

First Nations Special Education CONNECTIONS



Newsletter of the First Nations Special Education Toll-free Resource Line

Vol. 9, No. 9 May 2009

Do you work with First Nations students in British Columbia?

Do you have special education questions?

If so, you are invited to contact the First Nations Special Education Resource Line! The Resource Line is a free service for BC educators and parents.

The Resource Line is designed to help you brainstorm approaches, guide you toward helpful resources, help you to understand assessment documents, and share the latest information on special education.

When you call, you will reach the Resource Line Coordinator, Holly Smith. Holly is available to answer your questions, Monday to Thursday, 12:30 to 4:30 during the school year

Contact the Resource Line:

Toll-free 1-877-547-1919

hollis@fnesc.ca

Connections is the newsletter of the Resource Line. Back issues of *Connections* are available from

www.fnsa.ca/resource-line.htm

The Resource Line is a collaborative project of the First Nations Education Steering Committee and the First Nations Schools Association, made possible by financial assistance from the Department of Indian Affairs.



Spring is in the air around the province! I think we are all pleased to put an unexpectedly challenging winter behind us and look forward to the longer days and warmer nights.

Are you implementing the Friends for Life program in your school? We would love to hear how it is going from teachers, students and parents. Go to the First Nations Schools Association website to find the Friends for Life Program Feedback forms:

www.fnsa.ca/programs.htm#friends

Holly Smith

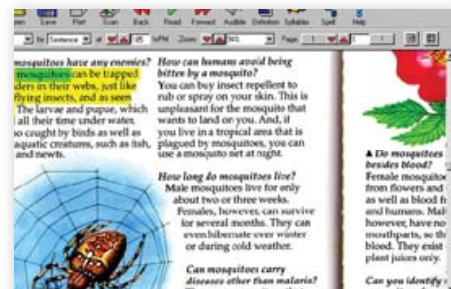
Special Education Resource Line

Enlightening Reading

Kurzweil 3000 for Struggling Writers

Guest Contributor: Carol Graham
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You may have heard of it before, the software that's helping so many learners at the intermediate and secondary level. Kurzweil 3000 is becoming one of the most popular programs in BC for use by learners of this age. The program is mostly known mostly for its 'scan and read' capabilities; when the computer is attached to a scanner, Kurzweil will import text book pages and worksheets and then 'read' it to the learner.



Kurzweil 3000 has many features that support both reading and writing. For example, highlighters allow learners to identify key vocabulary and main ideas, and on-board dictionary and thesaurus help with comprehension. Highlighted text can be extracted to a new document for study notes or a writing assignment. There is even a feature that allows users to convert documents to MP3 files so learners could listen to chapters or stories on their MP3 players or home computers.

The reading features of this program make it valuable to those students who can understand content if it is told or read to them but struggle when they have to read it for themselves. It also helps those who miss school and have to get caught up. If content is available in text form, they would be able to access it independently.

When using the program for writing, learners can hear what they are typing. They have access to word prediction, a talking spell checker and customized word lists. These tools help learners to better express their knowledge and ideas, even if writing has typically been difficult for them.

These features and more could be very good reasons for checking out this program for your students. If you don't have a copy already for your school, free trial CD's can be ordered through the Kurzweil website at www.kurzweilededu.com. This website also has a good-quality introduction to the program – check out their 'product overview videos.

If you choose to purchase this program, SET-BC has negotiated a province-wide site license that is available to BC schools. The price is significantly lower than other sources. You can check that out at the SET-BC website at <http://www.setbc.org/psap/>

Extensive training resources, some of them short video clips of program features, are also available at the SET-BC website, through the Learning Centre link <http://www.setbc.org>. While at this site, be sure to check the Upcoming Events Calendar to see upcoming online training opportunities.

This may be a great tool to help learners in your school. It's worth a look!

Online Resources

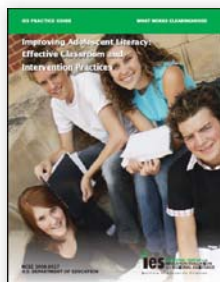
What Works Clearinghouse

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) is a central and trusted source of scientific evidence for what works in education. An initiative of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, the WWC:

- Produces practice guides for educators that address instructional challenges with research-based recommendations for schools and classrooms;
- Assesses the rigor of research evidence on the effectiveness of (programs, products, practices, and policies), giving educators the tools to make informed decisions; and
- Develops and implements standards for reviewing and synthesizing education research.

Below is one of the practice guides available:



Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/adlit_pg_082608.pdf

The practice guide provides educators with evidence-based recommendations to assist in improving literacy levels among adolescents. The first three practices can be incorporated into classroom instruction to aid students in content areas, the fourth practice has strategies to increase motivation and engagement for learning. The final practice is for students who are struggling making sense of written material. Levels of research-based evidence for support of the recommendations are indicated below.

Recommendation	Level of evidence
• Provide explicit vocabulary instruction	Strong
• Provide direct and explicit comprehension strategy instruction	Strong
• Provide opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation	Moderate
• Increase student motivation and engagement in literacy learning	Moderate
• Make available intensive and individualized interventions for struggling readers that can be provided by trained specialists	Strong

Florida Center for Reading Research: Student Reading Center Activities

<http://www.fcrr.org/Curriculum/SCAindex.htm>



This site provides downloadable pdfs of 522 student reading center activities, as well as a Teacher's Resource Guide: Implementing and Managing Student Centers in the Classroom. The centers are organized by the five core elements of reading instruction (Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension) and grade levels K to 5. Student reading centers can be utilized in your classrooms to allow students to practice and review various components of reading individually, in pairs or as small groups. Some of the files are quite large and may take several minutes to download.

Developing Research-Based Resources for the Balanced Reading Teacher

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

BalancedReading.com was set up as a resource to provide research-based information about reading instruction to educators. Its mission is to bring research into practice.



BalancedReading.com

On this website you will find information on a wide range of reading topics from assessment to writing, links to other researched-based reading websites, a K-1 Reading Assessment tool, a summative assessment for grades 2-8 and other useful downloadable resources.

FNESC/FNSA Special Education Lending Library Spotlight

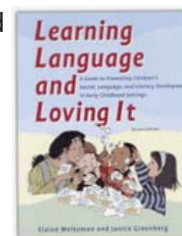
The FNESC/FNSA Special Education Lending Library has many valuable resources and it is available to FNSA member schools. Browse through the library's special education materials online by visiting the website <http://www.fnesc.org:88/>. Try entering "Special Education" as your search term. To request materials, contact Patti Yamamoto at the FNESC office at P: 1-877-422-3672, F: 604-925-6097 or email: pattiy@fnesc.ca.

Learning Language and Loving It Guidebook : A Guide to Promoting Children's Social, Language, & Literacy Development in Early Childhood Settings, Second Edition

Weitzman & Greenberg, 2002

This guidebook provides a comprehensive, simple guide to creating an enriched and inclusive environment that fosters the social, language and literacy development of preschool children in child care settings. It has practical strategies for teachers, speech-language pathologists and other professionals who work with young children and who are responsible for creating learning environments that maximize children's language, social and literacy skills.

The companion DVD has real life examples of teachers using strategies in play and daily activities to create enriched, interactive language-learning environments that include children who have special needs and language delays, who are second language learners, as well as those who are typically developing.



Language Development Questions? Parents and teachers are very welcome to call Deanne on the Speech and Language Resource Line: 1-877-547-5926

Dates for your Calendar

Don't miss local special education related workshops and conferences! The **2008-2009 Special Professional Development issue of Connections** is available online at: www.fnsa.ca/resource-line.htm.

MAY 2009

May 14-15, Vancouver. All The Rage: Helping Adolescent Girls in Crisis. Dr. Martha Straus. Many adolescent girls today are in a crisis of rage and despair. Learn what it takes to stay connected to these struggling adolescents as you help them become competent, inter-dependent young women.
<http://www.jackhirose.com/brochures/BC-Straus-Vancouver-May14-2009.html>

May 22-24 or June 12-14, Burnaby. First Nations Speech Language Assistant Certificate course: FNSL 180 Technology and FNSL. This course will concentrate on giving the student the understanding of and experience with technology that is used in assessing, intervention and communicating in the area of speech and language services. Burnaby NVIT Campus. For more details visit www.nvit.bc.ca/program.aspx?pgmID=42#FNSL-180 or contact s_sec@fnesc.ca

JULY 2009

July 5-6, Vancouver. First Nations Languages Conference, *Bringing Languages to Life*. Learn about promising practices in language education and revitalization. For information, visit www.fnesc.ca/conferences/index.php

July 6-10, Delta. Introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorders - Practical Applications (ASD): Participants will gain; knowledge about characteristics of ASD and how that information relates to providing appropriate supports. Participants will learn how to plan supports and teach new skills which will support student success and independence. For information and registration go to: <http://www.autismoutreach.ca/?q=training/course-calendar>

July 6-11, Terrace. First Nations Speech Language Assistant Certificate course: FNSL 180 Technology and FNSL. This course will concentrate on giving the student the understanding of and experience with technology that is used in assessing, intervention and communicating in the area of speech and language services. Coast Hotel. For more details visit www.nvit.bc.ca/program.aspx?pgmID=42#FNSL-180 or contact s_sec@fnesc.ca

July 6-31, Kelowna. UBC Okanagan Summer Institute in Education. Come for an Okanagan holiday and some exciting Pro-D that can earn you credits toward your TQS Category 5+. Choose from 13 week-long courses that offer a great variety of current, relevant, and interesting topics such as Quality Assessment, Murals, Drama, Birding, Technology and more. For more information visit www.ubc.ca/okanagan/education or call the Faculty of Education at 250-807-9176.

AUGUST 2009

August 10-12, Parksville. Achieving Excellence in Writing Annual Summer Seminar, presented by Susan Augustyn, is based upon Blended Structure and Style in Composition as written and developed by Dr. James B. Webster. This workshop presents an effective method of teaching writing to children. Covering various stylistic techniques as well as structures, both expository and fictional writing are addressed. The material is structured and easy to teach. This program provides an powerful tool for teaching children to write effectively. Applicable for teachers with classes from Grades 2 to 11. Contact: saugustyn@shaw.ca or phone 250-248-6434

August 24-29, Parksville. Dr. Gordon Neufeld - Asking Sense of Kids, Level 1 Week Intensive Summer Institute. Dr. Neufeld's attachment-based developmental paradigm will train teachers to use the constructs of attachment, maturation and vulnerability to view children's problems and open the doors for deep-rooted change. Registration includes materials, certification and refreshments (one week \$400) To register, please contact Barb Witte at bwitte@sd70.bc.ca or 250-720-2770. Register early due to limited space.

Did you know that the Resource Line is available to parents? Consider sharing my phone number or email with families in your community.