

# voice

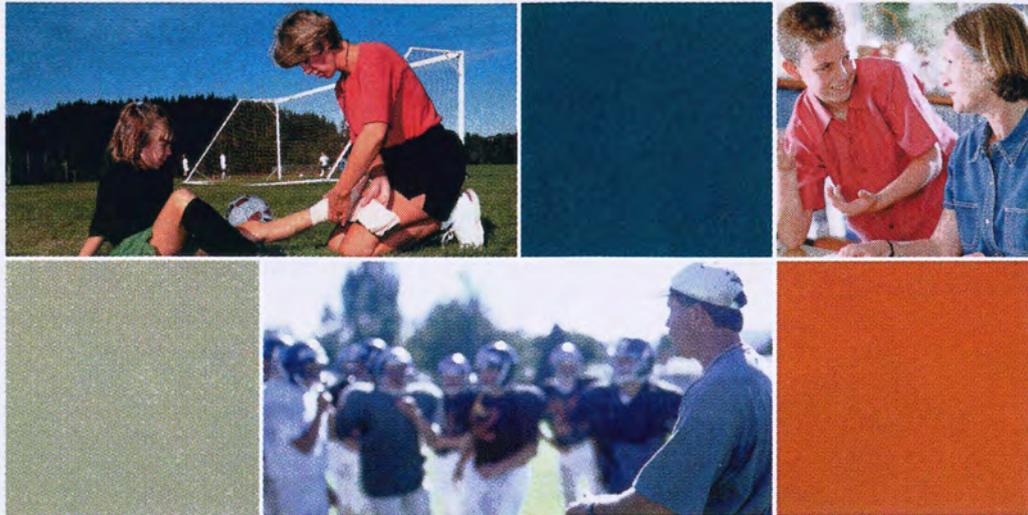
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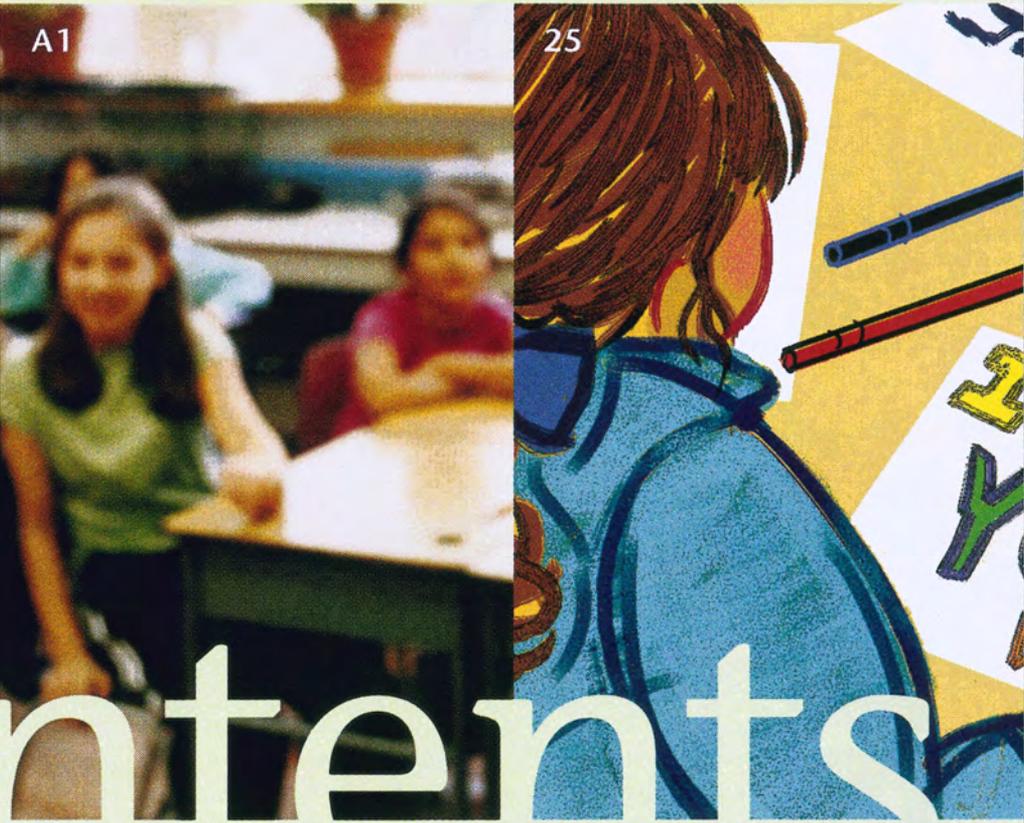
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200


 Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario  
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**COVER: JOËL BÉNARD.** Photo taken at ETFO's February news conference to announce Campaign 200.

# voice

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### *Elementary Teachers Need Preparation Time*

Provincially and locally, the Federation is determined that every collective agreement reached between ETFO and district school boards will include 200 minutes of preparation time per five-day cycle. We will also be bargaining for real salary increases and improvements to the benefit package.

As Christine Brown's article in this *Voice* points out, many members used to have more preparation time than they do now. The Social Contract Act of 1993, as well as other cutbacks and an underfunded education funding formula, have reduced elementary teachers' preparation time in almost every school board.

Two hundred is the number of minutes elementary teachers really

need each week to prepare classroom activities, mark tests, complete report cards, design individual programs and meet with parents and other professionals.

It is unacceptable that the education funding formula supports adequate preparation time for secondary school teachers while denying it to elementary teachers.

This round of negotiations will be a tough one. ETFO has committed the resources necessary to support your bargaining team. Speak strongly in support of 200 minutes of preparation time. Visit the ETFO website and download the Campaign 200 screensaver. Buy a Campaign 200 sweatshirt, and wear it! Your visible



EMILY NOBLE,  
PRESIDENT, ETFO

support will make all the difference in showing the school boards and the government that we are all determined to achieve this goal.

Recent experience with the PLP has shown that, by standing together, we can make a difference. If we all do our parts, the working conditions of elementary teachers and education workers will change for the better. It's about time!

---

## FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

### *OCT Administrators Aim at Unions*

When the Ontario legislature reconvenes this spring, one of its first acts will be to scrap the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) Professional Learning Program. Some PLP providers have already withdrawn their status. This is an excellent first step toward reforming the OCT. Congratulations to York Region's Director of Education, Bill Hoggarth, for being the first to demonstrate respect for teachers' rights to self-directed professional learning.

The next step must be to ensure that Ontario's publicly funded public school teachers hold the majority of seats on the college's governing council.

The college opposes our efforts to achieve this. Recent items in newspapers as diverse as the *Ottawa*

*Sun*, and the *Globe and Mail*, have attacked us. One columnist, the *Globe's* Margaret Wenthe, compared it to "lunatics taking over the asylum." Almost certainly, Ms Wenthe has little knowledge of the college and its operations. Wenthe's outrage was likely sparked by conversations with OCT administrators, both past and present.

Research shows that the members of other professional bodies, such as those representing psychologists, engineers, accountants, lawyers, and architects, have significant majorities on their governing councils. Teachers simply want to be treated with the same respect as the members of other professions.



GENE LEWIS,  
GENERAL SECRETARY, ETFO

Currently, teachers are completely disengaged from the college. For example, in 2003 only 4.4 percent of eligible voters cast their ballots for members of the governing council. Clearly, the OCT must change.

Minister of Education Gerard Kennedy has said that the government will consult broadly before changing the college's structure. Kennedy is not likely to make changes before the fall. This gives us time to press for a college that represents its members. You can be sure that ETFO will continue to be in the forefront on this issue.



# ON LOCATION REPORT

## ETFO Discipline

This discipline is effective February 1, 2004, through January 31, 2005.

The following member of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) has been disciplined for contravention of the ETFO Professional Code of Conduct (Articles 6.1, 6.3 and 6.4) during negotiations with the Ontario North East District School Board.

All of the following penalties apply to the member listed below:

- Publication of the name of the member and sanctions imposed by the ETFO Executive in a Federation document.
- Suspension of the right to hold local or provincial office in the Federation for a specified period.

Ontario North East Teacher Local Member: Hans Toby.

### New!

Look for your Federation wallet card on page 15. Keep it with you and use it in case of emergency.

### Do you have a story to report?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

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

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You can also reach Members' Records by telephone at 416-962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836 or by e-mail to [jpoints@etfo.org](mailto:jpoints@etfo.org).

### Resources from CTF

In 2002, the Canadian Teachers' Federation released *Debout!* a 200-page publication designed to help francophone teachers strengthen the cultural identity and language skills of their students in francophone minority settings. In February 2004, to complement *Debout!* CTF released a music CD and companion activity booklet.

*Debout! La musique qui nous anime* features well-known artists with diverse styles and stories to tell from a variety of francophone communities across Canada.

The CD has been designed for French-language elementary and secondary school teachers. However, it is also a useful tool for immersion and second-language teachers, as well as for anyone involved in cultural development with children.

The CD is available for \$10 plus tax and delivery charges from [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca).

### Mathieu Da Costa Challenge Award Winners

Twelve students from across Canada were in Ottawa in February to receive a prestigious award in recognition of Black History Month. The winners of the Mathieu Da Costa Challenge

Award were honoured at a ceremony at the Canadian Museum of Civilization. The students received their awards from Minister of State Jean Augustine and CTF Past

President Doug Willard. The Mathieu Da Costa program aims to enhance the study of Canadian history by inviting students to discover wonderful stories of Canadians from various ethnic, racial and Aboriginal backgrounds who have enriched Canada's heritage by their contributions. Every student who participates receives a certificate and a calendar.

This year, four of the twelve winners were elementary public school students: Claire Beauchamp (grade 4), Central Public School, Guelph; Pam Argue and John McPhee (grade 8), Abbey Lane Public School, Oakville; and Varman Koneswaran (grade 7), Milne Valley Middle School, Toronto.

Congratulations to teachers David Anderson (Guelph) Hubert Meeussen (Oakville) and Sandra Mills-Fisher (Toronto) for engaging their students in this challenge. For more information on the Mathieu Da Costa Challenge, visit [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca).

### Student Vote 2004

Timed to coincide with Canada's upcoming federal election, curriculum designed to support Student Vote 2004 can be downloaded from [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca). This resource has been developed by ETFO for use with students in grades 5 to 8.

Written by Ottawa Carleton teachers Renée

Belhumeur and Karen MacGillivray, and Toronto teachers Debbie Donsky and Wendy Hughes, "You Choose" is a series of four cross-curricular lessons. Teachers may decide to implement some or all of the material. "You Choose" also contains a variety of assessment strategies for teachers to consider.

For more information on Student Vote 2004, see *Voice* (Winter 2004), or visit [www.studentvote2004.ca](http://www.studentvote2004.ca).

### Terry Fox Run

The 2005 Terry Fox Run will mark the 25th anniversary of Terry Fox's historic Marathon of Hope. To commemorate Terry's remarkable efforts of 1980, and to acknowledge the contribution of Canada's schools to the Terry Fox Run, The Terry Fox Foundation is already planning next year's anniversary.

As a first step, ETFO and ETFO Peel are encouraging every elementary public school in Peel to participate in the Terry Fox Foundation's 2004 pilot project. The project will take the form of a one-day, unified, school-led, fundraising event in September.

The Terry Fox Foundation intends to use the model developed in Peel as the basis for its 2005 anniversary celebrations. The goal will be to have schools across Canada take part in a similar fundraising effort in September 2005.

### ETFO Members Selected for Project Overseas

The objectives of CTF's Project Overseas are to help teachers in developing countries upgrade their competence through in-service courses; to help overseas teacher organizations improve and strengthen their structures and activities; and to promote understanding and goodwill among teachers.

The following ETFO members have been selected to participate in CTF's Project Overseas 2004:

- Jerome Chisholm, (Limestone), Ghana
- Sukayna Dewji, (Toronto), Sierra Leone
- Janet Hendry, (Rainbow), Anguilla
- Connie Howald, (Upper Grand), Anguilla
- Johanna Lanfranco, (Toronto), Grenada (Team Leader)
- Belinda Longe, (Toronto), St. Vincent
- Hripsik Sarkissian, (Toronto), Ghana
- Kim Stenhouse, (Waterloo), St. Vincent
- Janet Thomas, (Ottawa Carleton), Mongolia

The deadline for applying for Project Overseas 2005 will be early November 2004. For more information on Project Overseas, visit [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca) and click on International Connections.



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*"I'm leaving energized, hopeful, and grateful to have a union that invests in people in this manner. I will become more involved."*

*"I value this opportunity as an occasional teacher to reconnect with colleagues and keep up with women's issues. I feel honoured to belong to ETFO."*

*"This will give me the strength and ambition to strive forward with energy over the remainder of my career. I have a new appreciation for ETFO."*

*"This is the first conference that I have been to, and I found it totally empowering."*

*"Has helped to motivate me to grow in areas that I have avoided due to lack of confidence."*

*"I came by myself and left knowing many wonderful women and feeling as if this was a place I belonged."*

# 'and still we rise'

ETFO's fourth annual conference for women, "... and still we rise", took place in Toronto in February. Four hundred ETFO members participated in a wide range of leadership and personal growth workshops, with speakers, panels and entertainment at plenary sessions. Workshops included topics such as collective bargaining, health and safety, legal rights and responsibilities, equity, balancing career and personal life, women and the economy, and dealing with difficult people.

Shari Graydon, author of the recent book for children about advertising, *Made You Look*, opened the conference. In the following days, participants were often heard discussing the issues raised in Shari's presentation: the hyper-erotized images of women and men

and the violent images confronting us each day in electronic media, including video games and advertising. Fortunately, advertisers and media do respond to public pressure, and Mediawatch ([www.mediawatch.ca](http://www.mediawatch.ca)) provides information and support for anyone who wants to take action against media versions of reality.

The "Girls Speak Out" panel followed up with an exploration of the impact of media on adolescents, including personal stories from two young girls, grade 7 and 8 students, whose clarity and courage gave everyone hope for the future.

Catherine Frazee, an activist and educator with a particular interest in the rights, identity, experience and well-being of people with disabilities, was the final plenary speaker. Her

humour, eloquence and brilliance inspired her audience. She also presented a new film about performing artists with disabilities (including dancers in wheelchairs and stand-up comedians with visual impairments or speech impediments).

Plans are already underway for next year's "... and still we rise." Information will be sent to ETFO stewards early in the fall.

Maya Angelou is a leading literary voice in the African-American community. Her poem "Still I Rise" inspired the theme of this conference. "... and still we rise" was organized by staff from ETFO's Equity and Women's Services, with assistance from many other members of the Federation's staff.



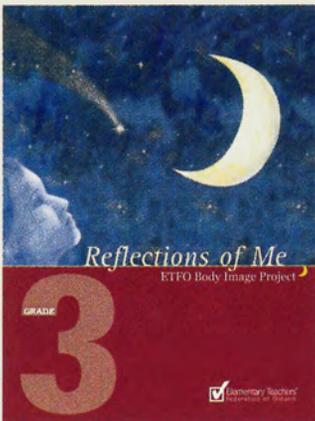
Left: Girls Speak Out Panelists. Right: Participants enjoyed a wide range of leadership and personal growth workshops.

Photos by Charlotte Morgan

## PD NOTES

### Summer Academy 2004

ETFO is proud to present our Summer Academy 2004. Practical and dynamic three-day courses will be offered across the province between July 5 and August 6 on a variety of curriculum topics. Watch for the catalogue, with full descriptions of the courses, on the ETFO website and delivered to your school steward at the end of April. The registration fee is \$75 and can be completed on-line or by mail. Registration will close at the end of May. Courses are offered in partnership between the provincial office and locals.



### Launch of the ETFO Body Image Project

ETFO commissioned a substantial worldwide research study to develop an overview of current knowledge about the causes of eating disorders and to identify the most effective school-based programs. Based on that research, "Reflections of Me... The ETFO Body Image Project" was developed. ETFO will launch the program in May 2004.

This exciting initiative includes classroom ready curriculum resources and reference materials, a video for parents and teachers, a parent's pamphlet and additional support materials. We will be looking for pilot schools to take part in training to implement the resource materials during the 2004–2005 school year. Watch the ETFO website and steward mailings for further information. Be part of making a difference in the life of the whole child.

### Websites for Kindergarten Teachers

The Early Years Committee has been working on the development of a list of helpful websites for kindergarten teachers. Our thanks to the members of the Early Years Committee for their suggestions.

- [www.canteach.ca/elementary/](http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/)

**songs poems.html:** This website provides a variety of poems and songs for teachers organized by themes (e.g., seasons, animals, food, and holidays).

- **www.naeyc.org:** The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) website promotes excellence in early childhood education. It also provides links to professional resources, position papers and articles related to the early years.
- **www.thekcrew.net:** Three kindergarten teachers share their ideas for kindergarten thematic units and literacy centres. The website provides samples of newsletters and parents' notes the authors use throughout the year.
- **http://www.earlychildhoodlinks.com/teachers/index.htm:** This website provides a comprehensive list of links to assist the early years teacher.

### Introducing ETFO's On-line Professional Development Courses

ETFO's on-line professional development courses will be launched at the ETFO new teacher conference "Connect 2004" on April 16 and 17. These four short courses have been designed to meet the needs of elementary educators. They focus on issues of instruction and classroom management. They are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The courses combine on-line learning with application in the classroom. Printable resources and additional audio information enrich the learning for those taking the courses.

There are two courses in creating a positive classroom environment. They are called "The Physical Space that Works" and "Dealing with Difficult Behaviour". The other two courses available are about teaching English as a second language and

#### Staff of ETFO's Professional Services Service Area are

WENDY MATTHEWS – COORDINATOR, KAREN BROWN, RUTH DAWSON, JOANNE LANGUAY, PAT MCADIE, VIVIAN MCCAFFREY, JENNIFER MITCHELL, CHARLOTTE MORGAN, MARY MORISON, JAN MOXEY, BARBARA RICHTER, ANNE RODRIGUE, LINDA ROWATT

teaching French as a second language. It is the combination of on-line learning with off-line reflection in the action planner that makes these courses a valuable professional learning experience for teachers. The courses will be available through the ETFO website beginning in April. The registration fee is \$50 for ETFO members.

#### In the Know – Research at a Glance

##### Curriculum Reform

The January 2004 issue of *Orbit* (volume 34, number 4) is devoted to curriculum reform from junior kindergarten to grade 8. While most of the articles discuss the situation in Ontario, there are several that situate Ontario within a larger context.

Included in this issue is an article by Pat McAdie, ETFO research officer. In this article, McAdie outlines key concerns of elementary teachers. Pushing content down to younger grades is questioned both from the viewpoint of developmental appropriateness and the crowding of the curriculum as a result. In addition, concerns about critical thinking and the conditions for mastery of the curriculum are raised. How this affects teachers' professionalism is also discussed; with a more prescriptive, standardized education system promoted by the previous government, the professional autonomy of teachers has been compromised.

##### Girls, Boys and Schooling

The next issue of *Orbit*, scheduled for release at the beginning of April, will be on girls, boys and schooling and

will feature an article by Bernie Froese-Germain, researcher with the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

Subscriptions or single issues of *Orbit* are available from OISE. Visit [www.orbitmagazine.ca](http://www.orbitmagazine.ca) for more information.

#### Useful Documents from the Ministry of Education

*Think Literacy – Cross-Curricular Approaches Grades 7-12* is a new and very practical resource available from the at-risk leaders in school boards. This cross-curricular literacy resource for teachers was developed for the Ministry of Education by a team of teachers led by an ETFO member. It is an excellent guide to strategies in reading, writing and oral communication for intermediate students. Templates, posters and organizers provide effective classroom-ready materials and instructional ideas for teachers to use with students.

Two recently released resources for Kindergarten to grade 3, *A Guide to Effective Instruction in Mathematics*, and *A Guide to Effective Instruction in Reading* are also very useful documents. Each school received copies of the documents with accompanying CDs. Both guides provide teachers with a balance of theoretical information and practical activities to incorporate into their classroom practice. The guide for reading focuses on the components of a balanced literacy program while the guide for math focuses on the number sense and numeration strand. A compendium resource for both reading and mathematics will be available sometime later this spring.

Another good resource that was released last fall is the *Targeted Implemented Planning Supports, Grade 7-9 Mathematics* (TIPS). It provides innovative and practical instructional and assessment strategies. The guide is intended as a resource for teachers of grades 7 and 8 to use during the first term each year. It provides sample lessons and investigations that encourage students to become actively engaged in learning mathematics and incorporates the use of manipulatives and technology. The resource is accompanied by a CD.

Congratulations to the Ministry for working with teachers to develop these valuable resources.

#### Paralympic On-line Schools Program

The Canadian Paralympic Committee is offering a free on-line resource for teachers of grades 4-9 that provides students with a unique opportunity to learn about the paralympic movement and true Canadian sports heroes – paralympic athletes. The Paralympic Games are held two weeks after the Olympic Games in the same location, organized by the same committee. This elite sporting opportunity is for athletes with physical disabilities. For more information and to access the teacher resources go to [www.paralympic.ca](http://www.paralympic.ca).

## Campaign 200 – Preparation Time for Elementary Teachers

By now you will probably have seen ETFO's billboards, listened to our radio advertisements, or heard about the upcoming negotiations. For public elementary teachers, "*200 minutes*" is about to become a very familiar phrase.

By Christine Brown

Whether you are a regular classroom teacher, a specialist teacher, or an itinerant teacher; no matter what grade level or subject you may teach; regardless of your level of experience or qualifications – you understand better than anyone the importance of a daily block of preparation time, within the students' instructional day, in which to complete your professional duties. It would indeed be preaching to the choir to detail here the many ways in which preparation time enables you to do your job.

This article, therefore, will skip the pep talk and provide a history lesson instead – one written for the 21 percent of ETFO's non-occasional teacher members who have teaching experience of up to four years, and for the further 20 percent who have taught beyond that up to ten years. Your older colleagues on staff may remember these events. So too will many of your occasional teacher colleagues, a group which, in many ETFO locals, includes a sizable number of retired teachers.

### Building on Yesterday

Attaining 200 minutes of preparation time is often characterized as an ambitious undertaking – which is true. Yet it is also sometimes cast as an unprecedented departure from previous working conditions – which is false. Twelve years ago, the trajectory for negotiated preparation time for public elementary teachers was moving in only one direction, and that direction was up. For the 40 percent of ETFO's teacher members who were not yet in the teaching force at the time when

200 minutes was very much on the radar, here is some background.

In the mid-1970s, there were no preparation-time clauses in any public elementary collective agreements. To be sure, ad hoc, often inequitable arrangements for minimal preparation

teachers, such as physical education teachers and music teachers. These bargaining objectives proved to be complementary.

Part of the problem early on was a mindset among not only some employers but also some members of

agreements contained preparation time clauses. Not all the successes occurred in large locals, however. In 1987, all Red Lake teachers had 200 minutes of guaranteed preparation time in their agreement.



time existed in a few boards. However, as with any entitlement not guaranteed through negotiated contractual language, these precious minutes could be snatched away at will. As late as 1981, only 18 percent of collective agreements (in 14 of the then 76 school boards) contained preparation time clauses of any kind.

**One of the earliest of the large teacher bargaining units to achieve preparation time was Hamilton – which negotiated 60 minutes per week in 1982-1983.**

There as elsewhere, this required hard bargaining. These were, as well, more expansionary times. In Hamilton the push for preparation time coincided with pressure to hire more specialist

the public that the work of elementary teachers, unlike that of secondary teachers, was insufficiently taxing to require professional planning time. It has taken many years of patient explaining on the part of teachers and the unions that represent them to dispel this myth. In reading over the rationale that was proposed in local after local, it is impossible to escape the conclusion that the struggle for preparation time was equally a struggle for professional recognition and respect.

**In 1979, Ottawa had been another large local to achieve negotiated preparation time. Windsor followed suit in 1985.**

By the beginning of the 1987-1988 school year, 46 elementary collective

**In September 1987, 9,600 teachers in Metropolitan Toronto went on strike under the slogan “It’s About Time.” Eighteen days later, a collective agreement was reached which included 100 minutes of preparation time per week. This was raised to 150 minutes in the next round of negotiations.**

Part of the reason for a protracted strike was the teachers’ unwillingness to gain preparation time at the expense of concessions in class size. Province-wide, it was probably the Toronto strike which forced the government to take the issue seriously. In the week after the settlement, the Education Minister of the day, Chris Ward, stated,

"Preparation time is something that's recognized by many boards throughout the province. We can establish minimum levels." This intriguing suggestion was never implemented.

A major battle over preparation time erupted in the London local that same school year. As well, in 1990 Lambton teachers went on strike over a number of issues, including preparation time. That strike resulted in an increase in preparation time from 100 minutes per week to 160 minutes, phased in over 19 months.

This brings us to the high water mark of 1991-1992, by which time preparation time was a standard feature in most elementary collective agreements.

By now, eight locals had 200 minutes per week, three more had negotiated a phase-in of the 200 minutes for the near future, and a further two had achieved that goal for their grade 7 and 8 teachers. Four other locals were on their way with 180 minutes ... and the list continues. From Atikokan to York Region (both of which had 200 minutes), significant gains were being made with each successive bargaining round.

Today, only Ottawa-Carleton has weekly preparation time of 200 minutes. For other locals, weekly preparation time falls in the 150-160

minute range, though numerous locals have negotiated additional time in the form of extra whole or half-days. What happened? The short answer is a small left hook followed by a massive right.

In the spring of 1993, the provincial government of the day enacted its "Expenditure Control Plan," designed to cut public spending significantly. Teachers and other public sector bargaining units felt the pinch at the bargaining table. This was soon followed by "Social Contract" legislation in the summer of 1993, which imposed wage freezes (by cancelling duly negotiated pay increases and increments), wage cuts (in the form of mandatory unpaid days off), and staffing cuts for workers across the public sector.

Teachers fought to protect their preparation time. Nevertheless, over the next three years 14 locals negotiated decreases in preparation time in order to "pay" for the cost of restoring increments to teachers whose pay had been frozen on the grid. However, a great many of these concessions were specifically negotiated to be time definite; i.e., once increments had been restored, preparation time was slated to revert to its previous, higher levels. In other words, it all might have been just a detour, rather than a change of direction.

However, in January of 1996, i.e., under the next government, then Education Minister John Snobelen very publicly targeted elementary preparation time as a "non-classroom expenditure" that could easily be capped at 100 minutes per week. In response to this and similar attacks on teachers' negotiated rights, 35,000 teachers converged on Queen's Park

in a rally organized by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA). Over the next year, the government kept up the attack on various aspects of teachers' compensation and working conditions, with assistance from taxpayer-rights groups, the usual suspects in the media and "academic experts" spinning ludicrous reports about labour costs in the education sector.

Lest we think the employers were innocent bystanders in this province-wide public relations exercise, in November 1995 the Ontario Public School Boards Association (OPSBA) had issued a press release in which it outlined its own lobbying efforts to reduce education expenditures. Prominent among OPSBA's proposals was a plan to have government simply legislate away teachers' rights to bargain preparation time.

On January 13, 1997, exactly one year after the OECTA rally, legislation was introduced which paved the way for the eventual elimination of local school board powers to levy education taxes and which reduced the number of school boards through province-wide amalgamation (eventually reducing the number of public boards from 76 to 31). One over-arching objective of both these initiatives was to reduce education expenditures, particularly that portion devoted to labour costs. Clearly the hope was to cut compensation by forcing pay levels to the lowest common denominator; i.e., salary levels which emerged in the new boards were to reflect the lowest level of the predecessor boards. In the event, this was not the outcome. However, one of several collective agreement casualties in some boards was preparation time.

In September 1997 the introduction of Bill 160, the Education Quality Improvement Act, radically altered the landscape of education funding and teacher bargaining. It also resulted in the largest job action Canada's education sector has ever seen. In the years since the dust settled, teacher negotiating teams have worked hard to restore some of the preparation time which had been lost over the years. In this they have had some measure of success. For example, nine teacher locals bargained successfully for increases to preparation time during the 2002-2003 school year.

The initiatives of the previous government have landed us with a cookie-cutter funding formula which,

among its myriad shortcomings, currently funds just 137 minutes of preparation time per week. Yet neither the funding formula nor the Education Act *limits* the amount of preparation time to that number. While ultimately the responsibility for addressing the flawed funding formula rests with the provincial government, even now funding to cover increased preparation time can be drawn from a number of areas within a school board's budget. As for the Education Act, its formulation for instructional time would seem to provide a framework which fully supports 200 minutes of preparation time.

The more critical support for the 200 minutes, however, comes from you, the teacher. In the coming months your local negotiating team will need the help and commitment of each and every member.

Christine Brown is ETFO's Research Officer for Collective Bargaining.

## Campaign 200 Goes Public!

ETFO's Campaign 200 went public this winter with billboards and radio spots across the province. The billboards were posted between February 23 and March 1, for a minimum of 28 days. The radio spot aired for seven days in late February and early March.

Keep up-to-date on Campaign 200 by visiting [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca). Download ETFO's specially designed clock screensaver. You can expect to see more media in the future as we get closer to the bargaining table.

### Radio Spot Script\*

"The following is a message from the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario.

> For weeks now, you've seen our billboards with the number "200," and you're probably wondering what "200" means to you as a parent.

- > "200" is the number of minutes elementary teachers really need each week to prepare classroom activities, mark tests, complete report cards, and design individual programs.
- > But right now, your school board is coming up short.
- > 200 minutes of preparation time will help your child succeed in school.
- > Ask a teacher why.
- > And visit our website – [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca).

\*In Ottawa, the script was changed because Ottawa teachers already have 200 minutes of preparation time. If you would like a copy of the Ottawa script, please contact Harold Vigoda at provincial office – [hvigoda@etfo.org](mailto:hvigoda@etfo.org).



## PROTECTIVE SERVICES / PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS

Harassment is taken very seriously by the courts and by human rights tribunals. No one should have to tolerate harassment in the workplace.

### Harassment and Discrimination

#### What is Harassment?

Section 10 of the Ontario Human Rights Code defines harassment as:

*“engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably be known to be unwelcome.”*

The definition includes three elements that must be met to prove harassment:

#### A course of conduct or comment

- Usually harassment will be ongoing conduct or comment. However, human rights tribunals and courts have recognized that even one incident of vexatious conduct can be considered harassment.

#### Which is vexatious

- Whether conduct or comment is considered “vexatious” is judged according to the perception of the person on the receiving end of it, although judges and adjudicators will take into account the notion of reasonableness in determining whether conduct is vexatious.

#### Which is known or ought reasonably be known to be unwelcome

This element of harassment will be judged according to an objective standard, that is, according to what a reasonable person would think. Therefore, if a reasonable person would know that the conduct or comment was or would be considered unwelcome, it will be considered harassment.

Harassment based on any prohibited ground is discrimination and is unlawful, including harassment based on sexual orientation, race or sex (etc.).

This is similar to the definition of harassment outlined in ETFO’s Human Rights Statement, which defines harassment as:

*“engaging in offensive behaviour or conduct, on a single or repeated basis, against another person when that behaviour is known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome or unwanted.”*

Harassment may, but does not have to, include a power imbalance or perceived power differential. Harassment can occur between co-workers or between people where one person is in a position of power or perceived position of power over someone else.

Examples of behaviour that has been found to constitute harassment include

- remarks or “jokes” about race, religion, sexuality, disability, etc.;
- verbal threats, intimidation (including staring or leering), or abusive comments;
- displaying offensive pictures or posters;
- subjecting an individual to pranks, practical jokes or ridicule; and
- physical or sexual touching.

Definitions of harassment have changed over the years and will continue to evolve with changing technology. Surfing the Internet for pornography, e-mailing sexist, racist and homophobic “jokes” or photos, and using e-mail to send harassing messages to co-workers are all forms of harassment that have developed over the last decade.

### Harassment in the Workplace

As a teacher or education worker, harassment can come up in a number of ways in your workplace and in the school environment. It may involve harassment between a

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supervisor and a subordinate, among co-workers, between teachers and students, teachers and other types of staff, parents or other members of the public.

Each case would have to be looked at on its particular facts to see whether or not it falls under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, a particular board policy or the collective agreement.

A teacher or education worker may be involved as a complainant, as a respondent or as a member of a school environment that is claiming to be “poisoned” by harassment.

Not all conduct, however, falls under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. It must be improper or offensive conduct that falls under one of the prohibitive grounds in order to be covered by the *Code*. Other conduct may be covered by board policies or collective agreements. Not all improper conduct is covered by harassment law, but for the conduct that is covered by the *Code* or the board policies, there is a wide variety of remedies for ensuring the workplace is free from harassment and discrimination.

Not all policies cover, for example, issues involving parents or members of the public. In the case of questions with respect to harassment and/or discrimination, you should contact your local or provincial federation office and look at the policies or collective agreement in your particular board.

**Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination**  
The *Ontario Human Rights Code* prohibits discrimination on the following grounds:

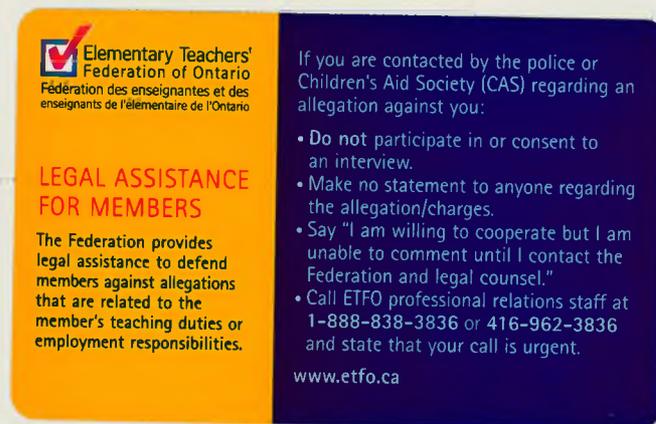
- race
- place of origin
- ethnic origin
- creed
- sex
- age
- marital status
- family status
- disability
- receipt of public assistance
- ancestry
- colour
- citizenship
- religion
- sexual orientation
- record of offences
- same-sex partnership status

Harassment on the basis of a prohibited ground is considered discrimination and is prohibited by the *Code*. All workplaces must comply with the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. Collective agreements and board policies at a minimum comply with the *Code*, but many collective agreements and board policies expand the grounds of discrimination (for example, to personal harassment). Each policy should be reviewed to see what types of discrimination are covered and to whom the policy applies.

Harassment is taken very seriously by the courts and by human rights tribunals. No one should have to tolerate harassment in the workplace, and if it is covered by the *Code*, collective agreement or board policy, there are a variety of remedies for ensuring the harassment stops and that the workplace is free from harassment.

## Legal Assistance for Members

The Federation provides legal assistance to defend members against allegations that are related to the member’s teaching duties or employment responsibilities. Please keep the attached card in your purse or wallet. It outlines what you should do in the event you are contacted by police.



The card is divided into two main sections: a yellow top section with the ETFO logo and name, and a dark blue bottom section with legal advice. The yellow section contains the ETFO logo (a red checkmark in a square) and the text 'Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario' and 'Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'élémentaire de l'Ontario'. The dark blue section has the heading 'LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR MEMBERS' in yellow, followed by the text 'The Federation provides legal assistance to defend members against allegations that are related to the member's teaching duties or employment responsibilities.' and a list of instructions: 'If you are contacted by the police or Children's Aid Society (CAS) regarding an allegation against you: • Do not participate in or consent to an interview. • Make no statement to anyone regarding the allegation/charges. • Say "I am willing to cooperate but I am unable to comment until I contact the Federation and legal counsel." • Call ETFO professional relations staff at 1-888-838-3836 or 416-962-3836 and state that your call is urgent.' The website 'www.etfo.ca' is listed at the bottom.

# Mentoring New Teachers

By Kathy Clarke and Kelly Hayes

DATA FROM THE ONTARIO TEACHERS' PENSION PLAN INDICATES THAT 18 PERCENT OF NEW TEACHERS ARE AT RISK OF LEAVING THE PROFESSION.

These teachers expressed dissatisfaction with their teaching experience; many expressed a loss of confidence in their own teaching skills. They also expressed a sense of "hurt" about what they saw as a lack of respect and recognition for their efforts, both within the profession and in the general public.

This loss of new teachers is damaging both to our education system and to the individuals themselves. To become confident and effective members of their new profession, beginning teachers need the support and guidance of master, or mentor, teachers.

The first years of teaching are stressful and challenging. New teachers must plan lessons, organize paperwork, manage classroom behaviour, teach an unfamiliar curriculum, interact with students, staff and parents, and yet remain energetic, positive and dynamic. Often they feel isolated and disillusioned. A formal induction and mentorship program could "open the doors" and provide educational, personal, and emotional support for these protégés.

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's Induction and Mentorship program promotes the personal and professional well-

being of beginning teachers through formal induction workshops and a comprehensive mentorship program.

Each pair of teachers (mentor and protégé) receives eight days of Learning Team Time (LTT) to build a mentoring contract that meets the needs of the new teacher. Mentors are invited to training sessions that focus on the stages of mentoring, active listening, problem solving, building effective mentoring relationships, and planning for professional growth.

To confirm the value of this program, E-BEST, the school board's new research service, is collaborating with Brock University, the Ministry of Education and the Ontario College of Teachers to conduct formal evaluations. Mentors and protégés offer insights through their electronic learning journals. They also complete questionnaires at the beginning, mid-point and end of the school year.

Each team builds a professional work folder to celebrate accomplishments within the *Standards of Professional Practice's* five domains. Reflection, research and rewards are part of this unique program, with participants enjoying the interaction as well as the professional growth.

ETFO Hamilton-Wentworth sits on the program's steering committee. An excellent working relationship has developed between management and

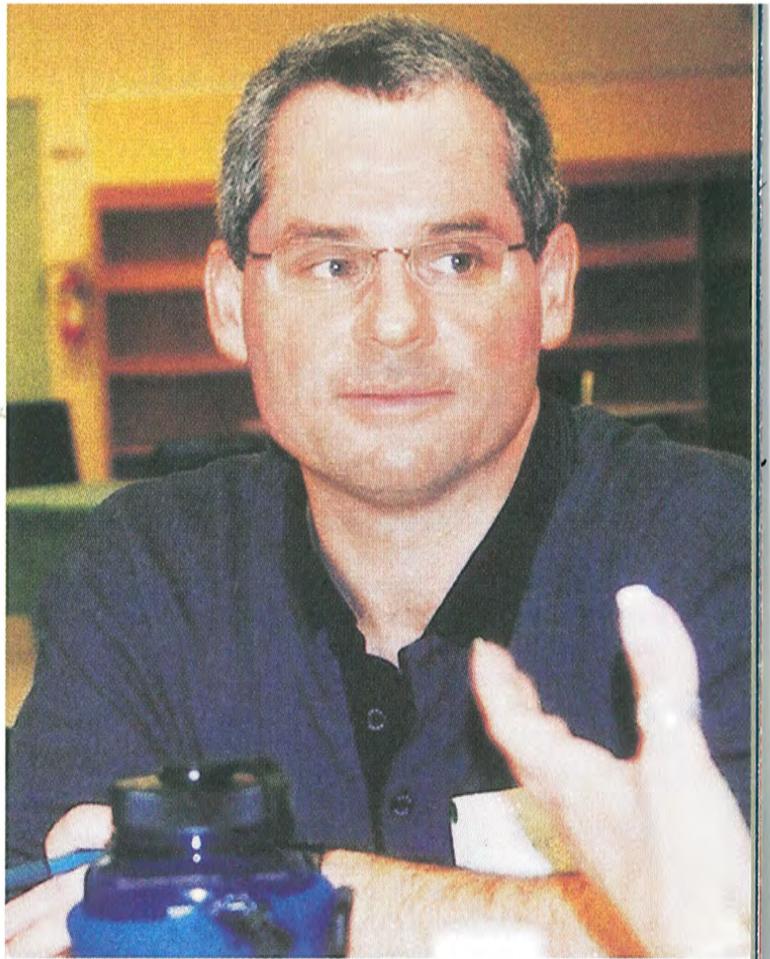
union. The respect shown for the collective agreement and union policy and positions has allowed the local to move from simply monitoring the program to becoming more involved with it. Members have greatly appreciated the role ETFO Hamilton-Wentworth has taken in this regard.

Hamilton-Wentworth's Induction and Mentorship program respects our experienced teachers and supports our beginning teachers. We have high hopes that over the long term, it will influence teacher retention. In the meantime, the immediate benefit is that we are building professional relationships and creating a marvellous learning community!

Kathy Clarke is the principal of the Hamilton-Wentworth DSB's Teacher Induction and Mentorship Program. Kelly Hayes is the president of ETFO Hamilton-Wentworth.

Teachers participating in the mentorship program.

Photos by Charlotte Morgan



# VEUX-TU ÊTRE DANS MON ÉQUIPE?

By  
André Charlebois

La classe de français langue seconde est un milieu rempli de vitalité, de joie, de connaissances, de culture et de besoins différents. Chaque élève y arrive avec un bagage d'expériences qui reflètent sa famille et son milieu social. L'enseignant ou l'enseignante de français langue seconde doit donc adapter son programme à ces différentes exigences – un défi pour le moins difficile mais quand même réalisable.

L'apprentissage coopératif se veut une stratégie d'enseignement qui permet aux élèves d'acquérir des connaissances académiques, ainsi que des habiletés sociales qui serviront au bon fonctionnement de l'équipe, tant dans le groupe-classe qu'en dyade ou en groupe de quatre membres.

Il est aussi primordial de se rappeler qu'un des éléments les plus importants de l'apprentissage coopératif est l'interdépendance qui se crée au sein de l'équipe. Ce climat de confiance est essentiel afin que les élèves se sentent à l'aise en travaillant avec leur partenaire.

Dans la classe de français langue seconde, l'interdépendance revêt une importance encore plus grande alors que les élèves sont gênés ou hésitants afin de s'exprimer dans la langue seconde.

Il existe plusieurs stratégies qui développent l'interdépendance en classe. L'enseignant ou l'enseignante doit planifier une telle activité lors de la leçon de français, car ce sentiment de confiance n'est pas inné chez les élèves. Voici donc quelques idées simples et pratiques qui permettront aux enseignants et enseignantes de français langue seconde de mettre en pratique cet élément de l'apprentissage coopératif, tout en visant à rencontrer les attentes d'un curriculum chargé de contenu. Plaçons-nous dans le contexte suivant :

- L'enseignant ou l'enseignante de français langue seconde, programme de base, arrive dans la salle de classe, qui n'est pas la sienne.

Les élèves sont assis à leur pupitre, attendant avec impatience, l'enseignant ou l'enseignante qui saura les captiver durant les 30 minutes de la classe de français. Le défi pour l'enseignant ou l'enseignante est de taille.

- « Comment faire une activité coopérative, vite et simple, qui piquera la curiosité de mes élèves et qui les encouragera à travailler en équipe? » songe l'enseignant ou l'enseignante.
- Voici enfin quelques recettes qui simplifieront la tâche de tout enseignant ou enseignante au prise avec ce défi :

## Le jeu de cartes

Dans cette activité fort simple à réaliser, l'enseignant ou l'enseignante distribue au hasard les cartes à jouer aux élèves. Le but est de créer des groupes de deux ou quatre élèves, selon le besoin de l'activité à



## Il est aussi primordial de se rappeler qu'un des éléments les plus importants de l'apprentissage coopératif est l'interdépendance qui se crée au sein de l'équipe.

accomplir. Les directives pour le regroupement sont claires, selon le désir de l'enseignant ou l'enseignante : les élèves se regroupent ensemble, les valets ensemble, créer une suite de cartes dans la même sorte... Si le nombre d'élèves est impair, il faut que chaque membre de l'équipe ait un rôle précis lors de la tâche à accomplir afin que personne ne soit laissé de côté.

Afin d'assurer un meilleur équilibre dans le groupe, l'enseignant ou l'enseignante peut ajouter d'autres directives, telles avoir un nombre équilibré de garçons et filles. Il ou elle devrait aussi s'assurer qu'il y ait un nombre partagé d'élèves forts et d'autres qui éprouvent des difficultés dans la même équipe.

Les équipes de travail ainsi créées, l'enseignant ou l'enseignante invite les élèves à se trouver un nom qui représente le groupe. On procède ensuite à l'activité pédagogique.

### La ligne

Cette activité de formation de groupes encourage aussi les élèves à développer l'interdépendance au sein du groupe-classe, ainsi qu'à l'intérieur de leur propre équipe. Alors que l'enseignant ou l'enseignante de français de base continue à se promener de classe en classe, il est parfois difficile d'organiser les élèves en équipes en se servant de stratégies plus exigeantes. Le niveau de langue doit être adapté au niveau des élèves, tout en leur permettant de bouger et d'avoir le sentiment d'accomplir une activité valorisante et ce, dans la langue seconde.

Dans cette activité, encore fort simple à comprendre et à réaliser, l'enseignant ou l'enseignante invite les élèves à se lever et de se placer en ligne selon un ordre précis et déterminé. Par exemple, on peut inviter les élèves à se placer en ligne selon la date de leur anniversaire. Les élèves posent la question : « Quelle est la date de ton anniversaire? » à leurs camarades. Une fois la date trouvée,

l'élève dit « Je vais ici » et se place au bon endroit dans la ligne.

Les questions posées aux élèves peuvent varier selon le thème à l'étude (les vêtements, les animaux, les nombres ...), l'âge des enfants, leur rang dans la famille, les couleurs préférées placées selon les couleurs de l'arc-en-ciel. ... Enfin, toute question à laquelle les élèves peuvent répondre en un mot s'avère le genre de question qui permet de réaliser cette activité.

Une fois la ligne créée, l'enseignant ou l'enseignante peut maintenant faire une équipe en comptant les élèves par groupe de deux ou quatre, selon les besoins de la tâche. Les élèves aiment cette activité car elle permet à tous et chacun de se déplacer, de parler français dans un cadre précis et de rencontrer des camarades de classe.

L'interdépendance commence à se créer alors que les élèves partagent maintenant un point commun au sein de l'équipe. Il est important pour l'enseignant ou l'enseignante de se servir de cette connaissance des élèves entre eux.

### Le passeport

Cette activité a pour but de mousser l'interdépendance au sein des équipes qui ont déjà été formées. Les applications de cette activité peuvent être utiles afin de combler un bon nombre de besoins dans l'apprentissage coopératif.

Pour cette activité, il est nécessaire que chaque élève ait une carte de fichier ou une feuille de papier pliée en deux. L'élève écrit son nom dans le milieu de la fiche et divise le reste de la fiche en quatre parties. Chaque partie de la fiche servira à dessiner ou écrire une caractéristique personnelle de l'élève.

Selon le niveau de langue qu'ont acquis les élèves, l'enseignant ou l'enseignante invite chacune et chacun de répondre à la question, trouver un énoncé ou faire un dessin qui illustre la réponse.

Le but de cette activité est de permettre aux élèves de partager certains

points d'intérêt personnel, tout en apprenant à connaître ses camarades de classe.

Ainsi, l'élève est invité à écrire ou dessiner, selon le cas, des caractéristiques sur les points suivants : date de naissance, animal préféré, lieu préféré, endroit où il habite, un symbole qui le représente. Enfin, tout ce qui peut motiver les élèves à parler français, selon ses capacités, tout en partageant des points personnels, sont des prétextes afin de mieux connaître les élèves.

Les élèves sont ensuite invités à partager le contenu de leur passeport avec les membres de leur équipe. L'enseignant ou l'enseignante recueille ensuite tous les passeports et peut ensuite s'en servir afin d'exploiter des stratégies coopératives avec ses élèves. Il peut être préférable de faire cette activité un peu plus tard durant l'année scolaire, alors que les élèves auront acquis une meilleure connaissance de la langue et auront aussi connu des situations d'apprentissage coopératif.

Ces quelques suggestions d'activités coopératives ont servi à maintes reprises chez les enseignants et enseignantes de français langue seconde à faire la mise en œuvre de l'apprentissage coopératif chez leurs élèves. Il s'agit maintenant pour vous d'en faire l'essai, tout en procédant à petits pas, en vous assurant ainsi d'un véritable succès.

Ressource : Jim Howden, Huguette Martin, *La coopération au fil des jours*, Éditions Chenelière/McGraw-Hill, Montréal, 1997

André Charlebois recently retired as education coordinator, second languages, with the Upper Canada DSB. He is currently a professor at the University of Ottawa, where he teaches undergraduate students in the second language teaching program.

“To empathize with people of the past, we need to know their circumstances, and the era in which they lived. We need to know the mood of the time, the conflicts and the feelings of the different actors.”

Too often our texts fail to develop empathy because certain groups are not depicted as real people acting on their own behalf. Aboriginal peoples especially are presented as ahistorically situated, not acting on, but only reacting to, their environment, and their victimization.

### Activity

Read *Canada Revisited: Aboriginal Peoples and European Explorers*. Answer the following questions.

1. Pages 26 to 28 and 124 to 130 are stories about two groups that lived in Canada long ago, Vikings and the Siksika. How is each group described? Create a chart to show the similarities and differences in each group.
2. Who were the important people in each group?
3. What do you know about the important events in each group?
4. What are the differences in the way the two groups are described?

#### QUESTION 1 – students’ response Vikings

- explored far places
- wore tunics and real clothes
- used metal tools
- traded with other people

#### Siksika

- just travelled to look for food
- wore furs and skins
- used every part of the buffalo
- looked around to find things

#### QUESTIONS 2-3 – students’ response

Students listed up to five names and five dated events describing the Vikings. They could not find any names of Siksika persons or any events bearing dates.

#### QUESTIONS 2-3 – students’ response (paraphrased)

The Vikings are depicted as agents who made extraordinary choices. As historical agents, they are seen as real people. We can also ask and answer the following questions:

- What were the issues that challenged the group?
- What was the mood of the people?
- What were their particular hopes and fears?
- How did leaders rally their people?

Conversely, texts portray the Siksika as a group who just happened to exist, rather than as recognizable persons. They are not agents making specific decisions. Instead, they are creatures melded into their environments, reacting only to the most basic of needs.

This led to the question “How did the two groups change?” The class replied as follows:

- The Vikings responded to challenges with a series of deeds. For example, they ventured to distant places when faced with a shortage of land.
- The Siksika, however, experienced no extraordinary changes. They probably still live in the same way as they have been living for thousands of years.

Clearly, one cannot empathize with people who lack all manner of agency. Conversely, my students gained understanding of and empathy towards historical actors in other contexts.

Knowing that students can more easily do this by playing roles that are well supported with information, we began with the European characters described in our textbooks and performed the following drama. Later, we will see another form of drama used to gain an understanding of Aboriginal peoples.

### Drama Activity

#### ACT OUT THE DEBATE ABOUT THE TREATY OF TORDESILLAS.

Read pages 143 to 147 of *Canada Revisited*.

There is a dispute amongst European nations about which should have a monopoly over the newly found lands. The class will enact the debate.

- As a whole group discuss the following ideas. Why would Spain and Portugal want to have a trade monopoly over the newly found lands?
- In small groups, prepare the arguments of the European nations.
- One group will advise the Pope, who is the referee in this treaty process.
- Spain and Portugal will argue their cases first.
- Why would Spain and Portugal think that they have exclusive rights to the newly found lands?
- What expenses have Spain and Portugal incurred as a result of finding these lands?
- Other nations make arguments for inclusion in the treaty.
- What could be their arguments against exclusive rights?

After observing the skits performed by fellow students, the class discussed their insights. Through drama, they posed the following possibilities:

- Some countries felt entitled to new lands because they had spent a good deal of money to finance the expeditions.
- Other countries argued that they should all share the new land because sharing was a good thing for Christian countries to do.
- Some countries argued that if Spain and Portugal gained exclusive rights, they might use their wealth to threaten other European nations.

Ordinarily, these ideas would be too complex for 10-year-olds to comprehend. Often such details are listed and students simply memorize and recite them for tests. On the other hand, acting out the historical drama was easy for the students. Because they were play-acting, not answering test questions, they were comfortable making inferences. When they reflected on their dramas through writing newspaper reports, most displayed a complex understanding of the Age of Exploration. They were able to explain the European explorers' milieu, as well as the political games, moralistic arguments, and material temptations that guided their enterprises.

Once historical empathy was practised, the class was ready to question the legacy of the European attitudes towards Aboriginal peoples. The objective was to help students make critical judgments about history. To avoid simple moralistic and anachronistic conclusions about Europeans, I immersed my class in the sixteenth century Vatican debates over human rights.

To experience the multiple perspectives of Europeans, the class first played the part of the Dominican friars, whose mission was to protect the indigenous peoples in the Spanish colonies. The actions of these priests are well documented in the writings of Bartolome de las Casas and *Re-thinking Columbus*. Once briefed, the students were asked to act the roles of opposing historical characters and to debate the inhumane treatment of the Native people by their conquerors.

These activities helped students understand the pluralism of European interests existing during this era. Students came to appreciate that not all Europeans were insensitive toward Native peoples. This sympathetic awareness allowed the class to conduct a balanced investigation into controversial and genocidal actions. Refraining from making judgments about Europeans in general also shows students that moral judgment is not historically relative. Within every epoch, people took risks and stood up against injustice.

Cultivating a sympathetic attitude, even when it results in moral outrage, can be a valid educational goal. To help students become active members of society, education should address complacency. For example, one student who expressed a fatalistic view of history said, "If Columbus had not enslaved the Natives, someone else would have." Bringing out the story of the Dominicans provides an alternative to historical fatalism. We learn that atrocities are often challenged by protest. Witnessing the history of protest shows it to be a legitimate reaction against injustice. It also illustrates the diverse obligations of citizenship.

Developing historical consciousness is not only about investigating moral issues; it is also about historical literacy, i.e., exploring truths by juxtaposing divergent versions of the same event. But what of those events that are without documented alternative perspectives?

Traditional historians have paid little attention to Native history, partially because few written records remain. With little or no alternative accounts to study, it appears impossible to develop proper historical consciousness about Native peoples. Must we limit ourselves to a single version of history, even when that version was written by outsiders?

The primary chroniclers of Native history were the French Jesuits. These historians were openly hostile to First Nations' beliefs and customs. Hence, accounts of the "massacre" of the Wendats by the Haudeneshoni may have been biased. To find an alternative account of this period, we can emulate the work of ethno-historians.

As Bruce Trigger, the renowned authority on Iroquois history, says "Only rarely is enough historical evidence available ...to permit historians to understand behaviour at the individual (level). ...On the other hand it is possible to do more at the level of the interest group. ...Common interests cut across ethnic divisions and united various Indians and Europeans in opposition to their own people."

According to Trigger, the main Wendat interest groups were the factions dividing the peace and war chiefs, each vying for prestige. Next, there were the traditionalists, who favoured old customs, such as communal sharing. Opposition came from those who sought to make individual profits. There was also competition between power groups, for example, the woman, versus the ambitious young men.

**"Developing historical consciousness is not only about investigating moral issues. It is also about historical literacy, i.e., exploring truths by juxtaposing divergent versions of the same event."**

Playing out these rivalries can construct an alternative explanation for the Wendat diaspora.

First, discuss the possible biases in the Jesuit accounts. Next, use historical empathy, in combination with the deductive techniques of ethno-historians, to reconstruct what might have happened to the Wendat. The intent would be to create an experiential base for understanding Native peoples as historical agents dealing with challenges.

### Drama Activity

#### ACTING AS WENDAT INTEREST GROUPS

- Debate whether the Wendat should ally themselves with the Iroquois or the French. Students choose roles as council members and represent different perspectives.
- Assemble a general council to decide what to do about the mass deaths resulting from European diseases, the conflicts with the Haudenenshoni, and the possibilities of varying alliances.

#### Student roles

- Supporters of woman elders
- Traditional traders who practised communal sharing
- Nouveaux riches who believed in keeping the fruits of their own commerce
- Peace chiefs who believed in negotiating compromises
- War chiefs who gained esteem through combat
- Reformers who advocated a new form of social hierarchy

- Religious people who wanted to safeguard the old culture and beliefs
- New Christian converts

The students, who were practiced in using historical drama, worked in groups to develop their positions. During the enactment of the council debate, even students who normally perform poorly in traditional history assignments were eager to participate. It seems that, as children develop a concept of historical agency, they engage personally in action. Examples of their arguments included the following:

- Council members should be aware they could lose their positions by allying with the French. The French are sexist and want the Wendat men to have power over women.
- Allying themselves with the French would destroy any possibility of a truce between the Wendat and the Haudenenshoni.
- The Wendat should negotiate a truce with the Haudenenshoni and trade with the English instead of the French.
- The English should not to be trusted because they have enslaved the Wendats' cousins, the Tuscurora.

The drama constructed a new interpretation of a historic event, the dispersion of the Wendats: that is, it could have resulted from civil war between Wendats, abetted by Haudenenshoni interference. This possibility is supported by documented evidence of conflicts between Wendat interest groups and by the fact that many Wendats were invited to resettle in Haudenenshoni territory. Equally

important is the fact that this thesis was not taught through traditional methods, but constructed by students making personal choices as real people.

In conclusion, what have these lessons achieved? Perhaps some students learned that history is not just a series of events to be memorized. Rather, history is something we can construct, both conceptually and practically, through enacting history and participatory citizenship. After all, knowing the content of history is not as important as learning the role of agency.

"I believe this latter approach has merits in Canadian citizenship education. Peter Seixas has found that teachers not adequately trained in their disciplines tend to teach history/social studies as 'fixed knowledge' not open to conflicting interpretations and analysis. The result is that students are likely to receive it passively, often through traditional lectures, and subsequently develop negative attitudes toward history or social studies in general. More importantly, students taught this way could withdraw from civil society convinced they do not possess the necessary competencies to participate actively in public matters." (Lévesque 2001)

Stanley Hallman-Chong is a Social, Canadian, World and Native Studies Instructional Leader with the Toronto District School Board. Part I of "Toward a Historical Consciousness" was published in the Winter 2004 issue of *Voice*.

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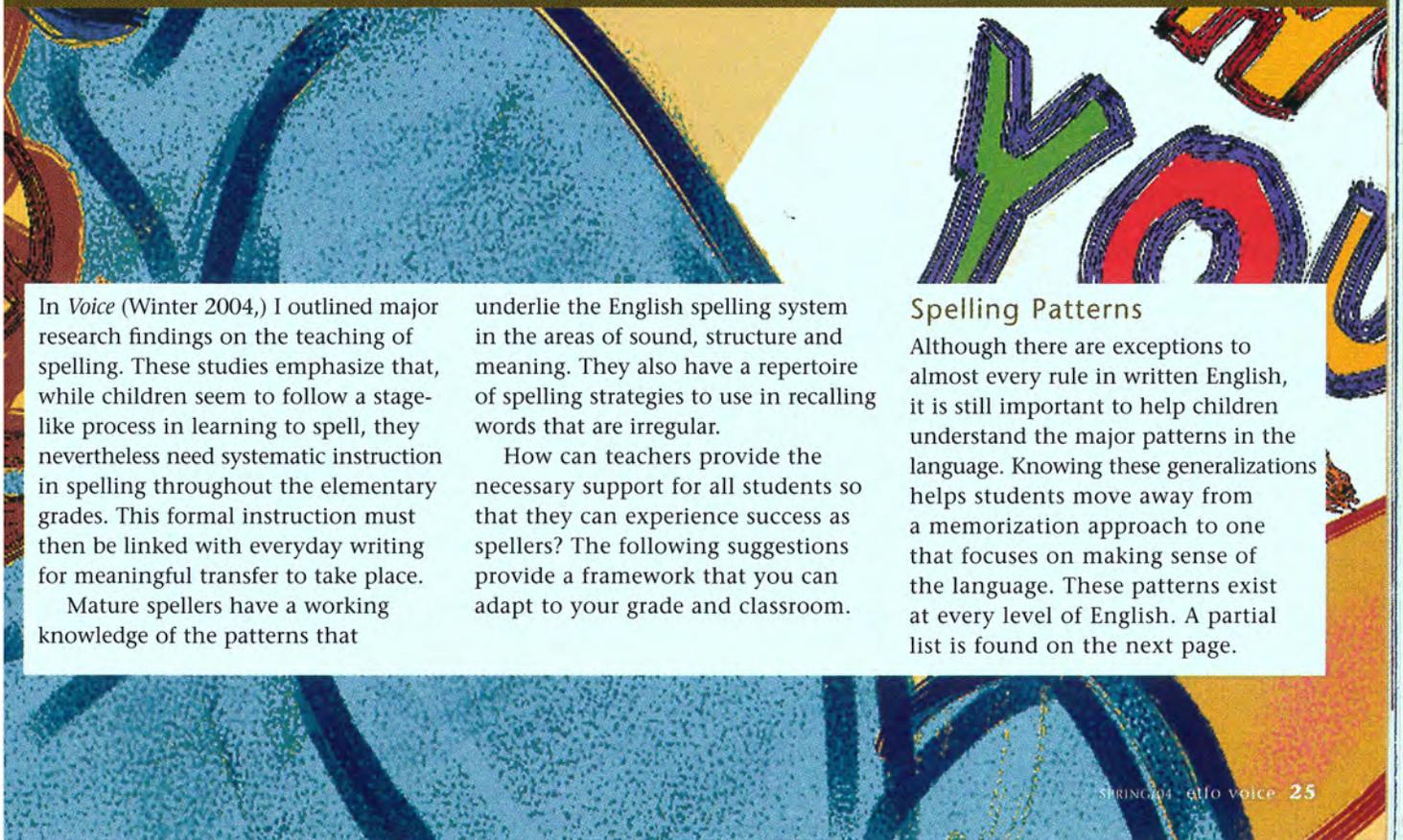


Part Two of a Two Part Series

# Spelling: Connecting the Pieces

Research Into Practice

By Ruth McQuirter Scott, Ed.D.



In *Voice* (Winter 2004,) I outlined major research findings on the teaching of spelling. These studies emphasize that, while children seem to follow a stage-like process in learning to spell, they nevertheless need systematic instruction in spelling throughout the elementary grades. This formal instruction must then be linked with everyday writing for meaningful transfer to take place.

Mature spellers have a working knowledge of the patterns that

underlie the English spelling system in the areas of sound, structure and meaning. They also have a repertoire of spelling strategies to use in recalling words that are irregular.

How can teachers provide the necessary support for all students so that they can experience success as spellers? The following suggestions provide a framework that you can adapt to your grade and classroom.

## Spelling Patterns

Although there are exceptions to almost every rule in written English, it is still important to help children understand the major patterns in the language. Knowing these generalizations helps students move away from a memorization approach to one that focuses on making sense of the language. These patterns exist at every level of English. A partial list is found on the next page.

Sound Patterns	Structural Patterns	Meaning Patterns
vowel patterns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short vowels</li> <li>• long vowels</li> <li>• r-controlled vowels, (/er/, /ar/, /or/)</li> <li>• schwa vowels (about)</li> <li>• diphthongs (/ou/, /oi/)</li> </ul> consonant patterns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• initial and final consonants</li> <li>• consonant clusters, blends, digraphs</li> </ul>	syllables stress patterns adding endings to base words: plurals, -ed and -ing, suffixes changes to base words when endings added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• doubling, e-drop, y to i</li> </ul> contractions possessives hyphens	compound words base and root words past tense markers (-ed) plural markers homophones prefixes and suffixes

Teachers have to decide, of course, which patterns to address in a specific grade. Even within a grade, the answers will vary depending on the backgrounds of the students. One approach is to be aware of the developmental spelling levels of students in your class and to link spelling concepts with these stages. Published material is available that describes the developmental continuum for spelling and provides helpful information for assessing students. Typically, however, the stages are not linked to grades, and the advice about which concepts to teach at each grade is fairly general. This approach is perhaps best suited to small classes where teachers can assess each child's development and individualize the spelling program.

A reputable published program of spelling texts based on the developmental continuum for learning to spell can address many of the concerns above. Whether teachers

consult the scope and sequence as a reference or use the actual program, these texts are usually linked closely with provincial curriculum documents and with typical benchmarks for students at a given grade. The program selected must be flexible to allow for the many levels of ability in a class, and should invite students to add their own words to the word list.

In addition to this formal approach to studying spelling patterns, it is vital to address patterns throughout the school curriculum. These opportunities help to reinforce and consolidate learning that may have been introduced in a more structured manner. An inquiry approach, which encourages students to spot patterns rather than memorize rules, is most effective. You can use word sorts and Venn diagrams to help your students see these generalizations.

For example, as part of a grade 3 social studies unit on urban and rural communities, have students sort the words below into two categories: short and long vowels.

- lakes
- signs
- water
- roads
- village
- crosswalk
- streets
- pond
- homes
- land

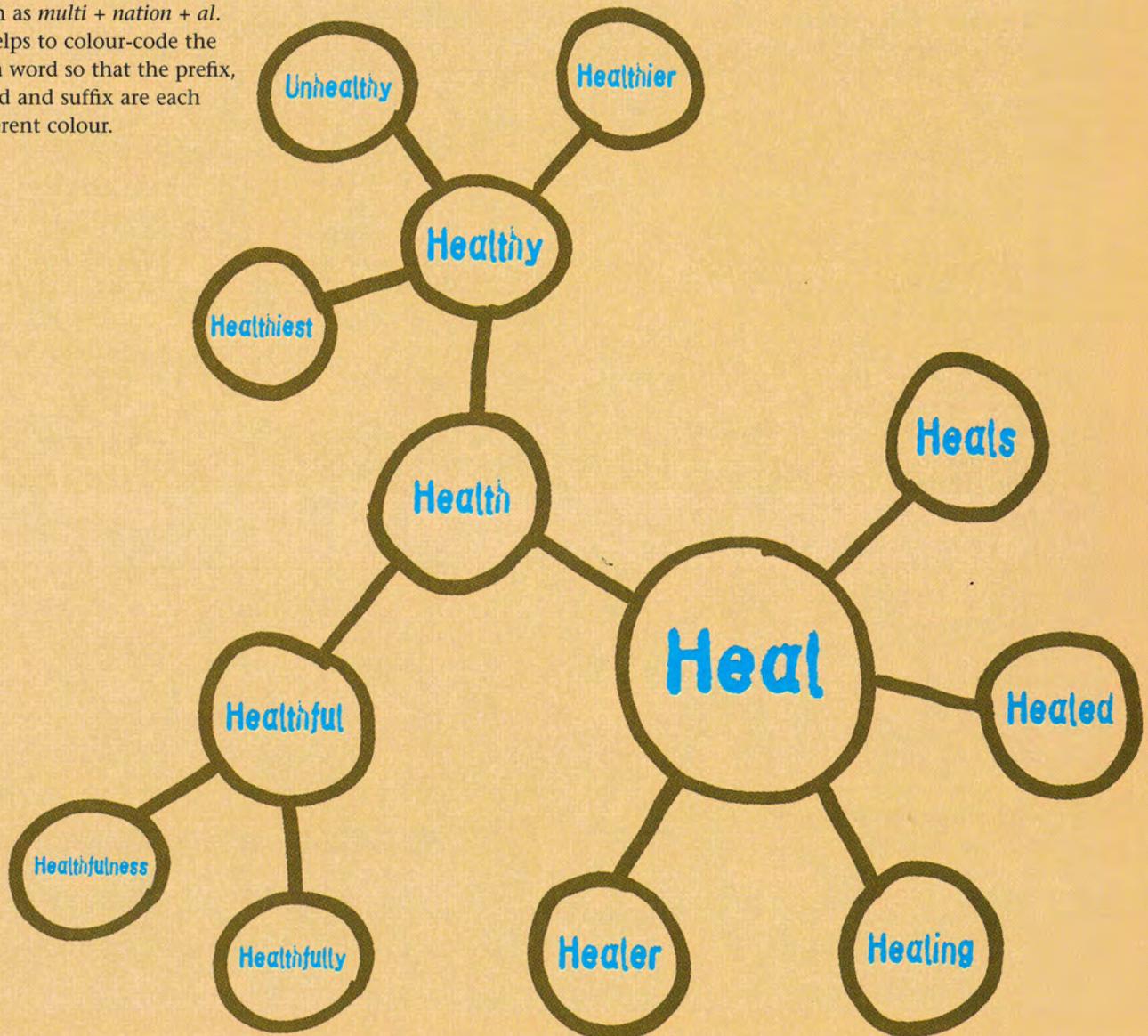
To make the activity more challenging, add new words to the mix and ask students to arrange the set on a Venn diagram. The new words *energy*, *city*, and *arena* would be placed in the overlapping parts of the intersecting circles since they contain both long and short vowels. Your students could then find other words related to communities and categorize them in the same way.

“Teachers have to decide, of course, which patterns to address at a specific grade level. Even within a grade, the answers will vary depending on the backgrounds of the students. One approach is to be aware of the developmental spelling levels of students in your class and to link spelling concepts with these stages.”

Word building becomes an increasingly important skill as students encounter longer words in their reading and try to use them in their writing. Demonstrate how long words often result from a prefix and/or suffix being added to a base or root word. For example, multinational can be shown as *multi + nation + al*. It also helps to colour-code the parts of a word so that the prefix, base word and suffix are each in a different colour.

Word webs also help students to see how words are connected through common bases. The web below is built from the base word *heal* and could be explored in the Healthy Living component of the Health and Physical Education curriculum.

Children in the primary grades may be able to supply only a few extensions for *heal*, while intermediate students will likely be aware of many more. If some of your students are unfamiliar with the word *healthful* and its derivatives, this would be a good chance to check the meaning in a dictionary.



"Word building becomes an increasingly important skill as students encounter longer words in their reading and try to use them in their writing. Demonstrate how long words often result from a prefix and/or suffix being added to a base or root word."

Sound Patterns	Examples
<p><b>Auditory</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sound-out (sound-symbol matching)</li> <li>• clapping or tapping syllables</li> <li>• listening for rhyming patterns</li> <li>• spelling words out loud</li> <li>• pronouncing silent letters</li> <li>• exaggerating hard-to-hear sounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• b-a-n-d</li> <li>• ad.ven.ture</li> <li>• <u>light</u>, <u>might</u></li> <li>• <u>scissors</u></li> <li>• library</li> </ul>
<p><b>Visual</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cloze</li> <li>• shape or configuration</li> <li>• what looks right? Try it books</li> <li>• personal word walls</li> <li>• sorting words by visual patterns</li> <li>• highlighting tricky letters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• su_prise; helm_t</li> <li>• sign [draw shape around the word]</li> <li>• because, becuz, because</li> <li>• <u>psychology</u>; <u>psychic</u></li> <li>• <u>sheriff</u>; <u>sheriff</u></li> </ul>
<p><b>Tactile</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• writing words in the air</li> <li>• writing on a partner's back</li> <li>• writing in sand, clay, salt or rice</li> <li>• sorting word cards and playing tactile word games</li> <li>• making words</li> <li>• illustrating words</li> <li>• sorting words in hoops</li> <li>• using a keyboard or chalkboard</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Meaning Strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sorting related words</li> <li>• combining prefixes, base and suffixes</li> <li>• word history</li> <li>• borrowed words</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Memory Tricks and Mnemonics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• linking letters to words</li> <li>• linking words with patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• radar: <u>radio</u> <u>detecting</u> and <u>ranging</u></li> <li>• <u>scissors</u>; <u>science</u>: I need <u>scissors</u> in <u>science</u></li> </ul>

"Good writing is based on a healthy friendship between imagination and technique. It can and must be taught without slighting either."

MARJORIE FRANK

## Spelling Strategies

Mature spellers not only understand the basic patterns underlying written English; they also are aware that many English words have irregular spellings. These tricky words include short high-frequency words such as *said*, long words borrowed from other languages such as *cappuccino*, and schwa vowels in unstressed syllables, as in "*strategy*."

Skilled spellers have a tool kit of spelling strategies that they use to recall these challenging words. To a certain degree, the use of strategies follows a developmental curve, with sound-based strategies being most prevalent in the early grades, but research has shown that even young children use a mixture of strategies when learning to spell.

Teachers can help children broaden the range of strategies they use, since poor spellers tend to have a very small repertoire of spelling strategies. It is also important to help children realize which strategies work best for specific words. For example, a sounding-out approach to words with silent letters, such as *knight*, would be ineffective, but this strategy does work well for many other words. When all else fails, we need to resort to mnemonics, or memory tricks. A familiar example of a mnemonic is to remember the double *s* in *dessert* by saying "I like seconds for dessert" or "I love strawberry shortcake for dessert."

Spelling strategies work best when students are involved in reflecting on their own processes. Model the spelling strategies when teaching a difficult word. Have the class suggest strategies for spelling tricky words.

The mnemonics they choose may not be yours, but they will be remembered and used more readily than if you present just a list of spelling strategies as in the chart. This list can be a useful reference for you and your students, but it can only be brought to life through application in everyday spelling challenges. Once your students are familiar with these strategies and others, they can place the list in their writing portfolios and refer to it during proofreading conferences or while editing their own work.

A more thorough explanation of these spelling strategies is found in *Spelling: Connecting the Pieces* (McQuirter and Siamon, 2004).

## Spelling and Writing

The study of spelling patterns and strategies will remain just an abstract activity unless students see how this knowledge will improve their writing. A spelling conscience develops when students care about communicating their thoughts on paper and realize that correct spelling is a courtesy to the reader. A rich writing program that engages students personally is a crucial link between the formal study of spelling and its transference to everyday writing.

Nearly 20 years ago, Marjorie Frank wrote, "Good writing is based on a healthy friendship between imagination and technique. It can and must be taught without slighting either." This advice is as relevant today as it was in 1979. Effective teachers know how to balance the formal study of important concepts with reinforcement throughout the day. They know how to connect the pieces.

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Ruth McQuirter Scott is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education, Brock University. She is the co-author of *Spelling: Connecting the Pieces* (2004), Gage/Nelson.

## Equity and Social Justice Pie

Social justice and equity are not about everyone getting a piece of the pie; it's about everyone getting a whole pie!

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup of respect
- 2 grams of hope
- 2 litres of advocacy
- 3 kilograms of allies
- 1 teaspoon of listening
- 1 dash of accountability

### Directions:

- Build a strong supportive crust of allies.
- Continue to smooth crust with open dialogue and good communication.
- Support the crust with patience when it starts to flake.
- Blend in gender equity, inclusion, sexual orientation, socio-economic equity, aboriginal, racial, ethno-cultural and faith communities.
- Bake for a year—yes equity work takes time—there are no simple no-bake solutions.
- Let cool for 30 seconds. Once you've created this marvellous pie why wait? Enjoy and celebrate your accomplishments!

*Baked by ETFO Executive Assistant Karen Brown*

## Diversity Workshop

Members of ETFO's equity-focused standing committees met together on a Saturday in January for a joint training session. Objectives of the training included

- exploring individual perspectives on equity;
- seeing equity work through a broad perspective; and
- giving committee members an opportunity to reflect on their roles in promoting equity within ETFO.

Led by Dr. Didi Khayatt from the Faculty of Education at York University, committee members discussed each committee's mandate and particular perspective. In exploring the links among the various "isms" that provide the focus of each committee's work, members also confronted the layers, conflicts and combinations of individual identity that make working for social justice and equity in daily life so complex.

Participants' feedback included the following comments:

- I learned that equity and social justice is easy to say, hard to do.
- I learned that one of the greatest barriers and bridges to establishing equity and social justice is communication (language). When we share from our own experiences and listen to others, we "hear" from those experiences and it complicates things!
- I learned that human rights are non-negotiable.
- I learned that ETFO definitely provides a safe environment that promotes understanding.

The following committees participated:

- Aboriginal Education Committee
- Anti-Racist Education Committee
- Disability Issues Committee
- Human Rights Committee
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members Committee
- Status of Women Committee

## Occasional Teaching for Today's Diverse Classrooms: A Workshop for Occasional Teachers

Occasional teachers today are facing classrooms of students with ever-growing needs. A new workshop has been developed specifically for teachers who choose this demanding and unique profession.

Developed by occasional teachers, the workshop provides examples of resources, practical suggestions and opportunities for discussion, all relating to the theme of inclusion. Participants will leave with materials they can begin to use right away.

Because of the demand for this workshop, we are now booking for 2004-2005. To book a workshop, please contact Sherry Ramrattan Smith at the ETFO provincial office.

## Ontario Black History Society

The Ontario Black History Society (OBHS) strives to recognize, preserve, and promote the contributions of black peoples, and their collective histories through education, research, and co-operation. This year, the OBHS celebrated the 25th anniversary of the formal celebration of February as Black History Month with a brunch in Toronto.

The event highlighted 2004 as the International Year for the Struggle to End Slavery, and celebrated the 200th anniversary of Haiti, the first independent African country in the western hemisphere.

**Staff of ETFO's Equity and Women's Services Service Area are**

KATHLEEN LOFTUS – COORDINATOR,  
KAREN BROWN, SHERRY RAMRATTAN SMITH,  
CAROL ZAVITZ

ETFO sponsored a table of ten at the brunch, attended by over 300 people, and sent a greeting on behalf of Ontario's elementary teachers and education workers.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Spencer Crew, Executive Director and CEO of the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The next OBHS project will be the creation of a museum of African-Canadian history.

ETFO is also a sponsor of the official Black History Month poster, which commemorates the life of Rosemary Brown, social worker, human rights activist, feminist and legislator.

### First Nations and Racialized Women's Leadership

This year's First Nations and Racialized Women's Leadership Experience was held in Toronto from Thursday, March 4, to Sunday, March 7.

Thirty women from across Ontario took part in this extensive program. The topics included setting goals, confronting barriers, and taking risks as a leader. There were also many opportunities for questions, reflection and active participation.

President Emily Noble and Equity and Women's Services staff were joined on the presentation team by

- Anne Solomon (opening ceremony);
- Harmony Rice (Leadership: Community Building and Communication);

- Andrea Douglas (Personal Profile Systems Plan);
- Deneen Montour (Taking Risks as a Leader);
- Phyllis Walker (How to Put Yourself in the Mix as an Advocate for Change);
- Maedith Radlein and Robyn Turgeon (Power of Story);
- Susan Lynne and Sally Bevis (Think on Your Feet);
- Jan Beaver (Looking After Yourself);
- Azmina Mohamed,
- Reena Anand
- Jill Aoki-Barrett
- Katherine Bennett
- Jennifer Mitchell (Federation Panel)



Participants in ETFO's First Nations and Racialized Women's Leadership Experience were in Toronto from March 4-7, 2004.

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## REVIEWS

### Special Needs and Conditions

This set of 14 books about various special needs and medical conditions helps school age children (ages 5-10 years) understand and become more sensitive to others with exceptionalities. The books stress similarities amongst all children and explain differences in child-friendly terms. Possible misconceptions about some exceptionalities are also addressed.

For example, *Taking Autism to School* explains that autism is not "contagious" and that it is "nobody's fault." *Taking Tourette Syndrome to School* talks about how embarrassed students with Tourette Syndrome feel when they have sudden body tics and make vocal sounds in the classroom.

The other books in this series address A.D.D., arthritis, asthma, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, depression, diabetes, Down syndrome, dyslexia, food allergies and seizure disorder.

A quiz is included in each book, as well as a section entitled "Ten Tips for Teachers" highlighting key concepts and strategies to facilitate successful educational experiences for students with special needs.

I read three of the books in one of my primary special education classes and found that my students were able to identify with the books and were eager to discuss their personal experiences with their exceptionalities. I highly recommend this special set of books for all elementary schools as they strive for full inclusion. These books are a valuable teaching tool for teachers and students.

★★★★

Various Authors. Special Kids in School Series. Plainview, NY: Jayjo Books, Soft cover. 32 pages. Order through the [sourceresource.com](http://sourceresource.com). E-mail [info@sourceresource.com](mailto:info@sourceresource.com).

Barbara Kit is a primary special education teacher with the Toronto DSB.

### Coping in the Classroom

What do you, as a teacher, find to be the hardest part of your job? Is it the paperwork or dealing with student discipline? Evaluating students or planning lessons? Dealing with parents or with the special needs of individual pupils? Each and every teacher would give a different answer, with different qualifying reasons.

Let's face it: it's not an easy job. Les Parsons, in his new book *The Classroom Troubleshooter*, recognizes that all teachers – young,

old, beginner or veteran – need coping strategies. And he provides plenty of examples while addressing some of the philosophical issues we all deal with.

#### *The Classroom*

*Troubleshooter* deals with the multiple tasks teachers face daily. The author gives practical ideas, such as ways to cope with "the paper chase" and the marking, discipline dos and don'ts, understanding bullying, evaluation pitfalls, and ways to set up groups and manage the ensuing discussions. He offers a number of rubrics and teacher self-evaluation checklists in an easy-to-read and understand format. The teacher guideline rubrics for marking response journals, for example, will be helpful whether you are a rookie teacher or a (sort of) wily veteran.

While it is rather thin at only 120 pages, this is nevertheless a very practical book that is easy to digest; one that you will turn to over and over again for ideas and solutions. While the book is ostensibly for teachers of any grade, it would appear that much of the focus is really aimed at those in the junior and intermediate divisions. This book should help many

teachers to re-energize and save time in this hectic profession of ours.

★★★★

Parsons, Les. 2003. *The Classroom Troubleshooter*. Markham: Pembroke Publishers.

Michael Hill is an intermediate teacher with the Simcoe County DSB. He also writes a weekly column for *The Toronto Star*, is a member of the Orillia Public Library Board, and is one of the organizers of the Mariposa Folk Festival held in Orillia in July.

## Books for Children

*Pianomania* is a motivational story for all children who love to dance, sing, and play instruments, but who often do not have the opportunity, either in the classroom or at home. This book grants a child imaginative permission to make a sound journey to a new land, where random noise ultimately metamorphoses into real music.

The story opens with Priya, who seems to be about seven or eight, begging her parents to allow her to take piano lessons, and being told, "Absolutely not." She is reminded of all the projects she started and abandoned, such as the ballet lessons, the art classes and the goldfish she forgot to feed.

But Priya is driven by a determination that will transcend any attempt to thwart her.

A real piano is out of the question until her parents are sure that Priya will play it, so a compromise is made. Priya will practise on a cardboard keyboard. It is while she practises on this cardboard keyboard that she is able to hear the sounds "of birds and thunder and wind-up toys."

Eventually Priya's parents buy her a real piano, and she begins the struggle to create, in her own way, the sounds of birds and thunder. Priya becomes discouraged. She is expected to play in the fall concert. She tries to practise the proper way and enlists her friends to accompany her at the concert with their instruments. The result is chaos and "uproar."

Priya realizes that she cannot hear birds or thunder, or wind-up toys. She stops playing and listens to the din. Her thoughts crystallize. She is ready to become a real musician. As the germ of music grows within her, she will learn, step by step, to create the music she really wants to hear.

Liz Milkau's charming and animated illustrations perfectly complement author Majusha Pawagi's verbal imagery. Priya and her friends are very much

alive within these pages and should endear themselves to everyone who comes into contact with them.

This book is an excellent catalyst for language, imaginative play and music in kindergarten and in the primary grades.

★★★★

Pawagi, Maniusha. *Pianomania*. Second Story Press ISBN 1-896764-63-0 24 pages, full colour \$14.95 CDN/\$11.95 US hardcover. 2003. For ages 8 and under.

Maureen Coleman retired from the TDSB in 2003. She received the 2003 ETFO Editor's award (multi-sheet) for *Dialogue*, published by Elementary Teachers of Toronto. Maureen is now an occasional teacher in Toronto.

## Anti-Racist Education Websites

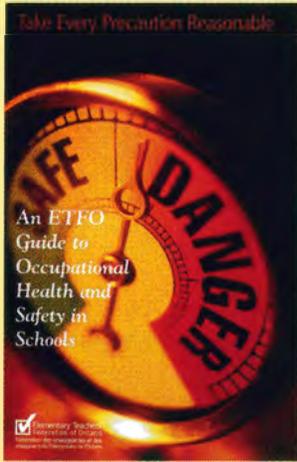
The following websites were reviewed and approved by ETFO's Anti-Racist Education Committee.

[www.bctf.ca/social/buildingbridges](http://www.bctf.ca/social/buildingbridges) – Building Bridges: Not Walls. A comprehensive website dealing with Canada's diverse society and practical methods and resources to bridge our cultural differences.

[www.pch.gc.ca/march-21-mars/](http://www.pch.gc.ca/march-21-mars/) – International Day for Elimination of Racism. Resources for students, posters, stickers, an overview of March 21. Information on Black History Month and CTF's Mathieu Da Costa Challenge.

[www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/index\\_e.cfm](http://www.pch.gc.ca/progs/multi/index_e.cfm)  
The Canadian government's multicultural website provides information on multicultural initiatives in Canada. This site offers demographics on ethnic profiles in Canada. Over three million members of visible minorities live in Canada.

[www.artistsagainstracism.org/AARMain.cfm](http://www.artistsagainstracism.org/AARMain.cfm)  
A website created by students at Ryerson University. Artists reach out as role models to youth. Various anti-racist materials, including book lists, people of prominence, classroom exercises, various activities in specific subject areas and videos.



# Health and Safety: It's About You

When you say *Occupational Health and Safety* to education workers, they start talking about what they do to keep their students safe. The focus on students is admirable, but it misses the point. *Occupational Health and Safety* is about workers.

Step back and look at your school from a different perspective. Look at it from the point of view of the worker. What affects you and your health and safety? What affects the health and safety of your colleagues? What can you do to help?

## Consider the Following Scenarios...

**A TEACHER IS GOING THROUGH A CUPBOARD IN HIS CLASSROOM** and finds powder covering a pile of papers on a shelf. While brushing the powder off, he gets it all over himself, including in his eyes, nose and mouth. Because the cupboard had been built around radiator pipes coming through the wall, an asbestos pipe elbow remained hidden until it disintegrated over the teaching materials.

**A TEACHER IS WORKING AFTER SCHOOL IN HER PORTABLE BEHIND THE SCHOOL.** The custodian has had problems with students coming into the building at night. He has been told by his maintenance supervisor to lock all the school doors, except the front door, by 4:30 p.m.. The teacher leaves for home at 6:30 p.m., by which time

it is dark. She is unaware that the school's back door is locked and that the outside lights had been recently broken by vandals. To reach her vehicle, the teacher must walk to the parking lot in front of the building. A small gang of teenagers is hanging out at the back of the school. The gang comes to surround the portable as the teacher starts to leave.

**THE SHELVES HOLDING GYM EQUIPMENT IN THE STORAGE ROOM WERE HARD TO REACH.** As a result, teachers routinely stood on a chair to reach what they needed. Stepping on the chair was so automatic that staff were surprised when a teacher fell and broke her ankle. The injured teacher was off work for months. Her collective agreement had a half sick day deducted to top up WSIB payments. It was the teacher's retiring year. She had hoped her 200 accumulated sick days would all count toward a service gratuity.

**A TEACHER IS WORKING WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL STUDENT WHO IS USUALLY CO-OPERATIVE BUT HAS OCCASIONAL AGGRESSIVE OUTBURSTS.** On one occasion, the student tries to attack another student. When the teacher restrains the student, she is bitten on the chest and the skin is broken. The teacher doesn't want to cause problems for the student and her parents, yet was amazed that such a small student could cause such a bad

bite. She's embarrassed she let it happen and doesn't tell anyone of her injury. Months later, when the long-term medical consequences of the severely infected wound are a reality, WSIB has no record of the incident.

**A TEACHER PLANS A SKATING TRIP TO THE LOCAL ARENA.** All the necessary high-risk field trip forms are complete. Everyone is wearing a helmet as required. When his students beg him to join them on the ice, the teacher does so with enthusiasm that belies the fact he has not been on skates for 10 years. Later, after surgery for a shattered bone in his left arm, he complains he is getting old. His staff colleagues send flowers. No one calls the Ministry of Labour to report a critical injury because it was a skating trip injury, not something that happened at work.

These scenarios are typical of worker health and safety issues that occur in schools. In each case, communication, knowledge, following procedures and specific training would stop similar incidents from recurring. Reviewing every incident improves our response and helps to prevent recurrence. That's why we have Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC), one of whose duties is to make recommendations on preventing incidents and injuries to workers. Your JHSC works for you and focuses on keeping you safe.

How can you help? You don't have to be an expert on the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Just keep your eyes and ears open. The most important task for you, and every worker, is reporting. This is not just a moral obligation; it is also a legal responsibility. Every worker must report, immediately, any health and safety hazard they notice to their immediate supervisor. Obviously, knowing a problem exists is the first step toward addressing it.

If this process is followed, the Joint Health and Safety Committee should find no new problems when it inspects the site. If your health and safety rep is finding things to record, this reporting process isn't working. Workers aren't reporting; management isn't responding.

Make your reports about health and safety issues in writing to your immediate supervisor. Keep a copy for yourself. Give your supervisor a reasonable time to respond. If your issue is not addressed in a reasonable time, is not addressed to your satisfaction, or is not responded to, or if your administrator is not sure what to do, it is your right to refer the matter to your Joint Health and Safety Committee. If the JHSC cannot resolve your concern, it can ask the Ministry of Labour (MOL) for assistance.

An MOL inspector may investigate the situation and order your board to correct the issue. Remember. The process for resolving a concern starts with you, the worker.

### How Is Your Health and Safety Awareness?

- Who is your health and safety representative?
- Do you know the members of your Joint Health and Safety Committee?
- Have you seen the asbestos report for your school? Do you know the locations of all asbestos and other designated substances?
- Does your board have an accident/incident reporting form? Can you obtain it? Do you use it whenever you have a workplace incident?
- Who are the "first aiders" in your building?
- Do you know where the first aid kits are?
- Do you take a portable first-aid kit on field trips?
- Do you know where to find a copy of the Occupational Health and Safety Act?
- Do you report any hazard you are aware of?

- Do you know your board's policies that address health and safety issues (e.g., harassment policy, violent incidents and air quality)?
- Have you received WHMIS training?
- Have you received specific training for your type of work (e.g., CPR)?
- Do you review all Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) before using a product in the workplace?
- Do you refrain from bringing into the workplace commercial products that are not part of the board's WHMIS?
- Are you familiar with your school's Emergency Preparedness Plan?
- Do you ask questions when you don't know how to do a task at work? Do you request training?

ETFO has just released *Take Every Precaution Reasonable: An ETFO Guide to Occupational Health and Safety in Schools*. This handbook is intended to help you keep your worksite safe; it is available from shopETFO for \$12 plus tax.

Ruth Ann Morley is a teacher with the Thames Valley DSB. She has served on ETFO's Health and Safety Committee, and as a deputy parliamentarian at the Annual Meeting.

"The most important task for you, and every worker, is reporting. This is not just a moral obligation; it is also a legal responsibility."

Health and Safety Committee.



## DISABILITY ISSUES

Christine Brown is ETFO's Research Officer for Collective Bargaining. She is working on a degree in Disability Studies.

### Stigma

Winston Churchill called his depression his "black dog."

A struggle with one's mental health can be as debilitating a crisis as any physical disorder. As a health issue within workplaces, the incidence is increasing. Mental disorders are now estimated to be the leading cause of employee disability, constituting some 30-40 percent of disability claims among our largest employers. According to data from the Ontario Teachers' Insurance Plan (OTIP), among Ontario teachers mental and nervous disorders are the leading source of long-term disability and prescription drug use. We all understand the economic and ethical arguments for promoting reduced stress, manageable workloads, reasonable working conditions, supportive environments and good mental health.

Yet unlike those who face other kinds of health crises, employees facing mental distress bear a double burden. First there is the disorder itself, which may also entail treatment with potent drugs, some of which have severe and long-lasting side effects.

Having got past these hurdles, however, the affected individual faces what many have characterized as an equally difficult battle – overcoming the stigma of being labelled. As Pat Capponi, long-time Canadian advocate and author once wrote: "I had to lose that sense of a blinking neon sign over my head warning *mental patient, mental patient.*" Disability activists are fond of pointing out that labels belong on soup cans, not people.

It has long been recognized that environmental factors are critical in the ability of a person with a mental disorder to cope. Given this, it is an enduring irony that an employee returning to work following a heart attack will often experience a very different reception from the individual recovering from a bout of, for example, depression.

First-person accounts of living with the stigma of a psychiatric diagnosis often show a consistent pattern. First, a common experience among those living with a label is a sense of being avoided, isolated or treated as

invisible once they attempt to pick up where their lives left off before the diagnosis.

Frequently reported as well is a generalized assumption that the crisis has left the individual with reduced competence, whether in the workplace or other aspects of daily life. Professional judgement may be questioned, decisions overturned or second-guessed, and work responsibilities reduced, even where such work reduction is not part of a required accommodation under human rights legislation. Returning employees have spoken of being discounted, not taken seriously or treated as fragile objects.

Next is the occasional inability on the part of employers or other people to accept that a mental disorder is real. In part, this is perhaps the fault of our collective reliance on the physical sciences when it comes to matters of health – there is no Petri dish test for bipolar disorder. More disturbingly, however, in an era when employers large and small are increasingly buying into slick "attendance management" or "absenteeism management" packages marketed by human resources consultants, this mindset can potentially have severe consequences for the job security of an affected employee.

Finally, there is the still all too common assumption that overcoming depression, or panic attacks, or substance abuse, is a question of pulling oneself together and taking control. To some degree this may simply be a manifestation of our general lack of knowledge about this complex area of human health. Possibly it also demonstrates a failure to understand that while dysfunctional or poisoned working environments can be changed, assuming there is the political will to do so, the damage such environments do is very real, and can linger.

Lieutenant-Governor James Bartleman has spoken out about his own experience of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. He has taken as one of his special causes to "speak out to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness." In the factories, offices, hospitals, shops and schools across the province, it is a message well worth taking to heart.

# WHO is WATCHING the WATCHERS?

By Charlotte Morgan

ON NOVEMBER 18, 1997, seven women were detained by police in Guelph, allegedly for breaching the public peace. The women had been participating in a protest organized by local teachers against the education policies of the Mike Harris government. They were taken to the local police station and then transferred to the Wellington Detention Centre. At the centre, they were strip-searched, a well-known and standard procedure for anyone sent there. Hours later, the women were released.

After local authorities rebuffed its repeated calls for an independent report, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) helped the women file complaints against the Guelph Police. Having first dismissed the complaints for being too late (they were filed two weeks into the period during which a chief has the discretion to accept "late" complaints), the Guelph Chief, Lenna Bradburn dismissed the guts of the matter again. While Bradburn acknowledged that the service could do better in providing prisoners with information about their legal rights, she ruled that there was no evidence of police misconduct in the decision to transfer the women to the strip-search facility.

CCLA then asked the Ontario Civilian Commission on Police Services (OCCPS) to review Bradburn's findings.

"Bradburn has done nothing to *allay* suspicion that the movement of the seven female protesters from the city police station to the local detention centre was designed to send a strong message to the women," said Alan Borovoy, the association's general counsel. "The police have not explained why the women, arrested in early evening and held on breach of peace charges until just after midnight, could not have been kept in a common area, such as the police gymnasium," said Borovoy.

Freddie Potvin, the last of the strip-search seven to be arrested, told the *Guelph Mercury* that the police response to the complainants left many unanswered questions. "We are still waiting for the police to admit they had made a mistake sending us to the detention centre instead of making

arrangements at the police station, or sending us home," she said.

While its April 2000 ruling did not go entirely against the complainants, OCCPS simply dismissed the women's complaints about their transfer and strip search. No reasons were given.

Since these events, the CCLA has persisted in pursuing justice for the women, winning battles with OCCPS at the Ontario Divisional Court and the Court of Appeal. As a result, officers involved in the transfer decision were to face disciplinary hearings. "Unfortunately, the process has been so drawn out we are doubtful of a satisfactory resolution," said Stephen McCammon, the association's associate counsel. "Under the current system, police investigate police. And, in the words of the Court of Appeal, the authorities handling of the matter was "patently unreasonable." After more than six years of struggle, two of the three police officers in question have retired from the force. And the only officer facing possible discipline is being tried by a police officer."

In response to this and other issues, the CCLA is taking a broad approach to the protection of civil liberties. On January 28, 2004, McCammon was part of a CCLA delegation that appeared before Ontario's Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, Monte Kwinter. Their presentation called on the government to strengthen Ontario's police complaints legislation.

"Enacting fair legislation is the best way to reduce the odds that others will endure the sort of indignity the strip-search seven endured," said McCammon.

The CCLA is also concerned with protecting civil liberties across Canada. In October, 2003, it submitted a brief to the Solicitor General of Canada, Wayne Easter. That brief called for the creation of an agency, independent of the government and the RCMP, empowered to conduct on-going audits of, and reports on, the RCMP's use of the new anti-terrorist legislation.

"We have to find a balance between our security and the protection of our human rights. At the moment, these watchers aren't being watched. It is vital that those responsible for our security are accountable for their actions," said McCammon.

At the 2003 Annual Meeting, Dave Krook, president, ETFO Upper Grand, called on ETFO to support the strip-search seven and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. Individuals wishing to support the CCLA's efforts can join the organization by visiting its web site [www.ccla.org/us/](http://www.ccla.org/us/). The Canadian Civil Liberties Education Trust offers education programs for schools. Visit [www.ccla.org/schools](http://www.ccla.org/schools)



Stephen McCammon, L.L.B.



## OTF REPORT

The plan uses the rate of interest on Canada Real Return Bonds (RRB) to establish interest rates in calculating the amount needed today to pay all pensions promised in the future.

### The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

Every year, the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan issues an annual report, which outlines the year's financial situation, and has its actuary conduct a valuation of the plan. To determine the financial health of the plan, the actuary compares the assets to the liabilities. If the assets match the liabilities, the plan is fully funded. If the assets are greater than the liabilities, the plan has a surplus. If the liabilities are greater than the assets, the plan has a deficit or funding deficiency.

Since the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) is so large, the assets can change by a billion dollars in a very short time owing to the volatility of financial markets. To prevent large swings in the contribution rate, the plan smoothes gains and losses. Smoothing means recognizing only 20 percent of a year's gain or loss each year for five years.

In mid-February, the plan reported its earnings for the year 2003. It was a banner year. The overall return on the plan's assets was 18 percent. Even though the plan's assets have been increasing in value, its liabilities are increasing faster.

Everyone is aware of how badly the stock markets performed from 1999 to 2002. The plan had losses in each of those years. Because of smoothing, those losses will continue to be a factor in the valuation of the plan until 2006.

The plan uses the rate of interest on Canada Real Return Bonds (RRB) to establish interest rates in calculating the amount needed today to pay all pensions promised in the future. For each 0.1 percent decline in this rate, the liabilities increase by \$1.5 billion.

What all of this means is that at the end of 2003, there was a \$6.2 billion deficit in the plan valuation.

By law, OTPP must file a valuation every three years with the Financial Services Commission of Ontario. Since OTPP filed last year, a filing is not required again until 2006.

If the RRB interest-rate decline continues, the 2006 valuation will show a significant deficit. If this occurs the contribution rate will have to increase in 2007. However, if interest rates on RRB increase, then a contribution rate change may not be required. There is no current plan for a contribution rate increase.

The sponsors of the plan are OTF and the Government of Ontario. We will continue to monitor the state of the plan.

If you have any questions about the pension plan, you can contact OTF's director of Pensions and Economic Affairs, Jeff Holmes, or ETFO Executive Assistants Bill Martin or Lorraine Stewart.

Emily Noble, president of ETFO, is serving as past president of OTF, and as ETFO's OTF table officer.

“When hearing that I was going to retire, a friend asked,

‘How will you live without your identity? Teaching is such a large part of you.’

I replied that I wouldn't even try.

I plan to continue teaching on an occasional basis. But I joined RTO/ERO because it will help me maintain my identity as a teacher when I am not in the classroom.”



“I'm pleased to be part of an organization that respects teachers, and looks out for their interests, not only for those who have retired, but also for my friends and colleagues who are still in the classroom.

I feel strongly that kids are our tomorrow. We have to look after them. In retirement, you can't just “pack it in” – you have to stay committed. As a member of RTO/ERO, I feel that I can continue to be involved in the education of children.

Through providing support for both active and retired teachers, lobbying governments on social, economic, pension and health-related issues, and the many local social activities, RTO/ERO is an organization that will look after the needs of members such as myself - now, and into the future.”

– ANN RIVARD

Former elementary teacher and RTO/ERO's 50,000<sup>th</sup> member

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## CTF REPORT

**“On January 30, 2004, the Supreme Court of Canada released its decision in the case of *Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law v. The Attorney General in Right of Canada*, which concerns the use of force by parents and teachers to correct a child.”**

### National Conference on Accountability

From May 13-15, CTF will host a national conference on education accountability entitled “Moving from a Cult of Testing to a Culture of Professional Accountability.” Among the featured speakers will be Alfie Kohn, Andy Hargreaves, Lorna Earl, ETFO’s own Anne Rodrigue and Ken Leithwood. If you haven’t already registered for this conference and wish to attend, there is still time to do so. Visit [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca) for more information.

### Gender Issues in Education

CTF is currently studying gender issues in education. A survey conducted earlier this year was designed to gather information on the gender composition of teachers and school-based administrators, as well as the staff and elected officials of member organizations and OTF affiliates.

The CTF work group established to lead the study includes a representative from ETFO. The data are currently being compiled and analyzed. The final report will be shared with Education International (EI), with CTF member organizations and with the affiliates of the Ontario Teachers’ Federation.

Teachers and education workers interested in gender issues may wish to read the fall issue of our newsletter, *PD Perspectives*. The issue focuses on boys and schooling; and is posted at [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca).

### Section 43 of the Criminal Code (Corporal Punishment)

On January 30, 2004, the Supreme Court of Canada released its decision in the case of *Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law v. The Attorney General in Right of Canada*, which concerns the use of force by parents and teachers to correct a child. The

Canadian Teachers’ Federation intervened in this case in support of the Attorney General. ETFO was also involved in the case, through its support of CTF.

### Issue Before the Supreme Court of Canada\*

The issue before the Supreme Court of Canada was whether s. 43 of the *Criminal Code of Canada* is unconstitutional. Section 43 provides that a parent, teacher or person acting in the place of a parent is justified in using force to correct a child that is under his or her care provided that the force used is reasonable in all of the circumstances.

### Decision

The Supreme Court of Canada decided that section 43 of the Criminal Code is constitutional; it found that section 43 does not violate a child’s rights to security of the person and equality, and is not cruel and unusual punishment. More specifically, the Supreme Court held that section 43 ensures that the criminal law applies to any use of force that harms a child, but does not apply where the use of force “is part of a genuine effort to educate the child, poses no reasonable risk of harm that is more than transitory and trifling, and is reasonable under the circumstances.”

### Position of the Parties

The Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law, argued that section 43 violates children’s *Charter* rights to security of the person, equality and that section 43 constituted cruel and unusual punishment. The Attorney General of Canada argued that section 43 reflects a fair balance between the interests of children, parents and Canadian society. Although the federal government does not condone the physical

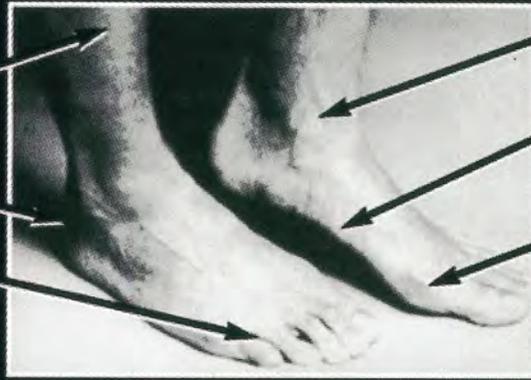
# YOU OFTEN TALK ABOUT DISCOMFORT AND PAIN

LOWER  
BACK  
PAIN

LEG  
PAIN

SORE  
HEELS

CORNS  
CALLUSES  
BUNIONS  
TOE  
CRAMPS



SORE  
ANKLE

FALLEN  
OR SORE  
ARCHES

PAIN IN THE  
BALLS OF  
YOUR FEET

discipline of children, neither does it support the criminalization of parents for disciplinary conduct which is undertaken in a reasonable way and takes into account the needs and best interests of children.

This decision is available online at: <http://www.lexum.umontreal.ca/csc-scc/en/rec/html/2004scc004.wpd.html>

\* downloaded from <http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/news>

Terry Price is the president of the Canadian Teachers' Federation. CTF is the national voice of 240,000 teachers across Canada.

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**May 27-28 – TORONTO**  
*GLACIE'S (Great Lakes  
Association for Cooperation  
in Education) 19th Annual  
Cooperative Learning  
Conference: Learning Together*  
Contact: Angela Canavan  
Tel: 705-432-8088  
E-mail: [acanavan@glacie.ca](mailto:acanavan@glacie.ca)  
Website: [www.glacie.ca](http://www.glacie.ca)

**May 28-29 – BARRIE**  
*Kaleidoscope ETFO  
Provincial Conference  
2003-2004*  
Kempenfelt Centre  
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ETFO Provincial Office  
416-962-3836/  
1-888-838-3836  
E-mail: [lmcclean@etfo.org](mailto:lmcclean@etfo.org)  
Website: [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca)

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**June 21-27, 2004**  
*Pride Toronto Week*  
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## Square Pairs

I've just discovered an old sports day photo of me with some athletic friends, taken in my student days. The picture shows the fewer than 20 competitors of the cross-country race, arranged in the order in which we finished.

With each of us displaying a different consecutive competitor number from 1 upwards, I couldn't help noticing that the numbers on every pair of adjacent runners summed to a perfect square. Moreover, the number on my vest was the same as the position in the top half of the field in which I finished.

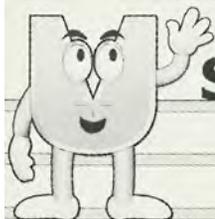
**What position was that? and  
How many runners competed?**

# Teachers' Trivia

By Peter Harrison

A draw will be held on May 27, 2004, of all the correct answers to "Square Pairs." Five winners will receive an ETFO sweat shirt. Correct answer and names of the winners will be published in the first available issue. Send your answers to Charlotte Morgan at provincial office. Fax to 416-642-2424. E-mail [cmorgan@etfo.org](mailto:cmorgan@etfo.org). Regular mail to Charlotte Morgan at the address on the masthead.

Because no correct answers to "Heads or Tails" (Winter 2004) were received, the challenge continues ... with a clue. 1. Start with a very small board and count the 'turns.' 2. Increase the size gradually and see a pattern emerge. 3. Discover a simple formula involving squares and turns and - hey presto - you're a winner! "Heads or Tails" is available from [cmorgan@etfo.org](mailto:cmorgan@etfo.org). Draw for "Heads or Tails" will take place on May 27.



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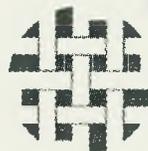
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**House to share near Carcassonne, France.** August 14 to September 11. [www.sympatico.ca/cptnkirk](http://www.sympatico.ca/cptnkirk).

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**For Rent. Nova Scotia –** House for rent, 3BR, Little River, Digby Neck, Bay of Fundy, beaches, whale watching, biking, hiking, \$600/week. For info and brochure, [phealy@vianet.ca](mailto:phealy@vianet.ca).

**Helen Featherstone Cole** turns 90 in July – Palmerston, Runnymede Public 1938-1973. Greeting may be sent: Bev Cole, 2734 Camcrest Drive, Nanaimo, B.C. V9T 4W4.

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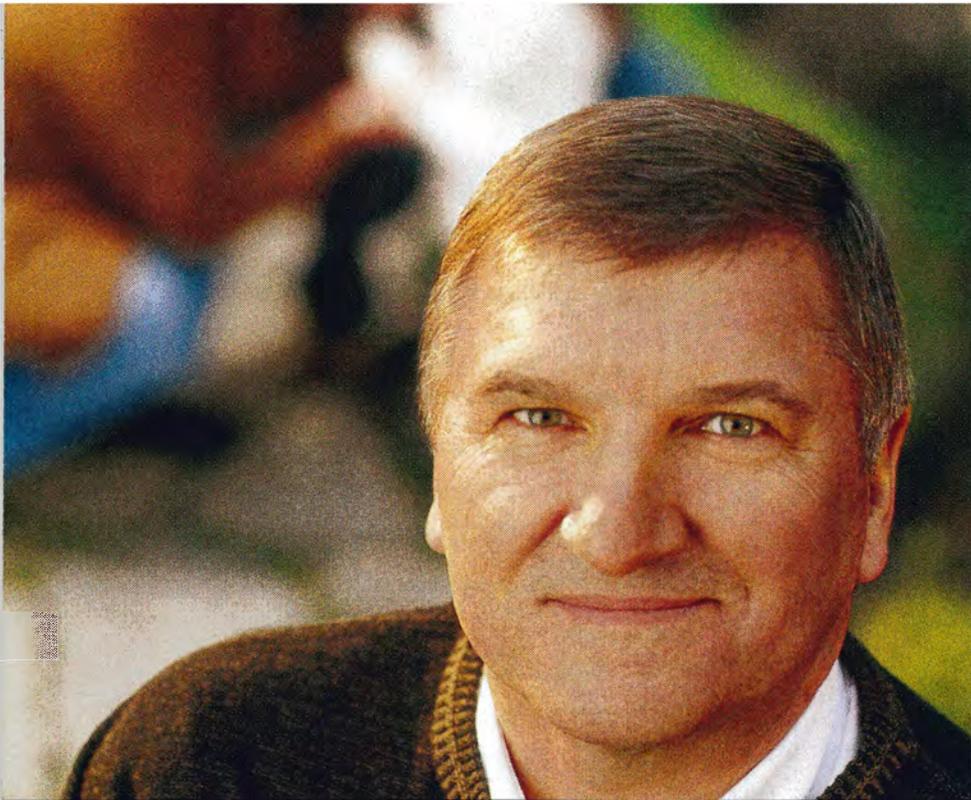
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