation.

Through these pages, we invite you to share your professional experiences with your colleagues. In return, we offer a modest honoraria for articles and curriculum inserts accepted for publication. Guidelines for submitting articles are available from the editor.

We invite you also to complete the On Location Report and return it to us. That way, we'll be able to report on the many wonderful activities happening in schools around the province. As well, use this form to tell us about an award or recognition received by you, or one of your colleagues, for service to education or to your community. If possible, please include photographs with your submissions. We'll return them to you as soon as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you!

*Charlotte Morgan*

## On Location Report

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Event Date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Event/Award Discription \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Most Significant Result of the Event \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Quotes from Participants \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

# Professional Relations

Many members call ETFO's Professional Relations Services (PRS) with regard to the Ontario College of Teachers. Here are some of the most commonly asked questions.

*What should I do if I receive a call from the College informing me that I am being investigated?*

Listen to what the College staff is advising you about the complainant. Ask questions if necessary for clarification. Do not make any statements whatsoever about the complaint or respond to the investigator's questions related to the complaint.

After the telephone contact from the staff of the College has been made, a formal letter will be sent to you outlining the actual complaint and the investigation process. It is very important that you contact PRS at the provincial office as soon as you receive the written complaint.

*A parent has threatened to call the College. Can I stop them?*

There is nothing you can do to stop this. Any member of the public can call the College to make a complaint. Hopefully, if a member of the public expresses a concern about you to the College, they will be encouraged to talk to you and/or the Principal to attempt to resolve the concern at the school level. The complainant may, however, file a formal written complaint with the College that the College is then obligated to investigate.

*Do I have to cooperate in an investigation by the College if I am called to provide information about a colleague?*

If you have concerns about participating in an investigation by the College, it is advisable to contact PRS and consult with the person "on call" as soon as possible.

You do not have to agree to an interview over the telephone at the same time you receive a call from an investigator. You might ask questions such as: Why am I being contacted about this investigation? What specific questions will you be asking me? Can I get back to you at another time to respond to your questions?

The Regulation made under the Teaching Profession Act, section 18 (1)(b) applies in this situation. If, during an interview with a College investigator, you make an adverse report about the member being investigated, you are obligated to inform the member within 72 hours. We understand College staff advise members of this requirement if an adverse report is made during the interview.

The Professional Misconduct Regulation in the Ontario College of Teachers Act indicates that a member could be investigated themselves for "failure to cooperate in a College investigation."

PRS advises members to contact PRS first, prior to informing the College, if you are reluctant to participate in an investigation.

*If a complaint is made about a teacher, what kind of records are maintained by the College?*

The College is obligated to keep a written record of every call even if the concern is deemed to be frivolous and vexatious. It is recorded as a "concern" and you would not be informed of this. A call does not become an official complaint until it is submitted to the College in writing. Once a complaint is in writing, you will be informed and asked to submit your response. Written records of all complaints are kept indefinitely.

*Is there a timeline for notification by the College regarding a complaint?*

The Act does not identify a specific time period for the member to be notified. Before the member is notified, however, College staff will clarify and confirm the complaint, if necessary, by gathering more information from the complainant. This can involve calls or letters back and forth. Based on experience to date, this can take a few days to a couple of weeks. When the College staff believes they have enough information, the member is then notified by telephone and in writing.

**ETFO's Professional Relations Services can be reached at (416) 962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836.**

# Women in the Web

Marilyn Millar and Vanessa Rabinowitz

In a world increasingly dependent on technology, technology is everybody's business — or should be. Girls' and women's enrolment in math and science courses has improved over the last few decades. However, females remain under-represented in the higher-level courses in these disciplines. (AAUW, 1999).

Frequently, girls lack self confidence, not believing themselves capable of coping with technical matters. People around them might also take boys' interests in these subjects for granted and assume girls are not interested in these areas of study. Most computer games are more appealing to boys' interests than girls'. These early games help to build a child's confidence with using computers and other technology. (Furger, 1998)

An increasing number of occupations are technical in nature. Girls who study math, science and technology have access to more interesting and expanding occupations. These occupations also tend to be the highest paid.

At Sixteenth Avenue Public School in Richmond Hill, we noticed that, although our computer lab was open to all students during noon hours, very few girls were making use of this opportunity. It was time to take action!

To increase girls' interest in technology, and to change girls'



Forty-five girls participated in *Women in the Web*.

traditional choices of subjects and course programs, we decided to create *Women in the Web*. We invited our grades six, seven and eight girls to join *Women in the Web*, an ongoing voluntary program designed to help them to feel more comfortable with technology. Forty-five students signed up and we were ready to go.

*Women In The Web* had several exciting components:

- *Women in the Web* met once a month.
- We used the school's computer lab during the lunch period to help the girls become more comfortable with the hardware and software.
- We taught the girls how to take photographs using a digital camera.
- We helped the girls create and publish their own *Women In The Web* newsletter.
- We offered "real work experiences" in the form of field trips. We visited Black's Photo Laboratories, the Ontario Science Centre Computer Laboratory, Ontario Place,

the Toronto School of Business, as well as the control tower at nearby Buttonville Airport.

- We invited four guest presenters to talk to the students about their occupations. Having a large corporation as a neighbour proved to be an advantage when our first invited guest, IBM's Mona Kirageu, used the LCD projector to make her presentation to the group.

At the end of the year, the girls used hyperstudio and presented a slideshow (using the LCD projector) for students and parents, highlighting the various technological events they had attended.

In its first year, *Women In The Web* was a great success. We are running it again during 1999-2000. The staff at Sixteenth Avenue look forward to continuing to expand girls' horizons through building their confidence in using technology.

*Marilyn Millar is a Teacher Librarian at Sixteenth Avenue Public School, Richmond Hill. Vanessa Rabinowitz, a tutor with the Tutors in the Classroom initiative, is currently a pre-service teacher at York University.*

#### References

- See for example, American Association of University Women. *Gender Gaps, Where Schools Still Fail Our Children*. New York: Marlowe & Company, 1999.
- Furger, Roberta. *Does Jane Compute? Preserving Our Daughters' Place in the Cyber Revolution*.



# You're Invited to Go Behind the Scenes at the CBC

For the hundreds of students from across Canada who come to marvel at the Canadian Broadcasting Centre, the CBC's home in Toronto, the first impression of the CBC is generally formed by what they've heard on radio or seen on television. They may be familiar with the voices and faces that symbolize our various programs, but have never glimpsed the enormity of skill, talent, creativity and technology that goes into the making of each and every show.

"Behind the Scenes," the theme of the new tour, is an opportunity to see the wizardry involved in radio and television production and showcase the talents of people who work "behind the scenes." The goal is to ensure that every student is made aware of the unique nature of the CBC.

Prior to your tour, stroll through the main lobby of the Broadcasting Centre and read informative signage about Newsworld's set, the Glenn Gould Studio and CBL Radio. MIDDAY tapes and broadcasts its show from our lobby set weekdays between 10:00 a.m. and noon.

The tour begins on the ground floor, with the primary focus on radio, then proceeds to the Graham Spry theatre for a four-minute, fast paced video overview of how radio and television programs make it to air. It covers everything from live radio broadcasts to scenic construction to on-set tapings to pre-show and post-show preparation, all designed to help students put into context what they'll see on the tour.

The huge green Atrium elevators transport students along a tour route that includes: radio master control and a jumbo map highlighting regional radio stations across the country; a walk through a working newsroom; network control centre and TV master control; and a visit to a "mock" set that incorporates elements from both scenic and costume design. As well explore one of our rooftop state-of-the-art television studios.



Visit the CBLT news studio at the Broadcast Centre in Toronto.

After the tour, explore the CBC Museum and its feature exhibit "Show & Tell: Growing Up Canadian." This educational and entertaining exhibit explores the rich history of CBC's radio and television programs for children by using three generations of puppets and artifacts from shows we grew up with. The Museum offers a companion educational package prepared for grades 1 through 8. To request this package, please call (416) 205-5574. Admission to the Museum is free.

Add to the CBC experience and explore our exciting web site [www.cbc.ca](http://www.cbc.ca). Click on [cbc4kids](http://cbc4kids) and check out Teacher's Guide, which offers lesson plans on a variety of subjects.

"Behind-the-Scenes" tour admission is \$5.00 each for students. There is no charge for teachers attending with their classes. For more information about the new tour program and to book a school tour, call (416) 205-8605 or visit [www.cbc.ca/tours](http://www.cbc.ca/tours).



# a

## Creating a Literacy Environment in Your Kindergarten Classroom

*Joan Barrett and Joan Littlefield*

Each child in your kindergarten classroom has different abilities, interests and experiences that shape and influence his or her learning. Not all children follow the same path to literacy, but we know we need to create an environment rich in print resources (poems, charts, songs, stories) where reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing and representing are integrated into a stimulating, natural language environment.

When we teach children by building on what they know, structuring play in a balanced literacy classroom becomes critically important. As the teacher, you provide a balance between explicit instruction and opportunities for children to practice strategies and skills independently. Positive experiences lead to greater risk taking by the students as they gain confidence. You can enrich

the environment by providing resources and ensuring that the literacy activities are appropriate. Kindergarten classrooms need to be organized to invite children to use print. Classroom centres provide an optimal learning experience where you can meet the needs of individual children through flexible grouping and accommodate different learning styles.

You may find it easiest to begin with a content or theme centre. Fill the centres with theme-related resources for integrated activities. Begin with a few centres at first, build and model your routines, evaluate children's needs and interests, and make changes based on your observations. Build choice into a centre, and consider creating the following:

- Cozy Book Corner — great for independent reading;
- Writing Centre — alphabet frieze, theme word cards, lots of various papers, greeting cards, booklets.
- Alphabet Study/Word Study Centre — terrific with word cards, picture dictionaries, magnetic letters.

- Math Centre — pattern blocks, manipulatives, graph paper, play money, plastic cubes.
- Art Centre — recyclable materials, paints, sponges, straws, wall paper samples, variety of papers.

If you immerse your children in high interest, meaningful literacy tasks, encourage regular independent reading and writing (with lots of purposeful talk), capture children's curiosity with a good story; and use that interest to extend children's knowledge, language and imagination, you will produce competent readers and writers in a meaningful literacy environment.

*Joan Barrett and Joan Littleford teach at the English Language Centre, G. B. Little Junior Public School, Toronto. Their workshop "Looking at the Kindergarten Program" was one of the highlights of the 1999 Summer Institutes. They are the authors of the Scholastic Kindergarten Program Guide, the authors of four of seven of the integrated teaching units that accompany the Guide, and the senior editors of the other three units that comprise the complete program. The Scholastic Kindergarten Program was published by Scholastic Canada in 1999.*



# ETFO Members Agree: Discrimination Stunts Everyone's Growth

On the evening of Wednesday, May 5, 1999, 15 women gathered at ETFO's provincial office. This Women's Only program was a pilot project designed to develop a coalition of members who are aboriginal women, lesbian women, racial minority women and women with disabilities. The coalition offered opportunities for members to increase their level of awareness of specific women's issues as they relate to the designated groups.

Participating were: Elaine Brant, Judith Bowles, Wambui Gaitho, Liz Green, Nirmala Lall, Mary Linton, Adelle Lewis, Althea Rhooms, Soyini Chaderton-Downes, Azmina Mohamed, Kitty Harris, Bela Patel, Michelle LeBlanc and Mary Jo Starr. The group was led by ETFO Executive Assistants Colleen Lee and Jennifer Mitchell.

## Here's what the group said that night:

**Colleen:** Given that the Human Rights Code forbids discrimination on the basis of gender and race, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation, why and how do women who are different face discrimination in the school system? Why do they face it? What discrimination exists?

**Mary:** It could be barriers, like the board culture. Not knowing the ins and the outs, not being able to network as well as other people.

**Colleen:** Why are we facing discrimination in the school system?

**Azmina:** First we have to look at how the school system worked in the past. With any changing situation, it is very difficult to accept change right away. So there's a period of acclimatization.

**Wambui:** Education is a tool that's used to perpetuate or reinforce a culture. There's a mainstream culture that uses the educational

system in Ontario to pass on its legacy and its beliefs. As a person with a diverse culture — different from the mainstream, someone who has thoughts which are different from what the mainstream thinks — you are threatening, in some ways, their survival, from their point of view. You're challenging the mainstream culture; you are making them change. Nobody wants to do that. It's more comfortable to be on your own and continue with what you've always known. So when we come in and say we are part of this pie and want a piece of it, we're actually saying to them, you have to start — the society as a whole — has to start looking different.

**Adelle:** It's a lot easier to maintain status quo, and it's so much more difficult to change things that have gone on for decades. And it's hard for individuals to continually knock on doors, to try and open them, and to open them with new ideas, and new ways of doing things. It's very challenging.

**Mary:** With the changing curriculum and everything that's speeding by, some people may even feel that trying to accommodate the needs of others is an add-on.

**Judy:** Generally speaking, the majority in any

situation will think of different as “less.” You’re less of whatever the commodity is if you are different. And that’s really a fear and lack of education.

**Azmina:** The feeling that different is inferior.

**Liz:** When there’s a small change, it feels like a big change. It has been said that if a woman speaks for 30 per cent of the time she is perceived as dominating the conversation. If we have a handful of black teachers in the system, then they’re taking over. There’s already too many of them and you have to be black to get a job. I’ve actually heard people talk along those lines. It’s because as soon as you see one or two, then it’s a tidal wave.

**Nirmala:** Difference is perceived as negative and threatening. It’s not perceived as bringing a set

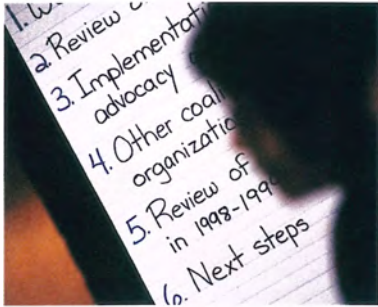
as though you don’t have the problem. Oh, you look just fine! That’s silly! You don’t need that!

**Colleen:** Are there any other “hows” in the ways discrimination affects you?

**Adelle:** Lack of representation in the workplace. Lack of leadership.

**Althea:** Victimization is something we haven’t heard about. When you feel that you’re not fitting in for whatever reason, you feel that somehow it’s your problem and you have to solve it. So you start to internalise it and define yourself as others have perceived you.

**Nirmala:** Sometimes it’s so subtle you don’t realize what’s happening to you; that you’re feeling less than you are, or you’re internalizing it. And you’re not sure what it is. You may think, it’s a lot of stress. That’s where we need to take our



of new ideas which can enhance what we are already doing. If you’re a woman, that’s one; if you’re a disabled woman or you are a racial minority or a lesbian, that adds to your checklist of differences, and you’re deviating that much more from the mainstream.

**Adele:** Fear of something or someone different is a big barrier to change.

**Althea:** Change is difficult, particularly around that sense of “Who are you?” You’re preconceived. Before an individual even opens her mouth, they have been defined and certain attitudes are exhibited towards them.

**Kitty:** There’s also the possibility that if adaptations need to be made, employers can save money by avoiding the person for whom the adaptation may be necessary.

**Judy:** If the difference is visible; it’s less, it’s fearful, you’re not as valuable. If the difference isn’t visible, then you’re discriminated against

time or be a bit of reflective.

If we’re in the culture, and we are participating daily, discrimination can be very subtle. We might start looking at ourselves through the lens of discrimination. Sometimes you hear things in the staff room, and you’re going, that’s not ok! If you’re in there every day, and if it’s subtle, it affects you.

**Mary:** It leads to a lower self esteem, lower self confidence. We talk about representation. You may be the leader, the next blooming leader, but you don’t feel confident enough to go that extra distance to try something new, to ask for a mentor. You’re not able to move ahead.

**Wambui:** There’s always this burden of representation. If I stand up to speak, I’m perceived to be speaking on behalf of all black women. If you’re disabled and you stand up to speak somewhere, you’re speaking on behalf of all disabled women.

Now the flip side is, if I'm standing in a crowd, speaking, God forbid I should be representing anybody else, except black women. The question would never arise of a white woman, because she would be representing all women. But I can only be speaking on behalf of black women. If I fail, everybody else behind me as a black woman has failed. Stereotyping forces this burden on us.

**Nirmala:** And that plays out in the school setting. I might be expected to have the antiracist portfolio, or I become the multicultural person to whom all the material is sent. Just by virtue of what I look like. When you're visible, you get pegged.

**Liz:** When you're not visible, there's a slightly different burden. And that's the burden of, do you out yourself or not? And if you out yourself, you're really in trouble, because there's so much more attached to being gay or lesbian,

ensure equal representation. It can be for men; it can be for women; it can be for racial minorities. Right now, for example, there's a big push on getting men into Primary classes.

**Colleen:** So you're saying it's the same issue for women, for other designated groups, as it is trying to promote men in Primary classrooms?

**Michelle:** When you look at affirmative action as ensuring equal representation, yes. We don't have very many men in the Primary grades, or we didn't a couple of years ago. Five or six years ago, we didn't have very many women in the Intermediate grades and that has improved greatly, as it has in administration and in seeing racial minorities and people with disabilities in the school and classroom. A lot of that happened because of affirmative action.

**Nirmala:** Back to our whole equity vs. equal issue. I always try to use that framework and that

**If we're in the culture, and we are participating daily, discrimination can be very subtle. We might start looking at ourselves through the lens of discrimination. Sometimes you hear things in the staff room, and you're going, that's not ok! If you're in there every day, and if it's subtle, it affects you.**

it's so much more ok to be opposed to us. So then you have to decide. Am I going to say "that's a homophobic remark and it's really unacceptable in the staffroom" or do you just shut up and hope that nobody notices. And that does tremendous things to your self-esteem.

**Bela:** We need to be advocates for ourselves if we want change to occur. And we've got that power, being in the classroom with a whole new generation. So if you're an advocate for yourself, then maybe change will happen.

**Michelle:** There's a difference being an advocate for yourself as a racial minority and being an advocate for yourself as a lesbian. It doesn't happen in the classroom.

**Judy:** If one lesbian fails on a committee or one physically disabled person fails, I've heard principals I've worked for say, "Well, we've tried once, we hired someone..."

**Colleen:** Why is affirmative action necessary? We talked about some of it.

**Michelle:** Affirmative action is necessary to

lens, and that applies to affirmative action. When we've got a certain group of people dominant within a particular profession or a sector of profession, such as primary education or administration, we have to look at equity, not just, "Do these people all have the same types of qualifications?" They end up looking a lot alike too because of the mentoring process, the old boys or old girls network and so on. Whatever's there tends to perpetuate itself. Affirmative action helps to break that cycle, and allow for more diverse representation, and for equity, not only in areas such as Toronto, where we want our staff to reflect our student population, but in all other areas

**Mary:** We've identified a need for representation. And if you look at past practices, the need hasn't been fulfilled and affirmative action is a way to meet the need

**Soyini:** Some of the people who end up representing everybody else in the designated community are often the same people who end

up satisfying the needs of the status quo. They tend to be very conservative. Their ideas align with a lot of the ideas within the dominant culture. That's why they attain these types of positions. Those people who tend to be "radical" and start looking at our system in ways that force us to acknowledge systemic and institutional racism, are often the people for whom opportunities are limited.

**Adelle:** Are you saying there's a very narrow vision? They're fitting in; they're conforming to the stereotype and to the expectation. In other words, they become an old boy?

**Soyini:** People who go the farthest are those who fit into the old boy mentality.

**Wambui:** The mainstream always looks for leaders within any group — whether it's the gay and

**Liz:** The ones who don't belong to designated groups are the ones who run the place.

**Colleen:** And make the decisions. We talked earlier about they feel intimidated, they fear they're going to be taken over. What's in it for them to support affirmative action, to support issues that designated groups have?

**Nirmala:** That's the essence of building alliances and having allies. There are people who recognize that change is inevitable and/or change would be a positive thing. When we have people in leadership positions who do recognize the need for diversity, that's a start.

**Wambui:** What's in it for them? Personal and professional growth; being exposed to different views and a different world.

In today's world the globe is really a little



**The mainstream always looks for leaders within any group – whether it's the gay and lesbian community, or the disabled community, or the racial minority community – they always look for somebody who is palatable to them.**

lesbian community, or the disabled community, or the racial minority community — they always look for somebody who is palatable to them. So it may be a case of, "Please don't send Nirmala. She'll start changing us. Wambui is easier to deal with. She's easier to control. She won't raise as many issues." Then, guess what, they have a black woman on, and we've satisfied any commitment to affirmative action. They can say, "Wambui's here." Part of the arrogance of being the dominant culture is that you decide who represents the designated community. And if you don't like that person, you pick a leader for them. And whenever the issue comes up about promotions that aren't quite happening, you move her up, or move him up.

**Judy:** It's a very limited, prescribed admission too, and the selection lies with the dominant culture. It is not necessarily the young leader who feels ready, but not quite confident enough, so it's not the natural next leader.

**Colleen:** Why should men and women who don't belong to designated groups support affirmative action?

village and you're dealing with people on a much larger scale. So you develop skills and understandings of different cultures and different views and different ways of life, that help you as a human being. Those people not in the designated group actually end up getting more out of it than the people who convinced them the idea was a good one.

**Althea:** Change is coming. We are living in a global world. Keeping yourself "Oh, so we against them" eventually is going to wear down and you are going to be at a loss. Any leader who wishes to move ahead and grow from within will have to look at that big picture, and that big picture is inclusiveness. It cannot be anything else. If you're not a part of it, over time, you're going to be moved out.

**Kitty:** It's important to improve your knowledge about different groups of people. This will help you deal with the youngsters in the classroom. Without all that knowledge, how are we going to deal with the diversity of students and understand and appreciate where they are coming from and what they have to offer us?



**Adelle:** I would add to that the diversity of parents, of the community at large. The fact that if there is not an acceptance, then their own jobs, their own positions are in jeopardy. That's a reality. They may be in the wrong profession if they think that this is just something that's going to roll over and die.

**Soyini:** Our society works on this whole idea based on networking your contacts. Who you know often becomes more important than what you know and the way in which you present yourself, or the way in which you align with the ideas within the dominant culture. Affirmative action actually unravels this whole idea of meritocracy, which is extremely scary for people within the dominant group.

**Colleen:** At this point ETFO has a number of women only programs; we have the coalition. This particular group is getting a start. We have standing committees that address equity issues.

not trained. And maybe seeing a commitment from the board to go out and search for these particular groups.

**Althea:** Bringing those individuals in to shine and to demonstrate their strengths and abilities, in the workplace - but that's just a starting point.

**Adelle:** I think of it in terms of something in slow motion, gathering momentum. The more enthusiastic we are about bringing down barriers and having representation in the workplace, the faster it will catch on.

I'd like to see more representation at the administrative level, especially from the aboriginal community that is very under-represented in this city, which really bothers me.

**Judy:** I'd like us to do a survey and know how many people who do self-identify are out there and in what roles. We need a well-stated questionnaire that asks those questions in each school district. The other thing that should

## Change is coming. We are living in a global world.

We also have several focus groups that address sexual orientation, aboriginal members and women with disabilities. As a new organization we're making a start. Are we being effective?

**Judy:** If we accomplish the goals we've set this year, we'll be able, a year from now, to really measure when we've done.

**Jennifer:** If we're looking at bringing this group together, does sending letters inviting people to participate work?

**Judy:** Two of us came because of the personal letters, not the general bulletin. When I got the letter in the mail, one on one, I had an opportunity to say I am in one of those groups. Yes. I will raise my hand.

**Adelle:** I saw the bulletin, and then I got a call from Jennifer. It was that added outreach that convinced me to participate.

**Wambui:** When I see the ETFO proposed budget at the annual meeting, that will tell me whether the Federation is serious about this or not.

**Colleen:** What would you like to see happen at the district and school level?

**Mary:** We want to start to see more representation within our school boards, and faculties. You can't have teachers in the classroom if they're

concern all of us is trying to find a way to encourage colleagues to self-identify, because we won't get the accurate statistics if there is only a small group of people who will identify. That's a huge problem. With each of the groups we represent, what are the ways that might encourage some women to identify themselves and not feel that that's a very threatening action to take? We've got a long way to go in figuring that out.

**Adelle:** This is a very local initiative. What's happening in places like Kitchener-Waterloo, Hamilton, Cornwall, for example?

**Liz:** I think right here for the Toronto District School Board it would be wonderful if we had more commitment at the Director level, at the S.O. level, more support for social justice issues. They could start by scraping their equity policy, and starting again. There's no commitment from the top on that. That has to change.

**Colleen:** Well, I think we're finished for tonight. That was wonderful. Thank you so much.

*Photos in order of sequence:*

*Judith Bowles, Liz Green, Elaine Brant,  
Colleen Lee and Jennifer Mitchell.*

# The Colour of My Dreams

BY JIM GILES

All schools for miles and miles around,  
Must take a special test,  
To see who's learning such and such  
To see which school's the best.  
if our small school does not do well,  
Then it will be torn down,  
And you will have to go to school,  
in dreary Flobbertown.

*Hooray for Diffendoofer Day* Dr. Seuss assisted by Jack Prelutsky and Lane Smith

**Theodor Seuss Geisel, who we all knew as Dr. Seuss, died in 1991 shortly before completing his final book. When his editor, Janet Schulman, received the 14 unfinished pages of coloured sketches and scrawled couplets, she knew that she had acquired something important. Schulman asked children's poet Jack Prelutsky and illustrator Lane Smith to finish the book Dr. Seuss had begun. The result was Hooray for Diffendoofer Day, a story celebrating individuality and creative thinking.**

During the last five, politically-charged years, Ontario schools have had fewer and fewer "diffendoofer" days where classrooms become sites of divergent thinking and creative work. Instead, many elementary classrooms are returning to past practices and devoting much of their limited program time preparing for provincial tests. The few professional development days still available to educators are geared towards improving test scores or finding ways to make the new, pedagogically uniformed provincial curriculum work.

Three major provincial initiatives (or so-called reforms) are making our public schools a much duller, drearier place for our children. They include the new province-wide curriculum, testing and the graded report card.

#### **The new province-wide curriculum.**

In June, 1998, a new "rigorous" elementary curriculum was launched with much fanfare. The curriculum was to make necessary changes to Ontario's school system. Amid the media hype, only teachers noticed that the unauthored document contained no implementation strategy nor was it tied to any resources or professional development plan.

For all it promised, the document (and its unnamed authors) took a convenient if not simplistic route to scholarly reform by pushing intermediate division expectations to the junior level and junior division expectations to the primary level. As a result, educators have been left with a grade-specific curriculum that shows little

understanding of developmental appropriateness. The arts curriculum I have been working with over the past year illustrates this point well.

In the introduction to the new arts curriculum, the arts are proclaimed "... essential to students' intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth ... enabling students to discover and develop abilities that can prove to be rich sources of pleasure later in life." Contrary to the spirit and function of arts education are the grade expectations found in the document. For example, music students at the end of the junior division (grade 6) are expected to:

- read correctly familiar and unfamiliar music that contains whole notes, half notes, quarter notes and eighth notes and their corresponding rests in 4/4 time.
- create musical compositions that show appropriate use of various elements of music (e.g. tempo, dynamics, melody, rhythm, form, texture, tone and colour) and perform them.
- describe, through listening, the main characteristics of pieces of music from the Baroque and Classical periods (e.g. Water Music by Handel, Clarinet Concerto in A K.622 by Mozart).

Meeting these three specific expectations (from a list of 18 specific expectations that exist for grade 6 music) would require a classroom teacher with a significant musical background and musical ability. Moreover, the teacher would need a greatly expanded timetable to tackle these expectations while also addressing parallel

**“You’ve learned the things you need,  
To pass that test and many more  
I’m certain you’ll succeed.  
We’ve taught you that the earth is round,  
That red and white make pink,  
And something else that matters more  
We’ve taught you how to think!”**

expectations in visual arts, drama and dance, five strands of math and four areas of science.

The days when every school had a music specialist disappeared long ago. Staffing formulas have made it equally difficult for principals to place music teachers in schools. This has left the classroom teacher, who may have little or no arts training, accountable for current expectations. Perhaps, we could go so far as to ask whether the current expectations are appropriate for 11 and 12-year-olds living in a multicultural, multilingual province.

The major flaw with the new provincial curriculum is that much of it is not grounded in educational research or practice. Where, for example, is the research to support straight grade teaching? Why have the countless studies supporting multi-age teaching been ignored? Why do we assume that a return to traditional school structures, established over 100 years ago, will meet the rapidly changing demands of society?

The new curriculum is built around the notion of straight grade teaching and provides no strategies or support for educators who have combined grade assignments. Neither does it address the issue of what happens to students who do not meet specific grade expectations. Do we retain them or pass them? Some educators would like to return to past practices on this point and retain or fail students. As with straight grade teaching, there is little educational research to support this practice.

#### **Province-wide testing.**

This past spring, Howard Gardner, the Harvard academic and author who is famous for developing the theory of multiple intelligences, spoke at the American Educational Research Association’s annual meeting in Montreal. In his speech, he stressed that students are being taught too many facts. Schools, Gardner said, are too focused on covering a wide range of information, instead of ensuring that their students truly understand what they learn.

Education reporter Art Chamberlain of The Toronto Star, covered Gardner’s presentation:

“Gardner’s views run counter to the current trends in Ontario and across North America. The Tory government is implementing more and more tests and exams to ensure what is being taught in all schools ... The most tested people in the world are American students, but that’s not helping them gain knowledge ... Gardner urged teachers to resist attempts to force them to cover a wide curriculum saying it would undermine their true calling as professionals.”

Ontario is the latest jurisdiction to jump on the bandwagon with the introduction of a battery of province-wide tests for students in grades 3, 6, 9 and 12. Province-wide testing is not a useful diagnostic tool. Grade 3 and 6 students do not receive their corrected test. This excludes the process of feedback and debate — key components for learning.

Tests place importance on the “product” of learning not the “process” by measuring student’s

## At best, grading is a narrow, arbitrary measuring system that fosters competition, discourages cooperation and does little to promote understanding.

abilities to recall facts, define words and perform routine calculations within a set time frame. Learning disabled students and second language learners (who are all encouraged to take the test) are greatly disadvantaged. Such tests are rarely sensitive to cultural differences and variations in curriculums that are particular to a variety of ages, grades and schools.

It costs \$90.00 per student to administer the new province-wide test. In a time of diminishing resources when most Ontario teacher receive \$10.00 or less per student for classroom supplies, we should wonder whether our money is being truly well-spent.

Meanwhile, employers are looking for graduates who are flexible, creative problem solvers, not good test takers. In Hooray for Diffendofer Day, Miss Bonkers is an eccentric teacher who understands learning. When the school principal announces that all the students must take a test to see "who's learning such and such/ to see which school's the best," Miss Bonkers says to her students:

"You've learned the things you need,  
To pass that test and many more  
I'm certain you'll succeed.  
We've taught you that the earth is round,  
That red and white make pink,  
And something else that matters more  
We've taught you how to think!

### **The graded provincial report card.**

Grades do not tell the whole story about a student. For example, they tell us little about motivation, attitudes towards success, feelings about competition, position and status among peers, special interests, resistance to learning and fears. Yet all these factors play an important role in children's learning.

Any teacher in Ontario who has used the provincial report card can tell you of the countless hours it required. Staff have had to deal with computer crashes, lost files and a cut and paste program that was never properly inserviced. Many of my own colleagues invested 40 or more

additional hours on each term report.

And for what? To give parents a very clinical report card that speaks nothing of the student's effort and very little about their child's strengths or learning styles. The report card returns to past practices of grading based on an achievement of expectations grounded in provincial curriculum. Unfortunately, the letter grade "B" does not tell students or parents what is needed to get to an "A"

"Grading is not evaluation. A student's abilities can never be described by a single letter. At best, grading is a narrow, arbitrary measuring system that fosters competition, discourages cooperation and does little to promote understanding. Standardized test scores do not carry any real meaning for instructional purposes." (Routman, 1991)

Reporting confined to grades also places the school or the teacher in the role of arbiter (or judge) of right and wrong. This builds a relationship of unequals where the parent is passed the responsibility of doing something about the misguided child.

A number of years ago, at a conference organized by the Canadian Association for Young Children, Gayle Robertson, a consultant from Winnipeg, made a memorable presentation on Assessment, Evaluation and Grading. She stressed how important it was for parents to see evidence of their child's progress and not to get caught-up in comparisons. Reminding parents of the variability of rates in child development is a key component in effective teacher/parent communications. To contemplate the impossibility of all children doing the same thing at the same time and being compared to one another is neither fair nor honest.

As a regular contributor to Federation publications, in December 1993 I wrote an article about a reporting system we were using in Peel, a process that included two half-hour teacher/student/parent conferences where each child's strengths and weaknesses were discussed. (Giles, 1993) The reporting system also included a goal-setting conference, two annual written

## With so many expectations... in the new curriculum, action plans have been replaced with anxiety as teachers cope with covering, and grading, curriculum expectations.

reports that commented on programs, personal achievements and progress-to-date, and a written summation report card.

This reporting process caught the attention of a parent in our community who worked for a Fortune 500 company. She was impressed by the shift from assigning A, B, C grades to a more developmental focus. In a conversation with me, she commented on the similarities between this type of approach and the new performance appraisals used by her company. These appraisals rewarded continuous improvement as the way to quality and excellence.

Goal-setting also enabled parents and teachers to develop action plans and implement strategies for change. With so many expectations at each grade level in the new curriculum, action plans have been replaced with anxiety as teachers cope with covering, and grading, curriculum expectations.

This innovative reporting process, which did so much to foster authentic partnerships between parents and teachers, has since been replaced by the graded report card and ten minute interviews.

It is in our best interest as a profession to become more skilled at understanding and justifying our pedagogical goals in regards to curriculum and testing. If we become complacent or content with testing, this curriculum or others like it, our next generation may never come to know what Dr. Seuss wanted us to think about — the importance of the colour of our dreams.

### Colour of My Dreams

I'm a really rotten reader  
the worst in all the class,  
the sort of rotten reader  
that makes you want to laugh.

I'm last in all the readin' tests,  
my score's not on the page  
and when I read to teacher  
she gets in such a rage.

She says I cannot form my words  
she says I can't build up  
and that I don't know phonics  
and don't know a c-a-t from k-u-p.  
They say that I'm dyslectic  
(that's a word they've just found out)  
... but when I get some plasticine  
I know what that's about.

I make these scary monsters  
I draw these secret lands  
and get my hair all sticky  
and paint on all me hands.

I make these super models,  
I build these smashing towers  
that reach up to the ceiling  
and take me hours and hours.

I paint these lovely pictures  
in thick green drippy paint  
that gets all on the carpet  
and makes the cleaners faint.

I build great magic forests  
weave bushes out of string  
and paint pink panderellos  
and birds that really sing.

I play my world of real believe  
I play it every day  
and teachers stand and watch me  
but don't know what to say.

They give me diagnostic tests,  
they try out reading schemes,  
but none of them will ever know  
the colour of my dreams.

— Peter Dixon

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# curriculum #1

Fall 1999 vol.2 issue 1

## Teaching mathematics in an internet world

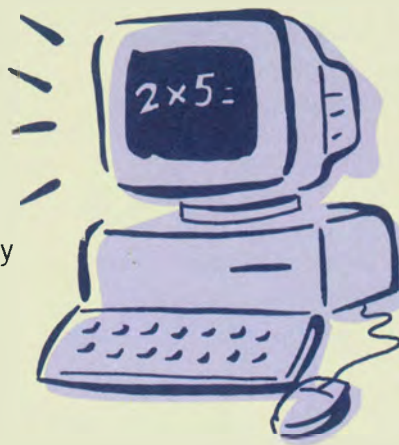
Trevor Brown

**As teachers we are continually looking for innovative and exciting ways to motivate and stimulate our students to think mathematically. We would like them to see why some people study math and how it is used to solve a variety of problems.**

There are many technical questions which invariably arise in the mathematics classroom, questions such as: How many faces does a cylinder have? Is 1 a prime number? What is 0? When these arise, we are not always sure what the "right" answer is.

Sometimes we simply would like to see different ways of approaching a topic – different ways of teaching multiplication of integers, subtraction of fractions, tessellation, etc. When these situations arise we invariably consult the various math journals or guides to assist us. Now, we can use the internet to access answers to these questions quickly and efficiently.

The following sites are very useful in providing many valuable and worthwhile starting points for teachers in grades kindergarten to 8. These sites provide wonderful mathematical investigations for our students and answers to the many perplexing questions that invariably arise in the classroom. Although it would be hard to find a math task that wouldn't fit into the Ontario curriculum, the problems found on these sites present particularly rich mathematics tasks.

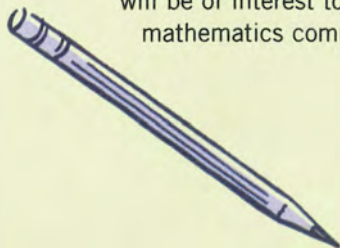


## Teaching mathematics in an internet world

### **NRICH**

[www.nrich.maths.org.uk/](http://www.nrich.maths.org.uk/)

This is a site well worth visiting. Here a teacher and student can find an amazing collection of rich mathematical tasks and mathematical games that will stimulate mathematical thinking and will engage your students for a significant period of quality time. The very extensive archive contains all of the problems presented to date. In addition to these features, there is a section where teachers can pose their own questions, and carefully written articles on various aspects of mathematics and editorial comments which will be of interest to the mathematics community.



### **MATH CENTRAL**

<http://mathcentral.uregina.ca>

This is a Canadian site originating from the University of Regina. There are many easy-to-use but by no means trivial lessons for elementary students posted at this site. There is an excellent unit on the teaching of probability. In addition to these lessons, teachers can visit the "Teachers' Place" where many pedagogical issues are discussed — questions like: What do you think of Kumon Math? How would you extend the Pythagorean Theorem?

### **MATH FORUM**

<http://www.mathforum.com>

This site in addition to posting weekly and monthly problems in the different areas of mathematics, has a very extensive archive. One of the many advantages of the archive that will be of interest to all teachers, is the students' written responses to past problems. There is a generic comment on the written responses for a given problem. Teachers can use these features to stimulate students to write and justify their thinking and compare their responses to the exemplars posted on the internet.

### **ST. FRANCES XAVIER**

<http://www.stfx.ca/special/math/problems/>

Looking for some challenging problems for your students? This site has some engaging problems that will stretch your students. If you would like to bring "closure" to a set of tasks in a certain area of mathematics, then the problems listed here could stimulate some additional ideas. Many of the problems of this site are content specific — an added advantage.

### **PBS**

[www.pbs.org/teachersource/math/](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/math/)

There are many issues which are of paramount interest to teachers — assessment, evaluation, rich learning tasks, open-ended questions, etc. This site which is constantly expanding, identifies some of the significant educational issues and offers some carefully worded responses.



## Teaching mathematics in an internet world

### DR. MATH

<http://www.mathforum.com/dr.math>

Puzzled by questions such as: How many sides does a cube have? Why the order of operations? Find a number that has 13 factors. If you would like answers to these and many similar questions, then this site is for you. Here a teacher will find answers to the many questions that teachers and others have posed. Once you start reading the questions and the different responses you will find it very difficult to "sign off." Very contagious!

### MEGAMATH

[www.c3.lanl.gov/mega-math/](http://www.c3.lanl.gov/mega-math/)

Looking for a site that can stimulate a lot of independent thinking and encourage students to mathematize? Then this site offers many possibilities – from investigating the four-colour map problem to exploring knots. For students who believe that math is uninteresting, this site will show them some very exciting areas of mathematics — areas not normally presented in the elementary classroom.

### MUSE

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

Why are manhole covers round? What is the recycle logo? Answers to these and other intriguing math questions can be found at this site. The articles are very short and easy to read and can be used to stimulate mathematical thinking in the classroom.

### CENTRE FOR INNOVATION IN THE TEACHING OF MATHEMATICS

[www.ex.ac.uk/cimt/](http://www.ex.ac.uk/cimt/)

Would you like a collection of some exciting math "games" for your students? This site presents a wonderful rationale for using math games in your classroom and a significant collection of easy-to-use and friendly math games. In addition, there are puzzles, challenges and activities for teachers and students.

### ABACUS INTERNATIONAL MATH CHALLENGE

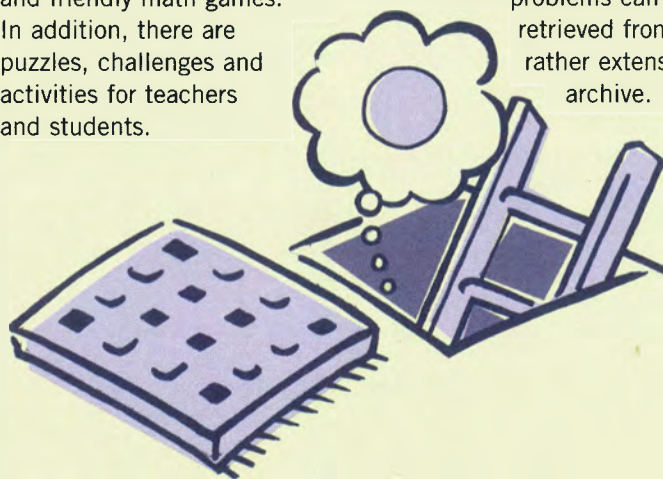
<http://www.gcschool.org/abacus.html>

This site offers a variety of challenging problems for students in grades 3-6. This is a very active site with new problems being added almost on a monthly basis. The previous problems are all stored in the archives. This is a site worth visiting.

### MATHMAGIC

<http://www.mathforum.com/mathmagic/>

This site has been around for some time. The sponsors encourage students to work together in solving the problems. There are some wonderful investigations here for students from K-8. Previous problems can be retrieved from the rather extensive archive.



## Teaching mathematics in an internet world

### Samples from the sites

Here are some of the innovative math tasks available through the described sites:

#### NRICH:

##### Counting Down

The rules are simple. Start with any number of counters in any number of piles. Two players take turns to remove any number of counters (e.g. their choice of 1, 2, 3 or 4) from a single pile. The loser is the player who takes the last counter.

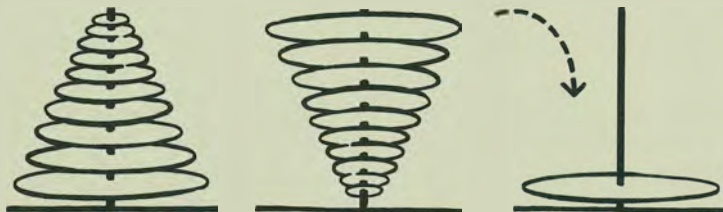
#### MATH FORUM:

##### True or False

I have four, two-digit numbers written on my paper. The sum of these four numbers is less than 100.

True or false: Each number is less than 25.

Bonus: If all the numbers on my paper are different, what is the largest number I could possibly have written?



(fig.1)

#### ABACUS:

##### Rectangular Puzzle

You have several  $5 \times 11$  rectangles. Using only these rectangles, can you make:

A) a  $39 \times 54$  rectangle?

B) a  $39 \times 55$  rectangle?

(You have to use the small rectangles so that they cannot overlap each other, but you may not have space between them either.)

#### MUSE:

##### Covering Up by Ivars Peterson

Have you ever wondered why the cover of a manhole is nearly always round? Why couldn't it be oval or square?

#### ST. FRANCIS XAVIER:

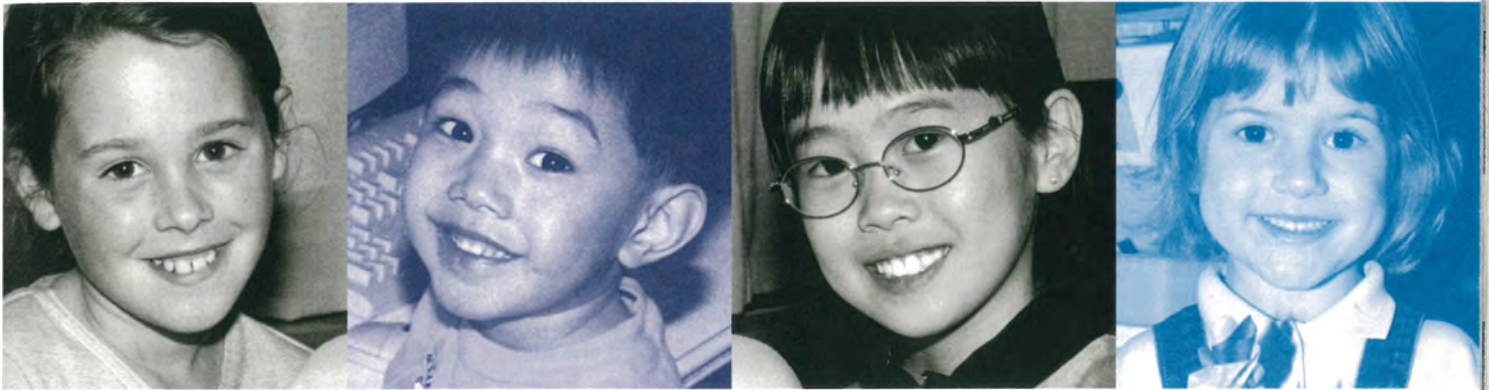
##### Minimum Moves (fig.1)

Batman has been imprisoned by the Riddler. To escape he must find the quickest way to move the tower of plutonium disks from one post to another so that the disks have the same arrangement as on the original post. He may move only one disk at a time. What is the minimum number of moves he must make in order to move the ten disk tower and have it appear the same?

*Trevor Brown is a Mathematics Consultant with the Toronto District School Board.*

# Captivated by Creativity

*Barbara Ritson*



To most of us, the story of “Alice in Wonderland” conjures up visions of tardy rabbits, talking doorknobs, and crazy queens; a fanciful yarn filled with curiosity, wonder, and self discovery, where the imagination of a little girl gets the better of her. But to nearly 600 students attending General Brock Public School in Toronto, Alice is real, and so is her wonderland. As you approach Room 27, sounds of hammering, drilling, sawing, and excited chatter greet you. The sweet smell of freshly cut wood delights your nose while a scene that is hard to describe spreads out before you. Young carpenters, electricians, physicists, artisans, computer analysts, safari guides, and engineers scurry around a topsy-turvy classroom. Your eyes are drawn to a workbench where the star attraction, Alice, gathers with several of her students. Sawdust, mixed with stardust has settled at their feet, on their heads, and in their hearts.

## Welcome to General Brock's Science and Technology Laboratory.

Begun in 1994, the lab boasts a unique and environmentally conscious hands-on approach to implementing Ontario's new science curriculum.

### **An integrated program**

But the learning isn't limited to science. In fact, Alice Mitchell aims for total integration of the new Ontario Science and Technology curriculum. Her program extends to virtually all components of the curriculum, including numeration, the arts, literacy, and physical education, as well as enhancing essential life skills like problem solving, helping others, handling equipment and machinery safely, responsible pet care, and recycling.

Alice in the fairy tale dreamed her wonderland into existence. Alice Mitchell, a teacher for 25 years, 15 of them at General Brock, helped create this enchanted land and then disguised it in the name of science and technology.

### **By any other name**

Don't let the lab's official name fool you. While the title officially justifies its existence, the children know better. Their eyes grow wide as they cross the threshold. Shy students leave their timidity at the door and journey into self-assurance. Children struggling to keep pace in the regular curriculum, blossom. Aggression evaporates. Not only are dungeons and space ships, draw bridges and doll furniture born here, but confidence, adventure, risk-taking and appreciation are nurtured as well. The heart of this wonderland is a woodworking table where every new class gathers for a review of safety rules and adventure instructions.

The lab has humble roots. It started in the back of Mitchell's grade 4 classroom and was equipped only with a worktable, mitre, a couple of saws, and wheels and dowels. Mitchell quickly discovered that her students' curiosity and desire for hands-on learning was hard to satisfy.

Mitchell had taught at every grade level but felt constricted in the traditional classroom setup. She longed to incorporate freedom of movement, centre-based learning, and her love for wood in her teaching. Her pint-sized makeshift world enthralled her students. But could this determined teacher captivate the entire school?

Mitchell attended a series of six workshops offered as an initiative through the former Scarborough Board of Education and applied for a \$3000.00 start-up grant.

### **Building the program**

In 1996, with the agreement of the teaching staff and support of the school's principal, Lorraine Noble, Mitchell expanded her classroom into one corner of the staff lounge. Brock's teachers were encouraged to bring their students in at their own initiative and with the individual teacher's supervision. Mitchell and her class spent many hours in the staff room. The magic spread quickly and students soon found themselves tripping over each other vying for the use of the equipment. It wasn't long before the project needed supervision and a full-sized lab. The burning question now became, where could they contain it?

With a vision and a little luck, Noble obtained a grant to build a wall, dividing the staff lounge in half, creating two rooms. One side of the room remained the lounge and the other became a new classroom. By mid 1997, a class of students had moved into the new classroom, freeing up Room 27 for the future science and technology lab.

Brock staff and students had their vision, their land, and their plan. Now they needed provisions. To supply the lab, Mitchell gathers her inventory from normal channels, like the regular school supplies order and program budgets. For additional supplies, principal and teacher rely on their ingenuity and creativity.

Noble applied for an environmental grant generously offered by Canada Trust. The monies awarded added an environmental emphasis to the room. Exotic plants and animals including a snake, lizard, hamster, and fish, flank the far side of the classroom. Working with wood naturally furthers the students' appreciation for their world and fragile ecosystem. Mitchell continually looks for ways to draw focus to the environment.

### **Mining for resources**

Mitchell also stockpiles bounty from unlikely sources. Treasures are discovered at garage sales and garbage day around her neighbourhood demands a slow drive by, hunting for potential. The school's surrounding community and parents' contributions also add to the booty. Mitchell receives a seemingly endless supply of both scrap and finished wood and cardboard from parents. Incredibly, one dedicated parent sands and prepares



Alice Mitchell's class is a hive of activity and requires a constant supply of raw materials.

wood pieces on his lunch hour to donate to the classroom. When the local high school, W.A. Porter Collegiate Institute, became the Scarborough Academy of Technology, Environment, and Computer Studies, Brock didn't hesitate to request their older computers.

Noble explains it's a matter of "working hard, being creative in your approach, selling your ideas, and using any funds you are given wisely."

#### The program expands

In September 1997, Mitchell worked half time in the new science and technology lab, seeing kindergarten to grade three students while providing preparation time for teachers. The junior division still visited the room under their own teacher's supervision. But by September 1998, Mitchell took over the lab full-time, accommodating kindergarten to grade six children, and periodically seeing the intermediates as well.

At first glance, pandemonium reigns. But closer inspection shows strong organization within the madness. Learning centres stretch out around the room, including a mini-jungle with plants and animals, a traditional art centre, computer area, Lego centre, woodworking area, and electricity and wiring centre. Children are encouraged to take advantage of at least two or more of the centres in their design. When time comes to move on, students dash about attempting to reinstate some vague resemblance to neatness, tidying the leftovers of raw imagination. The next class impatiently pushes in, moving instinctively to the workbench.

#### Safety first

Mitchell spends a few minutes reviewing safety rules, reminding her students about safety goggles, vise grips, and safe sawing techniques. She then presents the students' new mission.

"Wicked!" reacts one student. Another murmurs, "Wild, look at that!"

Every child has 70 minutes each week to build

his or her creation. Juniors learning about medieval times in the regular curriculum extend the strand by building replicas of turrets, gallows, siege towers, catapults, and a stake burning. Another unit involving electricity is extended when the students are asked to build a miniature model of a room in their home and arm it with working lights.

"Teachers teach the concepts and theory in class," Mitchell explains. "Here they apply what they have learned. I'm not teaching an exact science. I'm teaching terminology, safety skills, how to use time wisely, problem solving, and how to do things with care."

But while Mitchell's science and technology lab may be wonderland to her students, it can be overwhelming to her.

"I see 600 students a week, and all have to be assessed," she says. "I have to know all the kid's names and faces."

Mitchell periodically takes one full day to assess each child's accomplishment, based on level of completion, uniqueness, appropriateness, lab behaviour, and time value.

Is a science and tech lab of this magnitude for every school?

"You've got to like it or you'll be overwhelmed," Mitchell explains. Noble adds, "Assessing hundreds of students is an arduous task."

"Alice is a unique individual," Noble says. "She is able to reach every student and drive them on to greater things. She is the champion of the underdog."

*If you would like more information about General Brock's Science and Technology program, or if you are thinking about starting your own technological wonderland, Lorraine Noble and Alice Mitchell can be reached at (416) 396-6250.*

*Barbara Ritson is a freelance writer who has two children attending General Brock. She is also a member of the School Advisory Council as well as a volunteer in the school's reading recovery program.*

# Generations



Generations CanConnect is an exciting opportunity to re-embrace the art of inter-generational storytelling through the creative exploitation of information technology. Generations CanConnect seeks to bring youth and seniors together to create a dialogue in which both sides can share and learn. Under the guidance of the teacher or an adult volunteer, students are asked to first interview a senior citizen about some aspect of their life — a treasured item or a memorable event — and then write and edit a project based on the interview and create their own web page for the Internet.

# CanConnect

Through their work with the students, seniors are given an opportunity to learn about computers and the Internet. At the completion of the project, teachers are encouraged to invite the seniors into the classroom for a celebration event and to view the final website product. Although the program is designed for grades five to twelve, some of the most successful pilot projects have included a number of excellent web projects completed by classes at the elementary level.

Generations CanConnect promises to be a worthwhile learning activity with many links to the curriculum in a variety of areas from language arts, information technology, social studies, local history and native studies, to community, family, and citizenship studies and life skills options. Many teachers and schools already have programs that bring students and youth together through visits to the local seniors' homes and community centres. This program introduces a new possibility for such intergenerational experiences by including the computer and website skills element. It will enable the growing population of Canadian seniors to be models and mentors to young Canadians while helping them to develop their knowledge and skills in using the information highway. Building on the success of SchoolNet and other programs, Industry Canada hopes to increase the "connectivity" of Canadians of all ages, in response to the federal government's "Connecting Canadians" agenda.

#### **It's easy to get involved.**

Start by exploring the generations website: <http://generations-canconnect.ic.gc.ca>. It has all the information you need, including how to register for the project and how to use ready-made templates for building your own website.

Earn \$300.00 for your class or youth group. Completed Generations CanConnect projects, which consist of a minimum of 25 profiles of senior citizens, are eligible for \$300.00 funding.

By participating in this project, you can help your students learn within the context of the community, create a partnership between youth and seniors and help students build the skills necessary for the information age.

For more information, visit: <http://generations-canconnect.ic.gc.ca>, call: 1-800-575-9200 or contact: Generations CanConnect Information Highway Applications Branch, Industry Canada, 14th Floor, 155 Queen Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H5.

For more information on Canada's SchoolNet, visit: [www.schoolnet.ca](http://www.schoolnet.ca) and [www.stemnet.nf.ca](http://www.stemnet.nf.ca).

# Our First Year: Challenge and Change

Six hundred delegates and alternates from across Ontario were in Toronto August 17-20 to attend ETFO's Second Annual Meeting. The event, although strictly business, was also a celebration of ETFO's first year — a year of challenge and change.

In her address to the 600 delegates and alternates, Phyllis Benedict, President, spoke about the many successes ETFO experienced during its first year.

"In 1998-1999, the Locals and the Provincial Federation dealt with difficult issues every single day. And each time we took a stand, be it on issues of social justice, collective bargaining, political action, curriculum implementation, professional development or assisting a member in difficulty, we put ETFO's stamp on the face of education in Ontario.

"In 1998-1999, working together, we laid the foundations of our strong new federation. We now have something solid to stand on. Our actions in the future will see ETFO fly," Benedict concluded.

## **Our first year**

ETFO's Annual Report - Our First Year - was distributed to all delegates. In late September, copies were mailed to all ETFO's worksites. This booklet details ETFO's broad range of activities during 1998-1999. Ask your workplace steward to share this memorable record of ETFO's first year with you.

## **New Executive elected**

Delegates elected a new executive for 1999-2000: Phyllis Benedict, President, Kawartha Pine Ridge; Susan Swackhammer, First Vice-President, Grand

Erie; Ken Collins, Vice-President, Rainbow; Emily Noble, Vice-President, Algoma; Barbara Sargent, OTF Table Officer (and President of OTF 1999-2000), Lambton Kent; Executive Members: Ruth Behnke, Lambton Kent; Kathy Clarke, Halton; David Clegg, York Region; John Curtis, Toronto; Wambui Gaitho, Toronto; Kelly Hayes, Hamilton Wentworth; David Krook, Upper Grand; Christina Lofts, Lakehead; Hilda Watkins, Greater Essex.

## **Priorities set**

Delegates agreed that the Federation's priorities for 1999-2000 would be:

- protecting the collective bargaining rights of public elementary teachers and educational workers;
- defending publicly funded education;
- serving the needs of the membership;
- providing for the professional development of members; and
- promoting social justice in the areas of anti-poverty, non-violence and equity.

## **YNN opposed**

Delegates discussed the intrusion of the Youth News Network (YNN) into classrooms. The network is a commercially produced broadcast disguised as news. The twelve-minute broadcast includes 2½ minutes of commercials. In exchange for agreeing to these broadcasts every day, schools are provided with computers and other technological equipment.

Delegates unanimously agreed that the introduction of YNN to Ontario public schools should be actively opposed.



### Oxfam campaign supported

Prof. Meyer Brownstone, Deputy Director of Oxfam International, presented ETFO with a plaque on behalf of the Namibian National Teachers' Union (NANTU) in recognition of solidarity work with NANTA began ten years ago by the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario.

ETFO delegates endorsed the Oxfam International and Oxfam Canada Education Now - Break the Cycle of Poverty campaign. For more information on this campaign, see page 32.

### Minister meets delegates

On Thursday, August 19, Janet Ecker, the Minister of Education, became the first Tory Minister to attend the Annual Meeting since John Snobelen's appearance in 1995. Ecker had spent the summer meeting with her various constituencies.

"I know Ontario has excellent teachers," Ecker said, "but in a rapidly changing world we have an obligation to be sure you have the latest skills and the best possible training. So we will be working with you and other affected stakeholders to develop a system that will require all Ontario teachers to participate in a testing program."

During the question and answer session following Ecker's presentation, Jim White, a delegate from Hamilton Wentworth, told Ecker that regular testing was a "political hot button" that merely insulted teachers. "The way testing was presented during the election came as an insult and an affront to teachers, and we have no idea what you are looking for from us," White said.

### Awards presented

ETFO awards offer opportunities to recognize outstanding service by federation members and others to the profession, to students and to the broader community. Many of these awards are presented locally; others are presented at the Annual Meeting.

For more information on ETFO awards, see your workplace steward or contact Shauna Petrie at Provincial Office. There is still time to apply yourself or to nominate a colleague for one of ETFO's many awards and scholarships.

## ETFO 1999-2000 BUDGET GENERAL FUND

### Projected Net Revenue

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>34,891,268</b>
Teachers, Occasional Teachers, ESP/PSP & Associate members + interest	
<b>Defense Fund</b>	<b>(2,006,035)</b>
<b>OTF/CTF fees</b>	<b>(3,100,160)</b>
<b>QECCO fees</b>	<b>( 696,600)</b>
<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$29,088,473</b>

### Projected Expenditure

<b>Other Professional Organizations</b>	<b>123,800</b>
<b>Governance</b>	<b>1,754,231</b>
Annual, Executive, & Representative Council Meetings & released executive costs	
<b>ETFO Locals</b>	<b>11,982,847</b>
fee rebates to locals, local release time, training & material for locals	
<b>Standing Committee Meetings</b>	<b>121,800</b>
two meetings for each committee	
<b>Assistance</b>	<b>317,900</b>
awards, donations, scholarships & project overseas	
<b>Professional Development</b>	<b>283,901</b>
PD programs, teacher education & conferences	
<b>Equity &amp; Women's Programs</b>	<b>497,095</b>
race relations, employment equity, anti-violence & women's programs*	
<b>Protective Services For Members</b>	<b>2,438,601</b>
collective bargaining, professional relations services, health & safety, pensions & legal costs	
<b>Strategic Services</b>	<b>888,450</b>
publication & distribution of VOICE, LINK, EXPRESS & other communications, pamphlets, political action campaign, website & members' records	
<b>Provincial Office</b>	<b>1,581,400</b>
rent, maintenance, taxes, phones, equipment, printing & postage	
<b>Staff Salaries &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>8,700,377</b>
provincial staff salaries & benefits	
<b>Professional Services &amp; Sundries</b>	<b>254,000</b>
legal costs, consultants, insurance & auditors	
<b>Transfers to Restricted Funds</b>	<b>144,943</b>
transferred assets to be accumulated in separate funds to meet long term goals	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>\$29,089,345</b>
<b>surplus (deficit) of expenditure over revenue</b>	<b>(\$872)</b>

\* Each year, ETFO allocates 6% of the annual budget (\$1,742,297) to programs for women. Some of these programs are in the Equity & Women's Programs section but most are spread throughout the budget.

# Annual Meeting Report



Face to face. **Phyllis Benedict**, President of ETFO, welcomes **Janet Ecker**, Minister of Education, to the Annual Meeting.



Left: **Florence Keillor**, ETFO Vice President (retired) accepts the President's Award for outstanding service to the Federation.  
Right: **Jackie Aird**, a member of the Assembly Committee, won the computer offered in the Corporate Display area.



**Kathy Wilson** and **Barbara Delisle** from the Women's Crisis Services of Cambridge and North Dumfries, accept ETFO's award for Women Working in Social Activism on Behalf of Women and Children.



**ETFO Award Winners** (left to right) back row: **Kathy Strassburger**, Waterloo, Occasional Teacher of the Year; **Ginn Rawlinson**, Lambton Kent, Newsletter Editor's Award; **Brydon Elinesky**, Waterloo, Local Leadership Award; **Wendy Gagné**, Waterloo, Newsletter Editor's Award. Front row: **Glenna Weeks**, Ottawa Carleton, Outstanding Bus Driver; **Joan Bradley**, Renfrew, Educational Support/Professional Support Person of the Year; **Kim Pearson**, Waterloo, Newsletter Editor's Award



**Susan Swackhammer**, ETFO First Vice President, Grand Erie, and **Emily Noble**, Vice President, Algoma, enjoy a lighter moment in the debate.



At OTF's Annual Meeting, ETFO Executive Assistants **Brad Kuhn** (retired) and **Lorraine Stewart** were awarded OTF Fellowships.



Left: **Ken Collins**, Vice President, Rainbow, is congratulated on his election.  
Right: **Val Duhaime**, Rainbow, accepts the Provincial Leadership Award.



**Prof. Meyer Brownstone**, Deputy Director of Oxfam International, presents ETFO with a plaque on behalf of the Namibian National Teachers' Union in recognition of work started ten years ago by the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario (FWTAO).



Left to right: **Duncan Jewell**, Coordinator of Collective Bargaining (retired); **Joan Westcott**, FWTAO Executive Director (retired); and **Margaret Gee**, President of FWTAO 1996-1997 (retired), were awarded Honorary Life Memberships in ETFO.



Delegates vote overwhelmingly in favour of opposing the imposition of the Youth News Network in Ontario classrooms.



**Heather Germain**, Hamilton Wentworth, receives ETFO's Humanitarian Award.



## OXFAM CAMPAIGN

# Education Now: Break the Cycle of Poverty

The Education Now campaign has been endorsed by Education International, the Canadian Teachers' Federation, and overwhelmingly by the delegates to the 1999 Annual Meeting of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario.

In 1990, the leaders and representatives from 155 nations met in Thailand, along with representatives from the United Nations and the World Bank. The governments vowed to ensure that education for all became a priority, signing a

plan to give every child in the world a good primary education by the year 2000.

Today, on the eve of the millennium, millions of children around the world are still denied the right to an education.

**“Education is the single most powerful weapon against poverty. It saves lives. It gives people the chance to improve their lives. It gives them a voice.”**

- 125 million children have never attended school, two-thirds of whom are girls.
- Another 150 million children of primary age start school, but drop out before they can read or write.
- One in four adults in the developing world is illiterate – 872 million people.

We have lost a decade of opportunity – an opportunity to lift the young adults and children around the world from the scourge of poverty.

Oxfam International has begun a campaign to try to refocus our efforts — Education Now, Break the Cycle of Poverty. Oxfam maintains that education for all is affordable, costing an additional \$8 billion each year. This is equivalent to:

- 4 days worth of global military spending;
- 7 days worth of currency speculation in international markets;
- less than half of what American parents spend on toys for their children each year;
- less than the annual amount that Europeans spend on computer games or mineral water.
- less than one year’s interest on Ontario’s public debt.

Oxfam is calling for urgent changes to international policy

to ensure education for all becomes a reality. They are calling for deeper and quicker debt reduction for those countries committed to using the extra resources to invest in basic education and increased aid to support education.

To support these efforts, many ETFO Locals ran advertisements on World Teachers’ Day (October 5th) outlining the problem and endorsing the Oxfam campaign. Throughout the coming months, we will be looking at other ways to lend our support to ensuring that all children receive the education they deserve. Teachers, schools and ETFO Locals may wish to look at twinning with schools in developing countries, raising funds to support education in developing countries, and integrating projects on developing countries into the curriculum.

Teachers are a force for social change. What we wish for our children, we wish for all.

For more information on the Oxfam campaign, you can visit their website at [www.oxfam.org/educationnow](http://www.oxfam.org/educationnow).

*Pat McAdie works in ETFO’s Strategic Services Department.*

**Write or email the International Monetary Fund**

Mr Camdessus, Managing Director of the IMF, is one of the key players in determining how and when poor countries get debt relief. We encourage you to call for his commitment to improve debt relief measures which would help get children around the world into school. Your email or letter could include the following:

- The vast difference in educational opportunities separating poor from rich is cause for alarm
- Some of the poorest countries in the world spend more on debt repayments than on education and health
- With several G-7 countries proposing debt initiatives, there is an unusual opportunity for the IMF to take action
- Debt relief should not be dependent upon a country’s performance under IMF austerity programs.

Send your letters to Mr Michel Camdessus, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund, 701 19th St NW, Washington DC 20431 USA.

Send email to [debtmailca@mail.oxfam.org.uk](mailto:debtmailca@mail.oxfam.org.uk). This sends a copy to Oxfam International at the same time, so they can count the emails sent.

# Summertime Learning

## Draws Thousands to Curriculum Institutes

This summer, thousands of ETFO members participated in workshops designed to help them implement the new elementary curriculum in their classrooms. Eighty-seven, three and four day workshops in 35 locations across Ontario addressed all elementary grade levels and subject areas, from math and science to physical education, from language arts to social studies.

The institutes, offered cooperatively by the Ministry of Education, the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) and the Affiliates, were free of charge to participants. The original plan called for spaces to be provided for 1,500 elementary teachers. Five thousand registered and 2,640 were eventually accommodated. Attendance was completely voluntary.

"The overwhelming success of these institutes clearly shows teachers' commitment to delivering the best possible programs in their classrooms," says Phyllis Benedict, President of ETFO.

"For the last two years, we've been asking the government for professional development to support the implementation of the new curriculum. Now the new Minister and the new Deputy Minister have seen for themselves the enthusiasm and excitement teachers bring to

their work. Both courses and participants were a credit to the profession."

"The Institutes enjoyed strong support from our Local executives and members. This support was critical to their success," says Jan Moxey, the ETFO Executive Assistant responsible for coordinating the Institutes. "The site coordinators were flexible and amazing individuals who saw service to members as their top priority. The possibility of offering a similar program again next year is already under discussion."

manage all the demons a beginning teacher faces."

"I will be able to teach the curriculum with my split grade much more effectively."

"A wealth of knowledge provided – fabulous – practical activities galore – very motivating!"

"As a new teacher, this course was a super way to help me decide how to implement a math program and what things to prepare during the summer."

"The fact that this course was taught by a classroom teacher meant a lot to me. The ideas will be in my classroom this fall and in all of my classrooms for years to come. Thank you for sharing your classroom with me and helping make a difference in my teaching."

"These courses delivered: up-to-date information; opportunities for networking; improved morale; time for professional development currently unavailable during the school year; media coverage that enhanced teachers' public image; an opportunity to show the College of Teachers that teachers care about professional development; and a certificate proclaiming I had participated in professional development – great for collegial evaluation and to share with the board and my principal."

### ELEMENTARY SUMMER INSTITUTE STATISTICS

Registrants:	5,000
Participants:	2,640
Courses Offered:	87
Presenters:	50
Days Taught:	350
Locations:	35
Awesome lunches served:	10,000

Here's what participants said about the Summer Institutes:

"Thanks. I really enjoyed it. We want more ... we want more ... more... more..."

"I will try to implement as many good ideas as possible. Specifically, it will help me



ETFO's Curriculum Institutes were a sold out success story. In these photos, participants and presenters from Halton, Niagara, Thunder Bay and Avon Maitland enjoy teaching and learning new ideas to take back to their classrooms. In the top left photo, Sue Herbert, Deputy Minister of Education (right) solves a problem at the mathematics institute in Oakville. The possibility of offering a similar program next year is already under discussion.

# Collective Bargaining

## Bargaining after Bill 160

As of mid-October, Trillium Lakelands remains the only teacher Local in a District School Board without a collective agreement. In votes held at the end of September, the Local's members gave their bargaining team an overwhelming (94%) strike mandate.

Negotiations in occasional teacher DSB Locals have not moved along at the same pace, with nine collective agreements still unresolved and one Local — Thames Valley — currently in Provincial Takeover. As well, eight Locals in School Authorities are still bargaining. All three educational/professional support personnel Locals have reached settlements.

Thus, despite the current government's runaway-freight-train approach to school board restructuring, bargaining in the first round after Bill 160 has yielded neither the timetable, nor the outcome, that its authors desired. Only three settlements, for example, occurred before the time (September 1, 1998) set in Bill 160 as the starting date for the new collective agreements.

What happened? Basically, ETFO members refused to sit back and watch the gains they had made in bargaining over many years taken away. While the agenda may have been to reduce compensation levels in newly amalgamated

boards to the lowest common denominator, to strip working conditions and to erode members' rights, the agreements negotiated to date tell a quite different story. While some losses did occur, the overall integrity of the collective agreements has been maintained. Moreover, in a number of cases, gains have even been made.

For example, the prevailing pattern among amalgamating boards has been to move lower-paid teachers to the highest grid. In the four cases where this did not happen, existing salaries were protected through red-circling or allowances. This pattern of leveling up prevailed in occasional teacher settlements as well, with dramatic increases in daily rates taking place in some amalgamating and stand-alone boards. Furthermore, 17 of the 30 teacher settlements have provided increases over and above what may have been required to harmonize grids (or to maintain the status quo, in the stand-alone boards). These increases mainly fall in the range of 1% to 3%. Twelve of the 30 negotiated signing bonuses either in addition to, or in lieu of, percentage increases. Nearly all of the existing social contract salary anomalies have been resolved.

Despite a determined employer effort to achieve "flexibility," two-thirds of the teacher agreements contain class

size and/or detailed staffing provisions that go beyond the Bill 160 formulation. Two-thirds, as well, specifically address instructional time, school day or working day — a dramatic improvement over the predecessor agreements, which were for the most part silent on these issues. Preparation time was an especially hard-fought item. Province-wide, there were both losses and a few modest gains. Roughly 150 minutes per week was the most common figure negotiated, though 11 agreements contain preparation time in excess of that, with Ottawa-Carleton, at 200 minutes, at the top.

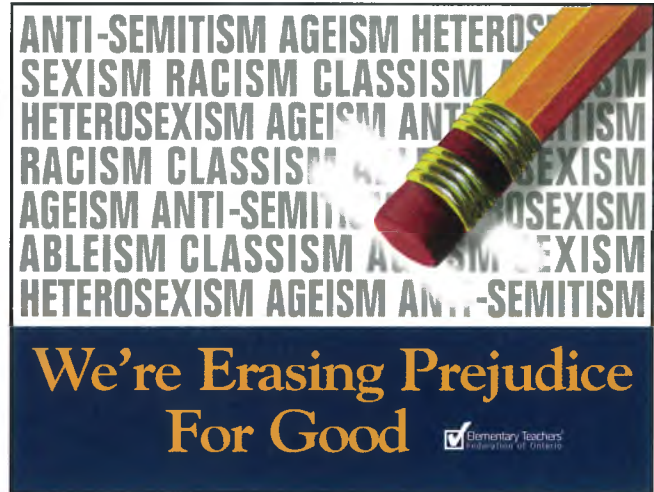
Significant progress was made in a number of key rights issues, such as the now widespread recognition that extra-curricular activities are voluntary, and that negative reports should be removed automatically from personnel files after a set period of time. Occasional teacher bargaining teams continue to incorporate provisions to strengthen members' rights, such as clauses requiring the employer to hire an occasional teacher when the regular teacher is absent.

Three strikes, 28 Provincial Takeovers and literally millions of dollars later, ETFO members can be proud of what they have achieved in bargaining despite what once looked like insurmountable odds.



# The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario proudly announces the launching of We're Erasing Prejudice For Good

A literature based, comprehensive anti-bias curriculum document which contains integrated lessons consistent with Ontario's curriculum. This year round resource contains complete lessons from kindergarten to grade 8 on ten monthly themes. These provide students with the skills and knowledge to successfully navigate a diverse world. We're Erasing Prejudice for Good can be purchased in whole or in part. One choice is the complete resource which consists of 360 lessons and a teacher resource guide. A second choice is 40 lessons for any individual grade (K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8) plus the teacher resource guide.



## ORDER FORM

**We're Erasing Prejudice For Good**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ School Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ complete resource(s)

K-8 lessons & teacher resource guide @ \$120.00 + (\$8.40 GST) = \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ and teacher resource guide @ \$30.00 + (\$2.10 GST) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ and teacher resource guide @ \$30.00 + (\$2.10 GST) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ and teacher resource guide @ \$30.00 + (\$2.10 GST) = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

For individual orders shipping costs are included.

For bulk orders call the provincial office to inquire about shipping costs.

Amount of cheque \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque payable to **Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario**

Bill to credit card # \_\_\_\_\_

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## OTF Report



Barbara Sargent, President  
of OTF and ETFO's OTF Table Officer

The Ontario Teachers' Federation's (OTF) major responsibilities include the teachers' pension plan, coordination with the College of Teachers, and government relations. OTF also coordinates many inter-affiliate activities.

### Teachers' Pension Plan

Eighteen months ago, teachers and government reached agreement on allowing teachers who achieved an 85 factor between June 1, 1998 and December 31, 2002, to retire with an unreduced pension. Now, OTF has begun to put together the preliminary submission for the next round of negotiations.

### College of Teachers

Once again, OTF will be sponsoring teacher candidates. The Election Regulation (as approved by the Council) still has not received government approval. This has delayed the second council elections, originally scheduled for April 2000. For this reason, the Council agreed to extend its term by six months.

The Ontario College of Teachers Act requires the Council to meet four times a year. In 1998-1999 it met three times at the College and once by teleconference. The OTF caucus meets the day before the Council.

### Government relations

OTF continues to lobby the government on the Youth News Network (YNN). YNN offers schools free access to youth oriented programming and free technology. The President of OTF wrote to school boards encouraging resistance to the project. Many school boards agree with OTF's position.

### Inter Affiliate activities

The Curriculum Institutes, coordinated by OTF, were a dynamic way to build professional development opportunities for OTF members.

In 1998-1999, OTF focussed on co-sponsoring Canadian events. The first of these was the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund, held in Toronto September 25, 1998.

OTF also co-sponsored the Canadian Aboriginal Festival's Education Days, held in Toronto November 20, 1998. And OTF will be sponsoring the Education Days of the Canadian Aboriginal Festival scheduled for December 2 and 3 at Toronto's Skydome.

## Emergency Legal Assistance for ETFO Members

ETFO provides legal assistance to defend members against allegations which are directly related to the member's teaching duties or employment responsibilities. An emergency is a situation when you are at immediate risk of being detained, arrested or incarcerated by the police.

### During School Hours

If you are contacted by the police or the Children's Aid Society (CAS) regarding an allegation against you:

1. Do NOT participate in or consent to an interview.
2. Make no statement to anyone regarding the allegations/charges.
3. Say, "I am willing to cooperate but I am unable to comment until I contact the Federation and legal counsel."
4. Call Professional Relations Services at 1-888-838-3836 or at (416) 962-3836 and state that your call is urgent.

### After Hours, Weekends and Statutory Holidays

If you are at immediate risk of being detained, arrested or incarcerated by the police outside of normal office hours:

1. Make no statement to anyone regarding the allegations/charges.
2. Contact a criminal defence lawyer.
3. Call Professional Relations Services on the next business day.
4. If the allegations/charges are directly related to your teaching duties or employment responsibilities the legal costs will be reimbursed by the Federation.

## Calendar of Events

**FEBRUARY 17-18 BRANTFORD**  
**Act, Reflect, Revise IV and Action Research Conference.**  
Contact: Marg Couture, ETFO.  
Tel: (416) 962-3836/  
1-888-838-3836  
mcouture@etfo.org

**FEBRUARY 18-19 TORONTO**  
**Equity for All: Safe Schools for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Youth.**  
Contact: Marg Schneider at:  
mschneider@oise.utoronto.ca  
Tel: (416) 923-6641  
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ETFO's Task Force on Disabilities and Accommodations invites members to share their personal experiences with disability and accommodation issues. By learning about real life struggles and successes, we can all benefit from raising awareness of important concerns and issues that face members with physical and mental disabilities. Our goal is to develop action plans that make our organization, schools and communities more inclusive. Please send your stories to: Carol Zavitz, Executive Assistant, ETFO, 480 University Avenue, Suite 1000, 10th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1V2. E mail: [czavitz@etfo.org](mailto:czavitz@etfo.org)

## Strike Discipline

The following members of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) have been disciplined for failure to support a strike in accordance with Article VI - Code of Professional Conduct and Article VII - Disciplinary Procedures of the ETFO Constitution.

All or some combination of the following penalties apply to the members listed below.

- a Publication of the name of member and the sanctions imposed by the Executive in a Federation document;
- b Suspension of the right to hold local or provincial office in the Federation for a specified period;
- c Denial of all services normally provided by the Federation for a specified period except for such services as must be provided by law.

### YORK REGION TEACHER LOCAL MEMBERS

Gillian Adamson – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Paulette Allibon – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Gail Bridgman – 1 yr. (a,b,c)  
Elizabeth Cameron – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Robin Cockburn – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Susanne Corrigan – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Erica Elcock-Stewart – 2 yrs. (a,b)  
Mari Ellery – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Elena Filomena – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Penny Fisher – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Milton Gazen – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Ian Grundy – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Rosetta Iulianetti – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Mary Johnson – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Helen Jones – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Jane Killer – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Veronika Klemt – 3 yrs. (a,b)  
Douglas Lang – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Angie Legg – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Wendy Legrand – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Dan Lenz – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Lindsey MacLean – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Dennis Malfara – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Bonny Manson – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Theresa Martin – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Joanne Massig – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Susan Mayhue – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Sharon Rose McCartin – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Laryssa Palin – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Barbara Pawlak – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Leonard Phillips – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Barbara Price – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Linda Prior – 3 yrs. (a,b)  
Tim Pugh – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Heather Purcell – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Anna Maria Roth – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Gail Sedgewick – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Lynne Sehmrau-Smith – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Stephanie Sommer – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Cindy Stevenato – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Gerrie Storr – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Darlene Tait – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Helen Tomkins – 3 yrs. (a,b)  
Julia Topping – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Elsie Watson – 4 yrs. (a,b,c)  
Allison Weagle – 4 yrs. (a,b)  
Franca Young – 5 yrs. (a,b,c)

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## Notice about TB

A number of members have phoned with concerns about tuberculosis. Tuberculosis is spread by airborne germs. People who are exposed to these germs may get a TB infection, but this does not mean they will necessarily get sick or spread TB to others. A positive skin test may be evidence of infection.

For further information about tuberculosis, talk to your doctor or call your public health department. A Fact Sheet on Tuberculosis is available from the Ontario Ministry of Health and can be downloaded from their website: [www.gov.on.ca/health/english/pub/disease/tuber.html](http://www.gov.on.ca/health/english/pub/disease/tuber.html).

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