

***Points of entry,
points of connection***

VIEWS FROM HERE AND ABROAD

**The Centre
for Literacy
of Quebec**

TRIBAL

CTAD

**June 27 - 29, 2005 – Montreal, Quebec**

Debate about the role of technology in literacy and learning often stops as soon as someone says casually, "...But technology is only a tool." Historians of technology would argue that while it is certainly a tool, tools change the way we organize ourselves and ultimately the way we think. The car was a tool that enabled faster travel; its widespread use, however, led to modern highway systems, new social organizations, urban design and economies, to name only some of the large scale impacts over time.

Technology has been a major force in spreading literacy. The printing press is the most frequently cited invention that made reading accessible to the masses; the invention of the pencil, less well-known, had a similar impact on writing. Now we have electronic communication with worldwide networks; are reading and writing with these tools the same process?

In the past century, a proliferation of new media has added another dimension to the notion of literacy. How do traditional print, media and technological literacies connect? Are they different from one another? Does one precede or underpin the others? Is the order in which we learn them important? Are literacy teachers equipped to teach them?

Canada has some of the most advanced communications networks in the world. Yet the impact on adult basic education and literacy has so far been relatively narrow

in terms of teaching students, managing programs and training providers. Disparities of access can be as great between regions as they are between developed and developing countries. We have some programs operating on the cutting edge and others using tools from the 19th century.

Funding guidelines often prevent programs from acquiring technologies, and government agendas to invest in getting technology to the general population frequently operate in isolation at every level of jurisdiction, duplicating expenses while leaving gaps in access.

When funding for technology is available, it is often restricted to equipment when investment in training is the key to high quality sustainable implementation.

Despite the barriers, there are still many innovative and promising uses of both old and new technologies in the field of ABE and literacy in many countries. This Institute will bring together several outstanding organizations and individuals that are pushing the limits of possibility in Canada, the U.S. and the U.K.

We will invite participants to consider questions we have raised and to pose others that are critical to their own practice. Our focus will be on the ways that technology can be used to create communities of practice rather than on showcasing individual technologies.

Confirmed presenter

We are excited to have David Rosen participating as a resident expert and discussant. David was a pioneer in the use of technology for adult literacy when he ran the Adult Literacy Resource Institute (ALRI) in Boston. Since retiring, he has remained involved as an independent researcher-consultant. He is completing an evaluation of TECH21 – a three-year national technology project at the University of Pennsylvania's National Center for Adult Literacy (NCAL). He has recently put staff development online for California's state staff development organization, and, with colleague Susan Gaer, has carried on an International Community Virtual Visit Project – now in its fifth year. David brings a perspective that integrates research, practice and policy at their best.

QUESTIONS TO START THE CONVERSATION

- What do we mean by "technology" (old vs. new) before we discuss how it fits into the definition of literacy?
- Can technology serve as a point of entry to literacy?
- How can technology help us share and manage knowledge?
- How does technology support information literacy?
- How can we foster a positive attitude toward technology? What impact does practitioner attitude have on learners?
- Is technology by itself an enabler?
- Can technology be used as a tool for standardization? Should it be?
- How can technology be managed? By whom?
- How does the need for technology in the workplace affect current literacy policy and programming?
- What impact does technology have on current policy, research and practice?

INSTITUTE FORMAT

The Institute is highly collaborative. Over three days, participants will present, respond, question and synthesize current thinking about adult basic education, literacy, media and technology. We focus on issues and challenges facing the field. To start the conversation, we will send out a few short documents three weeks ahead. Other exchange is built around the issues and problems posed by participants through a one-page response that we request before the Institute begins.

Anyone who registers may become a presenter.

If you want to share information without making a presentation, we have free tables and screens for poster displays.

If you prefer to listen, we invite you to respond to the issues we pose and to bring other topics or themes from your own experience. Part of each day is set aside to discuss and reflect on these questions, and to get feedback from colleagues.

The Summer Institute 2005

Adult Basic Education & Literacy, Media and Technology

I enclose a cheque for \$450.00 (until May 1) \$495.00 (after May 1)

Or, please charge my VISA

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CARD NUMBER EXP. DATE

INFORMATION: (please print) Signature: _____

Name: _____

Mailing address in June 2005: Home Work _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Institution: _____

Department: _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____

Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

REFUND POLICY:

Until June 10, we will give a full refund, minus a 15% administrative fee. After June 10, refunds will be issued only if you provide valid documentation, e.g. medical certificate.



Mail completed form to The Centre for Literacy at the address below.

Schedule

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday
June 27, 28 and 29, 2005
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

After 3:00 p.m. daily: Optional discussions, networking, research opportunities. Daily schedule finalized two weeks before the Institute.

Registration

Includes materials, continental breakfasts, lunches and refreshments.

Early-bird registration (until May 1, 2005) . **\$450**
After May 1, 2005 **\$495**

All amounts are in Canadian dollars. US participants, please note, when calculating costs, the US dollar is currently valued at approximately 25% more than the Canadian. UK participants, the pound sterling £ is currently valued at \$2.25 CDN. Rates are fluctuating.

Accommodation

Arrangements have been made at the Hôtel du Fort within easy access of The Centre and close to downtown shopping and attractions. The hotel is offering a special rate of \$135/single or \$145/double occupancy. They will hold the block of rooms until May 26, 2005. After that, reservations will be based on availability. They will extend the rate over July 1 holiday for anyone booking before May 26. The Montreal International Jazzfest begins on June 30.

For reservations, contact the hotel directly:

Hôtel du Fort

1390 rue du Fort
Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3H 2T2
Tel.: (514) 938-8333 or 1-800-565-6333
Fax: (514) 938-2078
E-mail: reserve@hoteldufort.com

Ask for The Centre for Literacy Summer Institute.

Literacy for the 21st century: A definition

Literacy involves a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. The need and demand for these abilities vary in different societies. In a technological society, the concept is expanding to include the media and electronic text in addition to alphabets and numbers. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes reading, writing and the critical understanding and decision-making abilities they need in their communities. Source: The Centre for Literacy

Technology and the definition of literacy

Does technology change the dominant symbol systems?
Is there a culture of technology? How does technology aid or hinder abilities, understanding, or use?

Questions: Alan Cherwinski, AlphaPlus

The Centre for Literacy is a non-profit resource, training and research centre. It is committed to bridging theory and practice to build capacity in adult basic skills wherever learning happens and to inform policy at all levels. It aims to increase public understanding of the changing definition of literacy in a complex society, and serves as a Learning Forum where practitioners, researchers and policy-makers can meet and exchange as peers.

The National Adult Literacy Database Inc. (NALD) is a Canadian non-profit, registered charity whose mission is to provide information and resources to the adult literacy community in Canada in both official languages – English and French. NALD is Canada's Literacy Portal.

AlphaPlus Centre is Canada's largest provider of information and resources for adult literacy. Their goal is to provide information, resources and support services to practitioners working in the Deaf, Native, Francophone and Anglophone adult literacy streams.

Cambridge Training and Development (CTAD) is one of the U.K.'s most dynamic developers of multimedia and web-based products that support adult literacy and numeracy. Their particular strength is focusing on the relationship between technology and learning with its attendant issues such as inclusion and accessibility. They use cutting-edge technology to complement more conventional media and deliver meaningful and exciting material that engages learners in diverse ways without compromising essential learning outcomes.

The Centre for Literacy of Quebec



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