

LITERACY

INTERNATIONAL NATIONAL

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WORLD LITERACY OF CANADA
692 COXWELL AVE, TORONTO N4C 3B6

SUMMER, 1977

One of our members has shared in another publication and at a workshop what learning to read has meant to her, a former adult student of the Laubach system.

"You open doors when you open books; doors that swing wide to unlimited horizons of knowledge, wisdom and inspiration that will enlarge the dimensions of your life. . . . Through books you can know the majesty of great poetry, the wisdom of the philosophers, the findings of the scientist. . . . Read then from the vast storehouse of books at your command! Read to increase your knowledge, your background, your awareness, your insight. . . . Read to lead, read to grow!"

-The Art of Reading, by Wilfred A. Peterson

ABLE Conference' 77

PROPOSED SECOND NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
ADULT BASIC AND LITERACY EDUCATION

Proposed dates: October 28 - 30, 1977
Proposed location: OTTAWA, Ontario

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INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY
Thursday
SEPTEMBER 8, 1977

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Audrey Thomas

Here is another "bumper" Newsletter, thanks to those of you who were stimulated by the last one, to send in contributions for this edition! Our intent is to have a quarterly publication, but lack of funds meant a slow start in this regard. The good news since the last issue is that we received a call from the Secretary of State on April 6th indicating that we would receive half of the amount requested last July. On June 10th (after some additional 'phone calls) the cheque eventually arrived. We're grateful for half a loaf .

The bad news is that the good news we were hoping for concerning the Hamilton pilot cooperative program utilizing the media as a tool 'to reach adult illiterates did not materialize. The proposal which was submitted originally in November and went through the "committee circuit" twice with strong words of enthusiasm, encouragement and hope from both the province and the Regional Office of Manpower and Immigration, was eventually turned down by the "feds" in Ottawa, as not meeting the criteria!! We are still assured that it is a worthwhile project. We have now waited for over three months for provincial funding. Why is something which was considered "a priority" so slow to be funded? There is no doubt that funding is one of the major issues facing those involved in Adult Basic Education. How patient are we expected to be?

FEATURES

ELEMENTARY SPELLING, BTSD, NOVA SCOTIA

When a student realizes he must learn how to spell a long list of words, he invariably cringes, begins to sweat, starts shaking, craves a cigarette (and usually has one, often two, whether he smokes or not), scuttles off to the canteen for a coffee, decides he needs to go to the washroom for a very long time, complains that his other work should receive priority, gets violently ill or, on occasion, faints.

Historically, learning to spell has been a drudgery. In most instances, it's frustrating, meaningless, boring, rote punishment. The student sits at his desk for hours trying desperately to memorize the spelling of hundreds of little words all for "The Big Test" at the end. And what is his reward if he passes the test? Sure, another list, probably longer than the one he just finished. And if he fails "The Big Test"? Right! He must study the same lot all over again and gets to try Form 2 of "The Big Test".

Our contention is simple; a spelling program needn't be torture. It, in some way, should be profitable for the student to learn how to spell these words correctly. A spelling program should have meaning. Why are the letters in a word arranged in a particular order rather than in some other sequence? Why are two words spelled differently but sound the same? Why are two words pronounced differently but spelled the same? How can meaning be changed by adding or removing letters?

The words in a spelling program must have usage potential for the student. He must see some value in learning how to spell a word in relation to his everyday existence. The word must occur commonly in books, magazines, newspapers, application forms, grocery lists, advertisements, catalogues, telephone directories, work manuals, and so on.

Learning how to spell a word must have some application for a student with reference to learning how to spell other words. If a student knows how to spell bake and cake why should we require him to learn the spelling of lake, make, rake, sake, take or wake?

Provided the student knows how to substitute initial consonants, if he knows how to spell one or two of these words, then he probably knows how to spell them all and forcing him to learn the entire list is redundant, wasteful effort.

With these points in mind, an entire revision of the Spelling Program used in Elementary Communications in the BTSD modules throughout Nova Scotia was initiated.

We decided to continue to draw the word lists from our original source, a portion of our Independent Reading program. However, since there were just too many words and since many of the words appeared to have little practical value for our students, some reduction or streamlining of the total vocabulary was in order. Therefore, a comparison of our word lists and the frequency of occurrence tables in the Thorndyke/Lorge, "The Teacher's Book of 30,000 Words" was made. The results were: (1) many uncommon

words were eliminated from the program, and (2) the words were rearranged to approximate the Thorndyke/Lorge grade levels.

Next, the words were organized within each level on the basis of the phonetic elements or the structural patterns within each word. Consequently, a list may consist only of words which contain a long vowel sound, a "y" or a capital letter. Then the lists were divided further into sublists where each sublist may consist only of words which contain an "l" blend, hard or soft "c" or "ar". Following this, each sublist was reduced to 20 words or less by removing words which were considered redundant in terms of phonetic content.

The next step was to develop a method of teaching the spelling of the words. The initial task for the student would be to learn the pronunciation of the words. This process could take the form of either a student/student or a student/instructor activity. Then word-attack techniques commonly used in student workbooks plus exercises using the context, the dictionary and sentence completion were employed to give the student an opportunity to use and discover the content of the words.

In order to test the student, it was decided to first test each 20-word word list. This procedure has the advantage of quickly identifying those words the student finds particularly difficult and also quickly identifies areas of word attack where the student is weak. Again, this process can take the form of either a student/student or a student/instructor activity.

During the exercises, reading and testing, certain words will be identified as difficult for the student to learn. These words are entered in the student's individual Word Bank. When the whole level has been completed, the student is tested on this word list as opposed to the entire level

Portions of this program were tested at one of our modules with encouraging feedback coming to us not just from the instructors, but from the students also. The entire program has been completed and will be implemented across the province in the near future. Only time and use can tell us actually how effective the program will be, however, we are optimistic.

Rolly Hill
Development Unit
Adult Vocational Education
Department of Education
Nova Scotia

SAFETY BLADE - A JOB LITERACY PROGRAM

Within the general Adult Basic Education - ABE - stream there is a need for a job literacy program which would bring adults to a level of functional literacy within the context of their work.

The broad intent of this program is to provide a course of study and instructional mode to establish a functional job literacy. This will involve spoken and written English and reading. The rationale for creating such a program is that much of the literacy and English-as-a-Second Language material is directed towards oral fluency and particularly to women. Adult male learner's needs are not being answered.

The general considerations for such a program are: the clientele; the nature of literacy training; adult learner anxieties; adult learning materials; progressive reading pedagogy; appropriate class arrangements; and, a course of instruction.

For the most part the clientele will be East Indian male labourers employed on shift work in the forest industry. Some have had formal schooling while others have not. Many have marginal oral English fluency, but cannot read or write. All recognize the desirability of literacy and know that job advancement hinges on this ability. The intended group cannot take advantage of regularly scheduled evening classes due to shift work. The group is a cohesive unit and their employer has indicated general support for the project.

The acquisition of any second language is a slow, demanding process. Literacy is no exception and therefore, the program will have to be so constructed that steady, continuous progress and mastery of skills occurs. Physiological and psychological characteristics of adult learners as well as adult learner anxieties will have to be considered in this project.

There is a well-established lexicon of work and safety words used constantly in the industry. Graphic materials, films, safety signs, production directions and procedures, caution-posters and personnel information provide the means for a core vocabulary. This core vocabulary coupled with reading and writing skills will provide the adult student with the knowledge and confidence to enter other language training classes at the intermediate and advanced levels.

The instructional mode will utilize a code-emphasis (sound-symbol) cueing and recognition system currently used in the BLADE program. Mastery of each unit in a spiral curriculum will be required so that the student can approach progressively more difficult material with confidence. Ultimately, the cueing system becomes an occasional word attack tool and can be discarded.

This project will differ from the BLADE program in its pacing, vocabulary, construction of tape-text instruction and in terms of the extent of individualization. There will be a much greater emphasis on group dynamics.

The class will be conducted at the mill site during the lunch break. Tentatively, there will be three (3) lessons a week, each lasting 15-20 minutes. After a given number of sessions, longer review and recapitulation classes will take hold. The course of instruction is comprised of 26 units in which all sounds in the English Language will be

mastered, a core vocabulary learned which can then be employed in writing, reading and speaking. A measured reading level will be established upon completion. Tentatively, there will be 40 hours of unit work in designated instruction time, 10 hours of off-site review and recapitulation time. Students will be expected to invest at least 40 hours in home study. Start-up is scheduled for September 1978 with completion in June of the same year. A pilot will be run in September 1977.

If the program proves viable, it will be expanded.

David S. Thomas
Assistant Director
Division of Continuing Education
School District No. 28
QUESNEL,, B.C.

ARE COPING SKILLS NECESSARY IN ADULT BASIC EDUCATION?

Project Squabel, as the accompanying article explains, is an attempt by the project staff and the faculty of the Adult Basic Education Program at Douglas College to measure and quantify the effects of life or coping skills on the employability and independence of ABE students. The author, Paul Gotro states: "We know of no research whatever that has been done in the areas of employability and independence, where the major concern of the researchers has been the effects of coping skills. Knowing that, we felt that the project might be of interest to other adult educators, perhaps giving them some ideas for their own programs and at the same time, giving us the opportunity to tell them what it is that we are doing in ours." Ed.

As any instructor in the program will know, Adult Basic Education is an eclectic and unique form of learning, the major element of which is that it attempts to teach to adults, fundamental elementary and high school subjects that are for most adults, as common to life as fingerprints. The one other factor contributing to the uniqueness of Adult Basic Education is the instruction of students in life or coping skills. These skills, it is hoped, enable the student to cope in today's world with a minimum of difficulty. Far too often and unfortunately so, the emphasis of life skills instruction is overridden in an effort to produce a more academically proficient individual.

Project SQUABEL (The Systematic Quantification of Adult Basic Educational Learning) headquartered on the Coquitlam Campus of Douglas College in British Columbia, is attempting to prove, through the use of a proposed survey instrument, that the learning of basic life skills is every bit as important as the acquisition of academic skills in the development of socially independent and employable individuals.

With the assistance of a pre- and post- test survey instrument, SQUABEL will measure and quantify the effects of coping skills on employability levels before and after ABE instruction, as well as to determine if those same coping skills, have made the graduate

more independent of social institutions.

To date, it is evident that the areas of independence and employability have, for the large part, been explored only as they have applied to academic skills and not so much as they related to individual feelings of self-worth or competence. SQUABEL maintains that employability is synonymous with those feelings and in turn directly related to the acquisition of basic coping skills.

To illustrate, most ABE students have in all probability, risen to a much higher level of scholastic qualification, perhaps from a level of grade six equivalence to a grade twelve equivalence. It cannot be disputed that this is an accomplishment of no little worth. But, the question does arise, are these graduates also capable, functioning members of society, able to operate without assistance with life in general? Most people, including those educated in the traditional way, will be little more than "well-educated" and unable to cope with the day to day process of living, unless they have been trained to do so. From that premise, it should not be difficult to see that employable characteristics are far more than merely academically induced. To be fully employable, the individual must be relatively independent of society, its institutions, and the crutch of "proxy" decision-makers.

In an article written for Adult Training (Vol. 2, #1, 1976), Michael Clague stated that "there is a need to be concerned with the growth of the whole person and not limit students to the acquisition of academic or trade skills alone (for example, adult education might include, in addition to the best possible academic experience, assistance in budget management, debt consolidation, personal health care and fitness, and programs in life skills and family relations)."

SQUABEL is in complete agreement with Mr. Clague. The results of the study being undertaken now will prove, we maintain, beyond the shade of a doubt, that the teaching of life skills, in as concentrated a fashion as academic skills, makes the individual a more socially functional person as well as academically and technically proficient.

It has been assumed that the ABE graduate is far more able through his increased academic skills or ability to apply for a much more highly paid or constructive job than perhaps was available previously. However, it must also be agreed that employers want not only scholastically competent employees, but also those people who need the minimum of supervision and who, upon instruction, will go about their jobs confidently, making minor decisions on their own.

Independence on a social basis as well as in the academic realm, makes possible an ABE graduate who appears at a job interview confident in himself as well as in his technical abilities, able to articulate ideas and concepts in a general sphere, and dressed according to the job requirements.

The employer will be able to discern (if ABE has done its job) whether or not the applicant is right for the job. Why? Because the applicant has had included in his programme of instruction, an equal concentration of academic and coping skills education. It will be all too obvious that the repercussions for social institutions can be only advantageous.

SQUABEL insists that it is within the capability of Adult Basic Education Programs to change the all too common attitude of "I can't do it alone; do it for me". Basic education programmes can prevent the student who has undergone academic upgrading, from undergoing the crippling experience of being told he is not right for the job, simply because he has not been given the proper tools with which to apply for a job. If the educative programme he has graduated from has had an equal peppering of life skills training to accompany his academic instruction" the above need not be the case. The student will learn to rely on his personal resources to get employment, keep employment, and become relatively free of the "mother-hen" social institution he has thus far relied on.

Even now, we can hear the question: "Interesting. But, how do you propose to prove that coping skills are every bit as important as academic skills?"

This summer, SQUABEL hopes to devise an instrument which will measure the unemployability and dependence of institutionally diagnosed unemployable. Upon entry to the programme, the students will be assessed as to their employment potential. A standardized cognitive test (ABLE) has been pre- selected and will be used to measure the academic abilities of the students, and a SQUABEL designed "self-concept" test will be used to measure the extent to which a student believes he is employable.

Another question sure to arise is: "What criteria are used to develop or formulate questions for the instrument?"

With the information obtained from an employer opinion survey, (information is presently being solicited from agencies such as Canada Manpower, Unemployment Insurance, major corporations, and personnel hiring agencies) SQUABEL will be able to delineate in as exact a fashion as possible, those characteristics which employers feel constitute the ideal employee. Already, from the several questionnaires returned, a pattern is beginning to develop. In addition to academic skills, which thus far, employers have been rating at an average of 60% in importance, characteristics such as inter- personal relations, motivation, adaptability, punctuality, and so on, have received ratings much higher. In the categories of inter-personal relations and adaptability alone, employer responses have resulted in an average of 80% to 100% importance. Employers thus far responding have also indicated that they provide on-the-job-training for most jobs and that they regard personal characteristics or competence as being much more important than academic or technical ability. Although the final results have not yet been tabulated, the pattern cannot be regarded as insignificant.

The next step in the project will be to present the results of the employer survey to the ABE faculty members at Douglas College and obtain from them exactly which of the employer-demanded characteristics are addressed within the scope of the existing Adult Basic Education programme. If none of the desired traits are visible within the ABE frame of reference, it will of course, be an obvious indication that at least at Douglas College, something is sorely missing in the curriculum and it will be up to the programme faculty to make applicable adjustments. If however, major employer concerns are addressed in the programme of instruction SQUABEL will measure and quantify the programme success in teaching those skills which ABE says it teaches adequately. A pre- and post-testing situation will be used to ensure the best possible and accurate results. Recurrent testing will also make possible a "check system" whereby the analysis of data collected will be assured of remaining correct. In addition, supervisors and instructors will be able to make

further adjustments to their curriculum and thus, facilitate the best possible "all round" education.

SQUABEL is confident that employer demands will continue to concur with its assumption that personal characteristics are equally, if not more important than academic skills, and that coping skills, together with academic skills, are an integral part of the socially independent and employable individual.

One need only add that if the SQUABEL postulated value of life skills competency as it applies to social independence and employability is correct, the ABE graduates will be leaving future programs at Douglas College not only more academically proficient, but also as a result of an equal concentration of coping skills instruction, better suited to maintain a status that is at once, self-confident and independent of what can only be called "institutional crutches". If the aim of the SQUABEL project is met, the student graduating from future courses in Adult Basic Education will not merely be more academically employable, he or she will have been given the added plus of enhanced independence from social institutions which until now, have been such a permanent fixture in their lives.

Paul Gotro
Douglas College
New Westminster, B.C.

UNESCO - RECOMMENDATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION

This recommendation was adopted by UNESCO's Supreme Legislative body, the General Conference, at its 19th Session held in Nairobi, Kenya, in October-November 1976.

As the text points out, "The General Conference recommends that member states apply the following provisions by taking whatever legislative or other steps may be required, in conformity with the constitutional practice of each state, to give effect to the principles set forth in this recommendation".

In the text great stress is laid on the educationally underprivileged and the necessity of including them in the lifelong education and learning processes. Parts of the text which seem particularly apt for adult basic educators and literacy workers are included below.

The full text is obtainable from the following:

Canadian Commission for UNESCO
255 Albert Street
P.O. Box 1047, Station B
OTTAWA, Ontario
K1P 5V8

Canadian Association for Adult Education
(CAAE)
29 Prince Arthur Avenue
TORONTO, Ontario
M5R 1B2

I. DEFINITION

1. In this recommendation:

-the term "adult education" denotes the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regarded as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or professional qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behaviour in the twofold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development;

education and learning, far from being limited to the period of attendance at school, should extend throughout life, include all skills and branches of knowledge, use all possible means, and give the opportunity to all people for full development of the personality;

II. OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

2. Generally speaking, the aims of adult education should be to contribute to:

(b) developing a critical understanding of major contemporary problems and social changes and the ability to play an active part in the progress of society with a view to achieving social justice.

3. Adult education should be based on the following principles:

(a) it should be based on the needs of the participants and make use of their different experiences in the development of adult education; the most educationally underprivileged groups should be given the highest priority within a perspective of collective advancement; ...

(c) it should awaken an interest in reading and develop cultural aspirations;

(e) it should be adapted to the actual conditions of everyday life and work and take into account the personal characteristics of adult learners, their age, family, social, occupational or residential background and " the way in which these interrelate;

(i) it should recognize as an integral part of the educational process the forms of collective organization established by adults with a view to solving their day-to-day problems;

(j) it should recognize that every adult by virtue of his or her experience of life, is the vehicle of a culture which enables him or her to play the role of both learner and teacher in the educational process in which he or she participates.

4. Each Member State should:

(a) recognize adult education as a necessary and specific component of its education system and as a permanent element in its social, cultural and economic development policy; it should, consequently, promote the creation of structures, the preparation and implementation of programs and the application of educational methods which meet the needs and aspirations of all categories of adults, without restriction on grounds of sex, race, geographical origin, age, social status, Opinion, belief or prior educational standard.

(b) recognize that although, in a given situation, or for a specific period, adult education may play a compensatory role, it is not intended as a substitute for adequate youth education which is a prerequisite for the full success of adult education;

(d) take measures with a view to promoting participation in adult education and community development programs by members of the most underprivileged groups, whether rural or urban, settled or nomadic, and in particular illiterates, young people who have been unable to acquire an adequate standard of general education or a qualification, migrant workers and refugees, unemployed workers, members of ethnic minorities, persons suffering from a physical or mental handicap, persons experiencing difficulties of social adjustment and those serving prison sentences. In this context, Member States should associate themselves in the search for educational strategies designed to foster more equitable relations among social groups.

6. Consideration should be given to the need for an adult education component, including literacy, in the framing and execution of any development program.

III. CONTENT OF ADULT EDUCATION

9. ... In defining the content of adult education activities priority should be given to the specific needs of the educationally most underprivileged groups.

16. With regard to such persons as have remained illiterate or are experiencing difficulty in adjusting to society because of the slenderness of their resources, their limited education or their restricted participation in community life, adult education activities should be designed not only to enable them to acquire basic knowledge (reading, writing, arithmetic, basic understanding of natural and social phenomena), but also to make it easier for them to engage in productive work, to promote their self-awareness and their grasp of problems of hygiene, health, household management and the upbringing of children, and to enhance their autonomy and increase their participation in community life.

17. With regard to young people who have been unable to acquire an adequate standard of general education or a qualification, adult education activities should, in particular, enable them to acquire additional general education with a view to developing their ability to understand the problems of society and shoulder social responsibilities, and to gaining access to the vocational training and general education which are necessary for the exercise of an occupational activity.

18. If people wish to acquire educational or vocational qualifications which are formally attested by certificates of education or of vocational aptitude and which, for social or economic reasons, they have not been able to obtain earlier, adult education should enable them to obtain the training required for the award of such certificates.

V. THE STRUCTURES OF ADULT EDUCATION

38. Measures should be taken in order to:

(e) abolish economic and social obstacles to participation in education, and to systematically bring the nature and form of adult education programs to the attention of all potential beneficiaries, but especially to the most disadvantaged, by using such means as active canvassing by adult education institutions and voluntary organizations, to inform, counsel and encourage possible and often hesitant participants in adult education.

VI. TRAINING AND STATUS OF PERSONS ENGAGED IN ADULT EDUCATION WORK

43. In addition to the employment of full-time professional workers, measures should be taken to enlist the support of anyone capable of making a contribution regular or occasional, paid or voluntary, to adult education activities, of any kind. Voluntary involvement and participation in all aspects of organizing and teaching are of crucial importance, and people with all kinds of skills are able to contribute to them.

60. For the individual, lack of funds should not be an obstacle to participation in adult education programs. Member States should ensure that financial assistance for study purposes is available for those who need it to undertake adult education. The participation of members of under-privileged social groups should, as a general rule, be free of charge.

"At a time when adult basic education in this country is so pitifully underdeveloped (and shows signs of becoming a political football between the two senior levels of government) . . . it is a sobering and useful reminder to have the UNESCO Recommendation declare so forcefully and unequivocally that our priorities need to be re-examined..."

Gordon Selman, Learning

PUBLICATIONS

Book Reviews:

Teaching Reading in Adult Basic Education

by Fay R. Bowren and Miles Zintz.

Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Co., 409pp.

Available in Canada from:

Burns and MacEachern

62 Rail side Road

DON MILLS, Ontario

M3A 1A6

Price: \$11.40

In the preface the authors state that their text is for teacher education and in-service programs specifically designed for adult basic education instructors, for present adult basic education teachers and for volunteer tutors. Many of the above-mentioned have been trained to work with children and now find themselves working with adults. This will help them bridge the gap. It will also be useful for the instructor who had training in adult basic education but lacks knowledge in teaching reading.

The first section of the book is titled "The Adult as a Learner". It describes the unique characteristics of and needs of adult learners.

The second section of the book, "Developing Reading Skills for the Adult Learner", deals with the usual topics one finds in a book on reading. The theme through these chapters is that while the end objective (to produce self-motivated learners who read efficiently) is the same for both adults and children, the route the teacher takes to help the adult learner is far different. This book attempts to explain the implications of the unique characteristics and needs of adult learners for reading instruction. The section on orienting beginning reading experiences thoroughly reviews a number of approaches to beginning reading.

The third section of the book deals with assessment. The authors first address themselves to the question of the approach to assessment with adults who have had unsatisfactory school experiences, who may have been away from a school situation for many years or who have never been to school. It discusses informal reading inventories and standardized tests and provides brief descriptions of adult learning material.

There is much useful material for teachers. in the 27 appendices. Some of the items dealt with in the appendices are Fernald technique, Fry and Fog readability, informal reading inventories, Wilson's essential vocabulary list and much other pertinent material.

This book is packed with pertinent information for the adult basic education instructor and would be a useful addition for a professional library.

Barbara Bowmar
Basic Education Coordinator
Langley School District

SPIRALS by Anita Jackson. U.K.-Hutchinson.
Six books: A Game of Life and Death; The Ear;
The Actor; the Austin Seven; Dreams; Bennet Manor.
Available in Canada from:
GLC Publishers Limited
115 Nugget Avenue
AGINCOURT, Ontario
MIS 3BI
Price: 90¢ each
(20% educational discount
applies)

No fiction specifically written for new readers can have the interest and vitality of writing, intended for literate adults, which is later simplified and adapted to the needs of new readers.

But the six excellent Spirals are the exception which proves the rule. Anita Jackson has made two intelligent decisions in order to avoid a banal story and a tedious narrative. First, she has chosen the type of fiction - the supernatural or ghost story - which has almost universal appeal. Second, she uses the first person narrative form: the different "I" of all the stories, except Bennet Manor, recounts his weird experiences and ponders on them at the same time, providing ample opportunity for the reader to confront the same words and phrases repeated in a completely credible way.

There are no illustrations, but the text is broken up into sections of a few lines, the chapters are short and the print large. The books were first published in 1974 and are very highly recommended.

- Pippa Wainwright
ALRA Newsletter, November, 1976

STUDENTS' WORK

The following poems are the creations of students at the Bathurst Library Adult School in Metro Toronto. The school went on a recent outing to the restored village of Sainte-Marie near Midland, Ontario and this was the inspiration for many articles by the students.

THE SORROWS OF SAINTE-MARIE

We took a bus

We had a long ride just north of us.

For we came to see
The village of Sainte-Marie.
A world of so long ago
Where the Hurons roamed
And made their homes

In the village of Sainte-Marie.

They lived in peace
They thought would never cease
For they had their land
It was so grand

In the village of Sainte-Marie.
Then came the French and said

We are here to stay

They made them learn the white man's ways

They brought disease
Where many deceased

In the village of Sainte-Marie

The Iroquois came
With torture and pain
They came in war
The Hurons had their land no more
Until one day They burned it away

The village of Sainte-Marie.

POEM ABOUT SUMMER

The summer is nice
The summer is when the flowers

are starting to bloom.

There is no more ice on the water So
there is no more ice in my heart. The
Canada geese are swimming

gently in the water

It makes me want to swim with them. I
threw a stone in the water It made a
ring on the water It got bigger and
bigger, Just like the love in my heart.

APRIL

Months come and months go But the
"April" month is the best

I know

As April's freshness settles in Flowers
bloom and Robins sing
People cheer
Spring is here
Spring is here.

Seasons come and seasons go But spring
is the gayest season

I know

April's freshness alights the air
With flowers blooming everywhere
As children cheer
The bees are humming
Spring is here
Spring is here.



EXCHANGE PEN FRIEND

ADULTS WHO ARE LEARNING TO WRITE
AND
SPELL, CAN WRITE TO ANOTHER STUDENT
IN A DIFFERENT PART OF THE WORLD.

Since January 1975 there has been a "Pen-friend Scheme" in England for adult literacy students. The organizers of the scheme are willing to match students from Canadian programs with any British students who may welcome this international link. In the U.K. students write in for a pen-friend at a rate of about 8-10 per week. It takes some weeks to match students, but feedback indicates that many pairs are still writing to each other after 6 months or so. There is a need for more young female pen-friends.

Any Canadian who would like to participate in this scheme should send name, address, age, interests etc, of prospective pen-friends and some idea of kind of English pen-friend required (sex, age, interests etc.) to:

Pen Friends, 73 Canning Street, Liverpool L8 7NW, England.

ARE THERE ANY CANADIAN STUDENTS WHO WOULD LIKE TO WRITE TO OTHER
CANADIAN STUDENTS? If so, let's hear about them and initiate some exchanges.

EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION REQUIRED!

The following requests for information and sharing of ideas etc, have been received:

Dear Audrey,

I am teaching a group of adult aborigines in Perth, Western Australia. The course is mainly oriented towards English-speaking urban aborigines ranging in age from 16-60. Some of the group are learning to read and write for the first time, whilst others are nearing the stage when they can enter tertiary institutions or on- the-job training schemes.

Although this course is fairly unique within the Australian context, I'm sure such adult literacy classes must exist working with other minority groups elsewhere in the world.

I would be grateful if you would let them know of our existence in Australia as a prelude to sharing of ideas and information, the more contacts and sources of ideas we can develop the better.

Yours sincerely,

David Goldsworthy, 82 Gloster Street, SUBIACO, PERTH, W. Australia 6008

Ed. note: Any BJRT or BTSD programs with native peoples on reserves or urban settings attached to Ontario Community Colleges, or Vocational Centres in Northern Alberta etc. or Outreach programs for native peoples would be of possible interest to David. WRITE TO HIM DIRECTLY.

INFORMATION ON LIFE SKILLS PROGRAMS REQUIRED:

The Surrey Work Activity Project is conducting six month programs of life skills instruction and counselling in order to assist adults toward independent living and competitive job placement. The program is geared to help people with special needs be they physically, mentally or emotionally handicapped. The three major components of the course are (1) life skills (2) group and personal counselling and (3) work experience.

Anyone who may be able to offer help or suggestions on relevant materials, please contact:

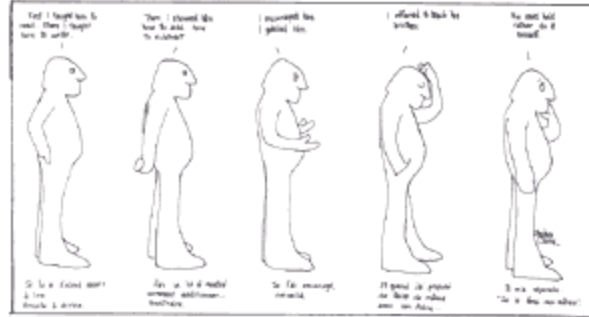
Marlaine Stewart, Life Skills Coordinator, Surrey Work Activity Project
#5, 10694 - 135th Street, Surrey, British Columbia
phone: 588-9565

ANYONE KNOW OF SUCCESSFUL BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ARITHMETIC?

Contact a Marie Dinwoodie, Dev-Cor Technical Services, 12225 105 Avenue, EDMONTON, Alta.

ANYONE OPERATING ABE AND LITERACY SKILLS PROGRAMS IN RURAL AREAS IN CANADA? Anyone developing programs or materials in the same area?

If so, please contact: Susan Beahen, Community Worker, St. Lawrence College, Box 201, SYDENHAM, Ontario, KOH 2T0.



action, spring 1977

NEWS FROM....

BRITISH COLUMBIA

In the last newsletter we mentioned the activity of the Committee on Continuing and Community Education under Dr. Ron Farris of the Department of Education. In this issue we present the recommendations of the Committee as they pertain to adult basic education in British Columbia.

"Approximately 330,000 British Columbians over the age of 15 left school without having completed grade 9. [1971 Census] Many of them need some form of assistance before any formal study could begin; others require a "second chance". Most of these people are Canadian-born, and many have rural backgrounds.

"Apart from the human and social cost of what UNESCO terms "functional illiteracy", the economic cost is too great to be ignored. Recent Canada Manpower cost-benefit studies clearly indicate the social and economic benefits of assisting adults with basic literacy skills in order to become more productive members of society.

"Although the committee recognizes that not all adults are capable of performing at the high school level, the relatively few adult basic education programs being offered and welcomed by adults indicate that much more could be achieved were the capacity for services to be expanded. The committee therefore recommends that:

3.1. The Ministry of Education recognize and take initiative to meet the acute need for expansion of adult basic education and literacy programs.

3.2. Every citizen be given the opportunity, on a tuition-free basis for educational upgrading up to and including the grade 12 level or its equivalence. 3.3. The funding, administration, instruction, curriculum development, and research necessary to achieve the goal above be facilitated by setting a priority not lower than that given to basic education for youth.

- 3.4. A provincial coordinator for adult basic education be appointed at an early" date.
- 3.5. One institution be designated and funded as a provincial centre for adult basic education curriculum development.
- 3.6. Recognition be given to the fact that many adults have learning disabilities that must be accommodated through special instructional approaches in order to facilitate learning.
- 3.7. Adult basic education programs be provided in non-institutional settings when appropriate.
- 3.8. Dependence on Canada Manpower for programs with an adult basic education emphasis (BTSD, EOW, BJRT, etc.) be lessened.
- 3.9. The Ministry of Education finance the development of a standard, individualized adult basic education program.
- 3.10. Pre-service and in-service training needs of basic education administrators, counselors, and instructors be given consideration in professional-development programs at all levels in the system.
- 3.11. Learning materials for adult basic education students be provided on the same basis as for all children and youth.
- 3.12. Adult basic education programs encompass social and personal development skills, as well as academic instruction."

FOLLOW-UP:-

1. A committee for long distance learning in ABE has been struck and is chaired by Barry Moore of Northern Lights College. The task of the committee is to identify resources appropriate to long distance learning in ABE and make recommendations to the Ministry. Materials collected will be held in the Provincial Educational Media Centre and distributed from there.
2. An ad hoc advisory committee for ABE , has been struck by the provincial government. The task of the committee is to identify and describe present ABE practices and make recommendations to the Ministry on required additional services. A series of status studies covering most aspects of ABE in the province have been underway.
3. Professional development workshops for ABE personnel continue to be held.
4. Several basic literacy proposals from community colleges have been made.
5. Some steps have been taken to get an ABE provincial association underway.

SASKATCHEWAN

Groups of people in Saskatoon and Regina are taking initiatives to tackle the problems of under-educated or illiterate adults.

The article below tells of the initiative of Saskatoon Region Community College. Also in Saskatoon on June 6-7 a conference entitled "ADULT ILLITERACY: A Problem for Saskatoon?" The event was cosponsored by Saskatoon Region Community College, University of Saskatchewan Extension, Saskatoon Public Library and the Y.W.C.A. Some of the theme topics were: What is Functional Literacy? Literacy and the Job Market; Literacy in Everyday Life; and what is Happening Locally?

In Regina, the Public Library held a successful LVA Workshop in May. It was attended by 28 representatives.

Also in Regina, a group of people have been meeting regularly to consider the applications of the work of Paulo Freire in the Saskatchewan context and more particularly in the urban society of Regina. A workshop was held under the sponsorship of the Regina Plains Community College and the Department of Extension, University of Regina on June 9th. the workshop leader was Paz Buttedahl who worked for five years with Paulo Freire in Chile as supervisor of his adult literacy program.

Volunteer tutors to upgrade adults' reading, writing skills

A dozen Saskatoon volunteers are eager to make a dent in recent statistics which indicate as much as 30 per cent of the Canadian population is nearly illiterate.

Eleven women and man showed up Saturday to volunteer as tutors in an experimental program by the Saskatoon Region Community College aimed at upgrading basic reading writing skills in adults.

Joane Orton, community program coordinator for the college, said the volunteers are ready to begin individual instruction in the basic skills and the program will be closely watched to see whether it should be expanded.

At this point it's a real experiment, she said

The aim is to reach adults whose literacy skills are insufficient for basic written communication those who have trouble writing a drivers, test or reading notes their children bring home from school.

The volunteers, obtained through the Saskatoon YWCA were introduced to basic instructional techniques are workshop Saturday and were given tips on understanding the problems of adults who cannot read .

They will meet again in late May to assess the program and college staff will be

available throughout for consultation with instructors .

Orton said the initial intention is for each tutor to take one pupil. Tutor and pupil would arrange times and places for meetings, using two hours of instruction per week as a general guide.

We didn't do a lot of publicity so far because we didn't want to raise expectations and end up with too many clients for our number of instructors Orton said.

But we were encouraged by the number and quality of the volunteers and we will try to be more visible.

The group ranged from college to retirement age.

Orton said she would like to see more male volunteers since some of the women would prefer to work with female students.

She said similar volunteer programs have been successful in Eastern Canada and the U.S. and it was a way of extending the options available to functionally illiterate people.

She said the college has been aware of the problem but until this year was unable to offer much in adult education below the high school level.

Evening classes offer adult upgrading from Grade 10 and a - new class began in January fur, upgrading from Grade 5 to high school level.

SASKATOON STAR- PHOENIX, March 28, 1977

MANITOBA: I hope you find space in some future newsletter for news about the huge literacy program in Winnipeg at the International Centre. 200 students attend our program for upgrading writing and reading skills twice a week. They are adult immigrants. Levels range from illiterates who must start with the ABC's up to those planning to enter university.

- Mary Johnson (We'd be happy to feature an article. Ed)

ONTARIO

As a result of the Readers' Digest article April, 1977 several requests for help and information on literacy programs and methods were received from places such as Sudbury, Geraldton, Cornwall, Inglewood and Toronto! What the article had done was to make these people realize that they were not the only ones who were working with illiterate people, and that some help might be available for them in their situations.

A LITERACY HAPPENING IN PEMBROKE! . . .

Take one member of the Board of
Directors of World Literacy of Canada
and
One Tutor-Trainer of Laubach Literacy
Combine their interests in literacy
problems, global and local, and their
interests and talents--
Then watch for results!!

A move from the South Shore of Nova Scotia to Pembroke, Ontario last year took me away from my active involvement in combatting adult illiteracy. I'd thought I'd proceed slowly in exploring the literacy needs in our new home's area. This planning hadn't reckoned with my contact with a dynamo of literacy energy and interest in the form of Grace Hampson.

My first contact with Grace was at her planned program at the local library to celebrate World Literacy Day. Her knowledge of the area and contacts formed from many teaching days in Pembroke accelerated my planned conservative approach, considerably!

Needs and resources of the Pembroke area in regards to adult literacy problems were examined and discussed. The outcome of this venture was a 12 hour Laubach Literacy Workshop held at the end of April. This workshop was co-conducted by Karen Dahmer, Tutor- Trainer and member of the Hamilton and District Literacy Council and myself. We received the support of the local radio station and newspaper for pre-publicity. Algonquin Community College offered the use of their facilities for the workshop. Twelve people were made aware of the concept and methodology of the Laubach approach. "Pembroke and Area Volunteer Reading Aides" was selected as the name for our council. We have four students assigned to Volunteer Reading Aides on a "one-to -one" basis. Other prospects show promise, both in regards to students desiring our services and for participants in a future workshop.

- Irlavere Tubbe

Mrs. Tubbe was the person involved in the first pilot "one-to-one" program in Nova Scotia in 1970

. . . AND IN TORONTO

A couple of keen ABE instructors from Humber College have taken the initiative in their spare time to start a group known as TORONTO VOLUNTEERS FOR LITERACY.

On: June 11-12 they held a Laubach Training Workshop in Toronto. Twenty-four people attended and fourteen are now tutoring. There is a waiting list of students and a second workshop will be held in September.

The group has ambitious plans for the future and hopes to adopt an eclectic approach to literacy to accommodate a wide variety of people.

The dates for the September workshop will be the weekend of 24th-25th. To learn, or volunteer for tutoring or help with organizing call: 924-7649, 9a.m.-5 p.m. 487-3596 or 239-9327 after 5 p.m.

* * *

Follow-up to the Literacy Connection

A group of library students was seconded to one of the public libraries for a three week period to investigate the extent of functional illiteracy in the area served by the library, current program opportunities and the possible role of the library. An excellent report was produced which showed the library to be located in an area where the level of under-educated adults was higher than average for the borough.

We are waiting to see what action will develop.

* * *

O.I.S.E. Videotape Project

The four videotapes on the Ontario ABE/literacy scene are nearing completion. A fairly wide cross-section of people and programs have been involved in this project.

QUEBEC

The following information on literacy classes has been provided by the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal. The classes operate at two levels - grades 0-3; and 3-6. They are provided free and best results have been achieved by the use of radio spot announcements. It is estimated that there must be several thousand Anglophone adult illiterates in Greater Montreal. Those who have come forward for help have made dramatic improvements.

Literacy Courses Offered for 1976-77:

Sixteen different classes operated for two terms of fifteen weeks each. Each week there were two evening sessions of three hours. Thus, one course for one term provided ninety hours of instruction. Many students took both terms, thus receiving one hundred and eighty hours of instruction during the school year.

The classes were held in eight different schools in various parts of the city. The teachers are qualified teachers of reading and are paid by the hour according to qualifications.

The number of students per class averages six. Maximum number of students is seven. Of the ninety six students taught during the second term, approximately fourteen were referred by associations for the mentally retarded.

Basic Literacy Course Description:

This course is designed for adults who are functionally illiterate - that is, for those who cannot read or write at all, or who cannot do so above a grade three level.

It aims to teach decoding and comprehension skills, the encouragement of good reading habits, the development of fluency and of competence in written expression.

Teaching is individualized, with a wide variety of methods, materials and devices. Visual and auditory aids are in common use. Reading matter is elementary in vocabulary but adult in interest, and includes fiction and non-fiction as well as career-oriented material. For the basic decoding instruction an analytic rather than synthetic phonic approach is generally used.

Programmes used include the Mott Basic Language Skills Program, New Horizons in English (Addison-Wesley) and low-vocabulary adult-interest books published by Xerox Educational Publications.

* * * * *

THE MARITIME

NALA NEWS:

New Brunswick

There are now two active literacy councils in this province - in Saint John and Moncton. The New Brunswick Community College supports the program by providing texts to students and tutors.

Nova Scotia

New councils:--Glace Bay and Port Hawkesbury are the latest additions. Also, the Nova Scotians are now moving into the correctional field. There is some tutoring in Sackville Correctional Centre and some groundwork has been done in Springhill federal institution.

NALA Regional Conference:--A successful conference was held in May at St. Mary's University. Over one hundred and fifty people attended from the Eastern Canadian Region. Many were volunteer tutors, but there were also interested observers and participants from Ontario and Newfoundland.

Many who attended the Writers' Workshop given by Dr. Bob Laubach realized how difficult it was to write at a grade 3 level. Nevertheless there was much enthusiasm and two Halifax volunteers have offered to collect, coordinate and eventually distribute the written material which is produced.

A wide variety of alternative seminars were given and a banquet was held on the

Saturday night.

The Halifax people really worked hard to make this a successful event. The next NALA Regional Conference will be in 1979, probably in Hamilton, Ontario.

* * * * *

NEWFOUNDLAND

The largest and oldest literacy centre in Newfoundland is at Stephenville, where there are 75 sponsored seats. Basic literacy covers grade levels from 0-5 and BTSD covers grades 6-11 and offers English/Math/Science. BJRT spans all grades - i.e. 0-11.

Two years ago as a result of funding from UIC, 5 literacy modules were introduced to the province. One of these is located in St. John's. The emphasis is on communication skills and life skills. The material used has been EDL 100, but over the last few months the instructors in St. John's have also been using the new Readers' Digest Point 31 program.

This program has been designed for adolescents reading at grade levels 0-4. It features mature-interest art and content (use is made of comic-strip format) with a high level of activity that involves the students. The coaches at St. John's felt that it was being well-received. The program is divided into 4 levels and develops decoding skills to a beginning grade 5 level. Each level is accompanied by audio cassettes. Above the decoding level, there are two magazine readers at each level and one activity book. There is also a teacher's guide as well as an evaluation booklet.

Elsewhere in the province, consideration is being given to adopting the Nova Scotia BTSD elementary communications program.

The Teachers on Wheels project based in St. John's was to be terminated at the end of the LIP funding in June. Fourteen paid tutors have spent up to 5 or 6 hours a week with an individual student or with small groups of 2-3 students at a time. Some 92 - students have been with the project during its life. The aim has been to help a student through the first 5 or 6 grades so that they would be more prepared to enter BTSD or other programs.

Now that this project's time has run out, serious consideration is being given to using volunteer tutors and the Laubach method.

The situation was summed up by a senior administrator as follows: "The problem is first of all to convince people that there is a problem of adult illiteracy and secondly to convince them that something can be done about it."

* * * * *

NEWS IN BRIEF . . .

Frontier College has been nominated by Canada to receive a UNESCO award for meritorious work in literacy.

This is the first time that Canada has made a nomination for this award. Two prizes are awarded each year in September and several honourable mentions are made.

The Canadian committee felt that the length of Frontier College's service, the uniqueness of its approach and its work with native peoples stand it in good stead.

Reach Non-Readers LIP project in Kingston, Ontario has just completed its research and report and recommends a literacy program in the Kingston area.

CBC Fifth Estate Program on Illiteracy first scheduled for April will now likely be shown sometime in September to coincide with International Literacy celebrations.

Reprints of the Readers' Digest article "The Secret Shame of Illiteracy" are available from: 692 Coxwell Avenue, Toronto.

Also available from the above address are Persepolis Declarations (English and French) and the French translation of the Digest on Canadian ABE and Literacy.

National documentation service on adult literacy

The British Committee on Literacy has established a National Documentation Service on Adult Literacy at the Agricultural Extension and Rural Development Centre at Reading University.

The location of the Literacy Documentation Service within a Rural Development Documentation Centre enables information on Literacy to be correlated with other aspects of development, such as agricultural production, vocational training cooperatives, public health, family planning and civic participation.

For further details please write to: Literacy Documentation Service, Agricultural Extension and Rural Development Centre, University of Reading, London Road, Reading RG1 5AQ, England.