

Comments From The Editor

Saskatchewan School Library Association

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SASKATCHEWAN SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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The days are gradually lengthening and with increased daylight comes renewed energy to try new ideas. In this issue you will find a variety of classroom tested inspiration from your teacher librarian colleagues. In the true spirit of collaboration, which is the touchstone of the teacher librarian program, you are invited to use, to modify and to share these ideas.

Included is a book talk on Chris Crutcher's *Sledding Hill* which can not only be used with students as is but which also can serve as a model for you to create similar "pitches" on novels of your choosing. Regina teacher librarian, Chris MacLellan, enjoys creating lively book talks to share with her students and has volunteered her talents with the Saskatchewan Young Readers' Choice Awards (SYRCA) since its inception.

Regina teacher librarian Judy Nicholson reviews the professional resource, *The New Learning Commons: Where Learners Win! Reinventing School Libraries and Computer Labs* by David V. Loertscher, Carol Koechlin, and Sandi Zwaan for your consideration. It's always informative to check in with these well known authors and conference speakers to learn their current thoughts and research on teacher librarianship.

As well, Judy scribed a session offered by Regina Public Schools' Differentiated Learning Consultant Wilfred Burton on Who are the Métis? For this inquiry lesson, Wilfred modeled the Reading and Analyzing Non-fiction text (RAN) strategy and used relevant picture books. Wilfred has co-authored a couple of picture books that highlight Métis culture.

Many teacher librarians collaborate with their colleagues on reading comprehension instruction with their colleagues. At Balfour Collegiate in Regina, a team of six teachers works with me to offer daily reading and reading strategy instruction to grade nine students. Helping us in our task is Shawna Stangel, Literacy and Numeracy Facilitator. Shawna's lessons on questioning based on a passage from Deborah Ellis's *Our Stories, our songs: African children talk about aids* are included in this issue.

Check out Regina teacher librarian Phyllis Thomas's inquiry project on Canadian provinces for a new twist on this often given assignment. Which would be the best site to locate a Disney theme park in Canada?

I have included an explanation of the library contest I am currently running through my library. It uses the web-based tool Wordle for creating word clouds about books. However, there are endless educational applications for this

easily used, effective tool. If you are not familiar with Wordle, read the article and then create your own applications for it.

A colleague of mine in the English area of Balfour Collegiate, Kelly Deis planned lessons with me using the databases our division subscribes to, Proquest and Infotrac. Students responded better to these lessons than to some similar attempts we have made in the past to acquaint students with database use so I have included them here for you to sample.

Two Saskatoon area teacher librarians collaborated while pursuing the online courses offered by the University of Alberta in teacher librarianship. Tracy Woodward and Laurie Hnatiuk both had fun using the web-based multimedia tool, Animoto. As neophytes to technology, they found easy success with Animoto and are delighted on the polished product students can create with it. In their lively article, they take you step by step through becoming an Animoto star yourself.

Teacher librarian Carlene Walter collaborated with teacher Susan Voitka-Seager at Greystone Heights School in Saskatoon to develop the lessons on reading and writing memoirs called Reflections on a Life. In this unit students are encouraged to read model texts and then to select representative moments from their own lives to tell their own stories.

Family Literacy Day celebrations occur in schools and libraries on and around January 27 every year. Included in this issue are examples of two ways Regina elementary schools celebrated. Teacher librarian Chris MacLennan chronicles the event at Dr. Hanna School while her counterpart at Judge Bryant School, Violet Smotra Cook, highlights the occasion there.

As always, The Medium editor and readers would enjoy feedback from you and, if you have ideas to contribute, they are most welcome. You may contact me at chris.arnstead@rbe.sk.ca.