

YAACING

The Newsletter of the Young Adult & Children's Services Section of BCLA
Winter 2011



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Message from the Chair

Hello YAACers,

As I write, it is a gloomy, wet November evening. If you're like me, maybe the onset of winter weather makes you feel like doing hibernation-themed storytimes and serving hot popcorn at your teen programs.

Our Vice-Chair Extraordinaire, Darby Love, has been working very hard representing YAACS on the planning committee for the 2011 BCLA Conference. This year, the committee did not meet in person, but via email, which I understand was quite difficult. The Conference outline is currently being finalized.

I have no news to report about BCLA board restructuring or the YAACS seat on the BCLA executive but will keep you updated.

As you know, we have some new editors at YAACing. Following in the footsteps of the great Joanne Canow and Phillipa Brown are the fabulous April Ens and Pamela Fairfield. They have been doing a fantastic job of getting YAACing to print (even though we're online now).

I would like to thank Joanne and Phillipa for their years of dedication to this newsletter and making it such a great resource for those of us who work in or are studying to work in the field of library services to children and teens.

Have you read a great book for which you could write a short review? Maybe you've created a booklist at work that you'd like to share with your fellow YAACers? Did your library host a "National Gaming Day" program that you think would interest other libraries? Submit your articles to April and Pam!

I hope everyone has a great winter and happy holidays.

*-Sarah Donald
YAACS Chair*

Message from the Editors

This issue marks the end of an era for YAACING and the beginning of another, as Phillipa Brown and Joanne Canow pass their editors' caps to us. We'd like to applaud them for their many years of tireless work. Phillipa has been editing YAACING since 1998, sharing her position with Joanne since 2006. And so they have left us big shoes to fill—a pair of very shiny stilettos. They have been the stars of YAACING, quietly shining these many years, as issue after issue they ensured the life and future of this important information source. With the New Year knocking on our door, we look forward to taking over this enjoyable challenge and to fulfilling the expectations of our readership.

You may notice a few changes in this issue and those to come. We've been working on standardizing the appearance of YAACING and drafting a style guide. This we will continue to tweak over the next few issues; and we welcome your feedback during this process.

In addition to the usual mix of news, articles and program ideas, we are launching a review column. We invite you all to contribute your thoughts on new, notable, and favourite books, blogs and other materials that you think we should all know about. We are also introducing our "Who's on the Felt Board?" section to inspire us all to share successful felt stories. We will no longer awake in a panic just moments after midnight in fear of the 80 toddlers, who come knocking on our door at 10 a.m., because we now come armed and ready with a solid collection of amiable characters with which we will entertain! So no matter how few pieces, send us your fantastic felt stories.

Contact us at YAACING@gmail.com with any submissions, queries or responses to anything you read here.

Thank you for your wonderful submissions so far and we welcome your contributions for future issues.

*-April Ens and Pamela Fairfield
YAACING Editors*



Red Cedar Award

The 2010/2011 **Red Cedar Book Award** season has officially begun! The Red Cedar Award is BC's very own Young Readers' Choice book award.

Every year, thousands of BC children between grades 4 and 7 are invited to participate in Red Cedar reading groups, where they read books from the nominated lists of non-fiction and fiction titles and then vote for their favourite in April. After all the votes have been tallied, the winners will be announced via the Red Cedar website.

Sadly, there will not be a gala in May 2011. But even though we won't be throwing a big party in May, we'll still have cool things for you and your students to do to help celebrate their hard work and achievements. We'll be adding some interactive features to the website, including author interviews, podcasts and a party kit with ideas for you to throw your own Red Cedar party with your reading group.

Registration is free and program resources will be readily available at www.redcedaraward.ca. Once again, posters to promote the Red Cedar program will be available via a full-colour PDF download available on our website. Please print off the poster to display at your school or library. On the website you will also find the full list of nominated titles, book information about each title, resources to help you run a Red Cedar reading group and more. So, check it out and sign up!

-Noreen Ma
Secretary, YRCA



Stellar Award

The **Stellar Book Award** is B.C.'s teen readers' choice award and "big sister" to the Red Cedar Book Award. Updated and refreshed for the 2010/2011 season, the Stellar website, located at www.stellaraward.ca is now ready for registration. Once teens aged 13 to 19 have registered themselves via the website, they can start reading, ranking, reviewing and discussing this season's nominated titles. Participants need to read at least 5 of the nominated titles to be able to vote in April.

This year, as well as being able to review the books that they are reading, teens will also have a chance to interview one of the nominees, and also win books just for participating in the Stellar Awards program. Librarians and teachers alike can support the Stellar Awards by encouraging the teens that they know to register online, facilitating access to and discussion of the nominated titles.

Interested older teens, teachers, teacher-librarians, public librarians, parents – anyone who wants to lead a Stellar Book Club can also register to be a book club leader. Registered leaders will receive information about new website features, contests and author interviews.

In order to reduce our ecological footprint, we have once again produced a PDF version of a full-colour poster available on the website for downloading and printing to display in your school or library.

We look forward to another dynamic Stellar season!

-Kate Adams
Chair, Stellar Steering Committee



TeenRC Got Into Character in 2010

This summer marked the Teen Reading Club's (TeenRC) fifth year as Canada's online literacy program aimed at youth aged thirteen to eighteen years old. This program provides a safe and positive online environment moderated by librarians from across the country where teens can discuss their reading and literature-related ideas, as well as share their writing with their peers.

In addition to book descriptions, reviews, writing and discussion forums, one of TeenRC's mainstays is author chats. From April to August 2010, a total of ten authors logged onto the chat rooms where they instant messaged with teens. This year's authors included Kit Pearson, Arthur Slade, and Lesley Livingston, amongst others. Teens had a chance to win prize packs by taking a quiz on the author and their works. Be sure to visit the TeenRC blog (www.teenrc.ca/blogs) to read each author's answers to five questions related to the TeenRC 2010 theme of "Get Into Character."

Inspired by the "Get Into Character" theme, Mystery Chats were created this summer and proved to be very popular with teens and librarians alike. TeenRC members were invited to host a chat pretending to be a character from a book. Chat attendees would ask them questions until the character was guessed and then the chat would be continue in character. Mystery Guests included Katniss from *The Hunger Games*, Tally Youngblood from *The Uglies* series and Magnus Bane from *The Mortal Instruments*. Recaps from each Mystery Chat can be found in the dedicated forum here: <http://www.teenrc.ca/forums/viewforum.php?f=115>

TeenRC ran two additional programs over the summer of 2010, namely the Book Battle Royale and the Mockingjay Mini-Contests. The Book Battle Royale was a six-week long program created by Edmonton Public Library (EPL) that TeenRC hosted in its forums. EPL created a book list of ten books, two of which were voted off every week until one final book was left at the end. They also created weekly challenges to encourage participation and give teens an opportunity to showcase their creativity. At the end of the summer, five prize packs with copies of each of the Book Battle Royale titles were randomly awarded to participating teens.

In August, the latest edition of Suzanne Collins' Hunger Games series was released and TeenRC marked the occasion by running the Mockingjay Mini-Contests, comprised of four mini-contests with fifteen copies of *Mockingjay* up for grabs. To see just how creative the TeenRC teens are, be sure to check out the Mockingjay Mini-Contests forums here: www.teenrc.ca/forums/viewforum.php?f=122

Without the help of all the volunteer moderators and librarians who participated this summer, TeenRC could not have been the fun and creative success that it was. A heartfelt thank you to all!

- Leah Pearse
Past Coordinator of TeenRC

Summer Reading Club

Summer Reading Club had another fabulous year. About 80,000 readers rocked at over 70 library systems all over the province! Programs included scavenger hunts, pet-rock-decorating sessions, "Name that band" contests and more.

For 2011, SRC is going to focus on the deliciousness of reading with a new theme: **Savour Each Word**. There are lots of programming possibilities involving reading, cooking and/or eating food, as well as appreciating the best of both! Our 2011 SRC artist, Kathryn Shoemaker, is hard at work on a poster and Reading Record that will bring out the connections between savouring books and savouring food. Watch for updates soon on the Librarians' SRC site at <http://kidssrc.bclibrary.ca>.

- Els Kushner,
Summer Reading Club Coordinator



Books for BC Babies

Since our fundraising campaign began in September, we have received lots of press coverage across the Province. Jim Looney and I have sent out the sponsorship document, developed by Louise Watson, to a wide variety of businesses, organizations and granting agencies. So far, our most successful 'ask' has been to many of the community Credit Unions throughout the Province who are prepared to fund the program locally. We are still hopeful that a big donation will come in but are looking at the practicalities of purchasing a bag, book, cd and booklet for those communities that have raised money locally or have money pledged through the provincial push for funding.

Thanks to Francesca de Freitas we have a fantastic website. Please point anyone interested in helping us out to <http://books4babies.bclibrary.ca>

Over the next month will be in contact with you to get your feedback and find out what you need.

If you have any questions please call Jim or I at any time.

Rhian Piprell
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Cell: 604 785 4132

Jim Looney
Cell : 604 551 0803

- Rhian Piprell
Co-Chair, Books for BC Babies



Who's on the Felt Board?

The Snowman

By Pamela Fairfield

For Toddlers and/or Family Storytime

Themes: Colors, Clothing, Winter

Tune: *The Muffin Man*

Do you know the Snowman?
The Snowman, the Snowman?
Do you know the Snowman?
He lives on our front lawn!

He has two brown potato eyes,
Potato eyes, potato eyes,
He has two brown potato eyes,
And he lives on our front lawn!

He has an orange carrot nose,
A carrot nose, a carrot nose,
He has an orange carrot nose,
And he lives on our front lawn!

He has a bright red cherry mouth,
A cherry mouth, a cherry mouth,
He has a bright red cherry mouth,
And he lives on our front lawn!

He has a bright blue scarf to wear,
A scarf to wear, a scarf to wear,
He has a bright blue scarf to wear,
And he lives on our front lawn!

He has two yellow sticks for arms,
Sticks for arms, sticks for arms,
He has two yellow sticks for arms,
And he lives on our front lawn!

He has two warm green mitts to wear,
Mitts to wear, mitts to wear,
He has two warm green mitts to wear,
And he lives on our front lawn!

He has a magic purple hat,
A purple hat, a purple hat,
He has a magic purple hat,
And he lives on our front lawn!

Hey! Wher'd he go? Well his hat *is* magic!!!!



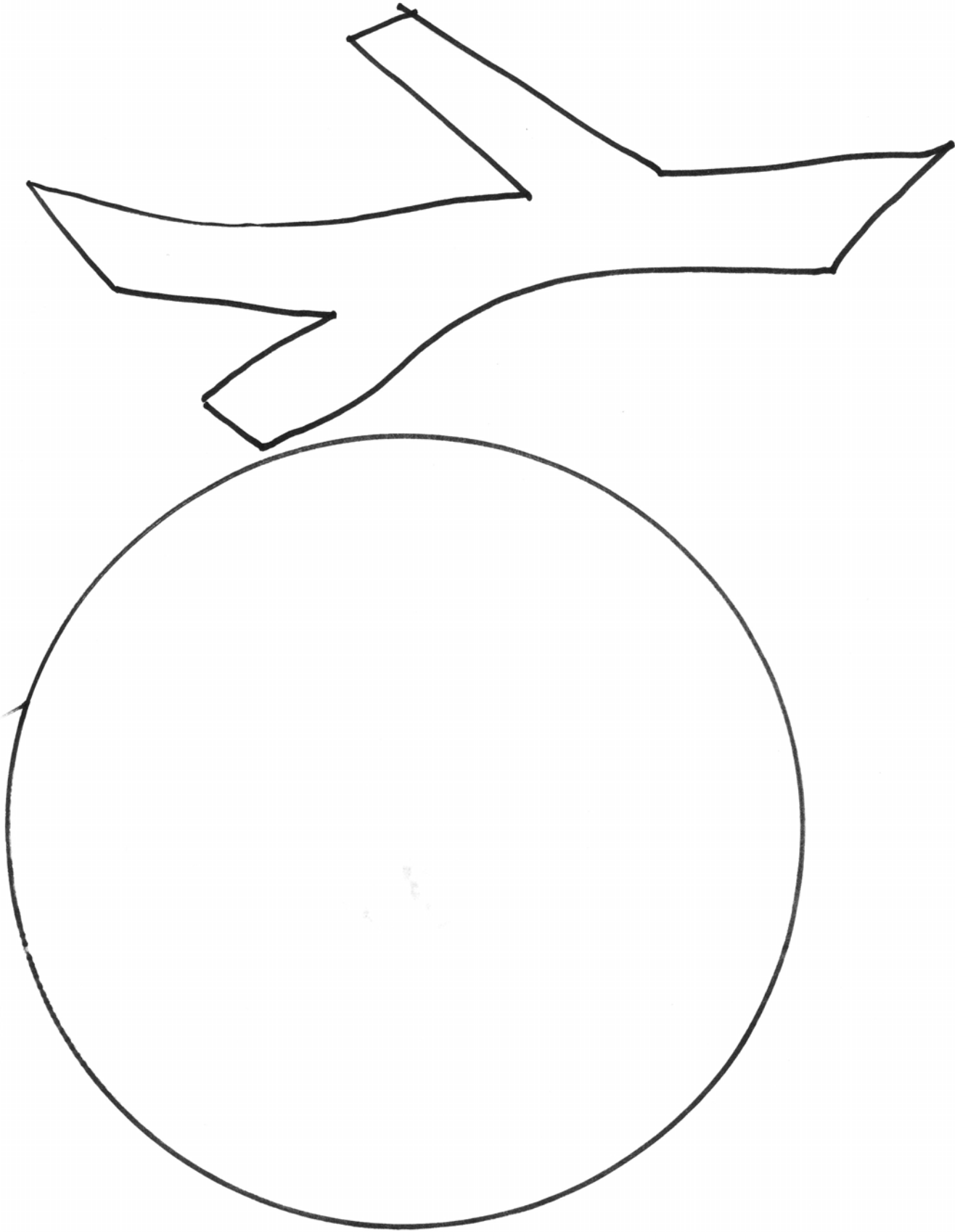
To make your own copy of *The Snowman*, print the pattern on the following pages.

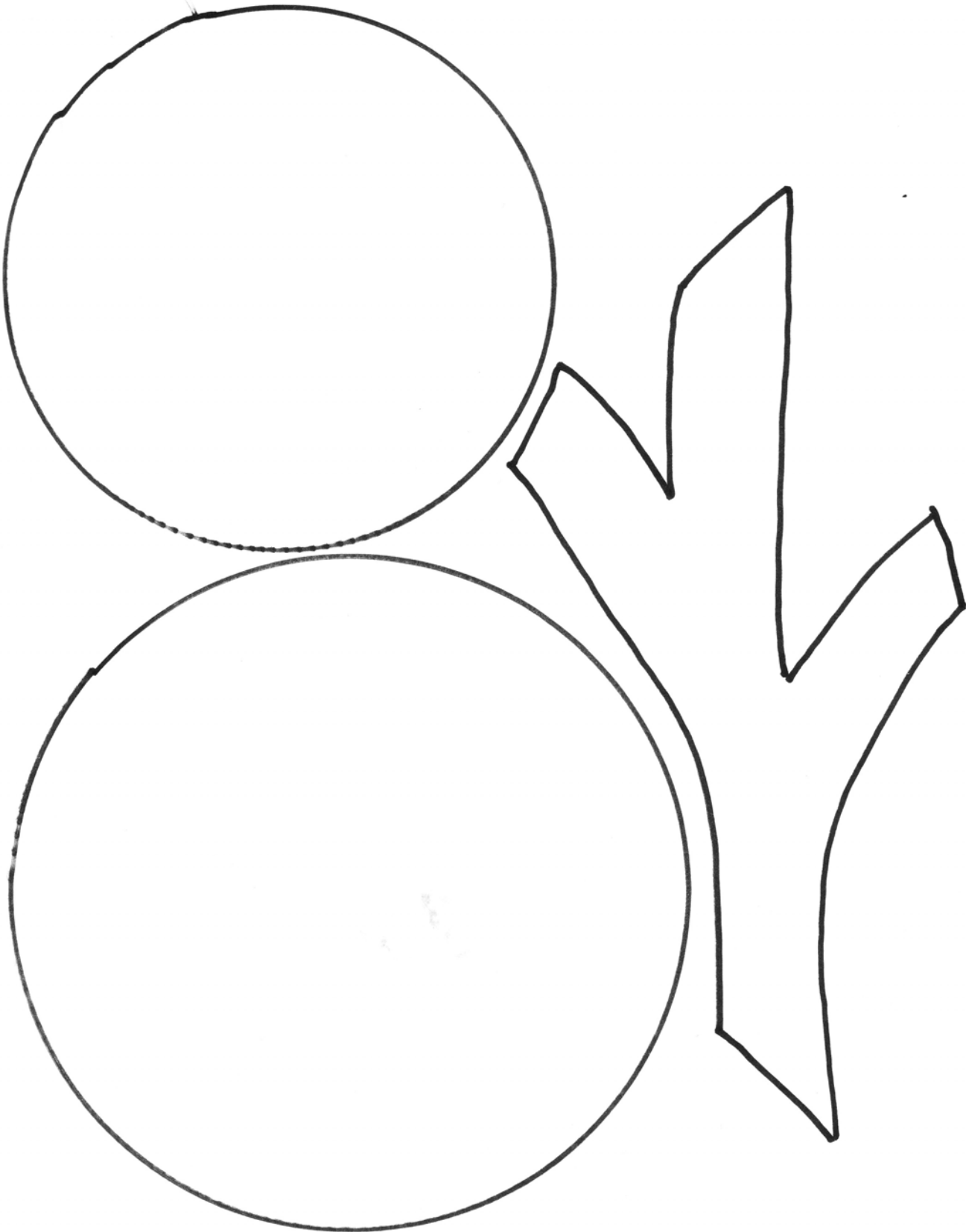
The Snowman is the first featured felt story of our new column: *Who's on the Felt Board?* For information on contributing your own felt story, see *Submissions*.

Pamela Fairfield is Co-Editor of YAACING and a Children's Librarian at the Vancouver Public Library









Teens Only

Problems relating to teens? Here's help!

By Amy Dawley

One of the things that I get asked a lot by people outside of youth services professions is how I can stand my job. Some people assume that being a teen librarian is an interim thing for me, that it must be an entry level position and that I'm going to abandon teen services one day when I climb the management ladder. What they don't realize though, is that I honestly do love my job and thank my lucky stars every day that I am fortunate enough to have a job as cool as this one. I love working with teens!

However, some folks find it really difficult understanding and working with teens and that's okay. I personally envy my coworkers who are so good with the five and under crowd. I don't know that I would be as good at giving preschool story times as I am working with older children and teens. In this issue I'd like to share what works for me when relating to and forming relationships with teens. Please note that I don't pretend that this is a be-all, end-all "Guide to Teens," but only what works for me.

Listen.

Teens get talked at all day long every day by parents, teachers, their peers and all kinds of other people. Let them do the talking for a change. Be excited about what they're excited about, be curious, and ask questions! If you can go the extra mile and memorize their names you'll score extra points. Being able to greet them by name the next time you see them in the library makes them feel appreciated and special.

Follow through.

Don't make promises you can't keep and keep the promises you make. If you ask for input on a program or service, take their input seriously and act on it. If you say you're going to order material for the library they've requested, make sure to order that material. And if you can't, be honest with them and tell them why. They'll appreciate you levelling with them.

Treat them appropriately.

Remember that teens aren't children, but they aren't adults either. They've got a lot of growing up to do and expecting teens to behave like adults is problematic. So go ahead, let them be themselves and take the loud chatter, laughter, and general silliness be a sign that they feel comfortable enough to be themselves in your presence. If you are able to re-examine your expectations of teen behaviour, you'll have a much easier time understanding any loud or disruptive behaviours and reacting to it more objectively.

Take advantage of your role.

Congratulations! You are neither their teacher nor their parent. I like to think of myself and the library as a neutral space and always remind myself of the importance of neutrality. I work hard to create a safe and welcoming "third" space for teens to inhabit while they're here. Teens come from all over the city from all different schools to attend my programs at the library; and for a moment while they're here, they can leave their home and school identities behind and be whoever they want to be. I believe this role has real value in teens' lives and have seen the impact of it firsthand. Normally shy, ridiculed and generally misfit teens have shed all those layers and have been able to relax and have fun at the library.

Be honest and be yourself.

It's been said before and I'll say it again. Teens have a highly sensitive "fakeness" detector and are quick to reject anyone who tries to be someone they're not. They are honestly interested in you as a person and all the little oddities and intricacies that make you who you are. So often adults will put on a facade that they know all the answers and have got everything right, which I think does a disservice to teens. Personally, I think it's more important for teens to have adult role models in their lives who are comfortable enough admitting that they don't have all the answers, that they are a little goofy and quirky, and that above all, it's okay to be yourself.

Remember what it was like to be a teen? None of us really knew what we were doing but it seemed that people always expected us to know what we were doing. Being a teen is hard enough and I like to think of my job is dedicated to giving them a break—even if it's just for an hour and a half—from all that.



Some simple tricks you can start using now:

1. Instead of asking them what they want to do, give choices! Many teens find it difficult to think on their feet. But if they are given a choice between a few options, it lets them off the hook and can help avoid potential embarrassment.
2. The cosmically powerful “air volume dial” works wonders for me. When teens are REALLY loud and I find myself having to intervene, I use my trusty air volume dial instead of shushing or “Quiet!” or “You’re being too loud!” Instead, “Hey! I need a lower volume!” and I “turn down” the volume control dial on my air-amplifier. It’s a little silly, but it works for me!
3. Let teens know you’re there to help, but don’t pounce. Instead of asking, “Can I help you?” or “Do you need help?” I greet them and say, “I’m

here if you have any questions or need help finding anything. Just ask, okay?” I usually get a grunt in response at first but then the majority of teens end up asking me questions. Lots of teens are used to blowing off the over used customer service phrases. Plus, it takes the pressure off them, keeps things light and friendly, and lets them know that you really are there to help.

I hope you find these suggestions helpful and best of luck with your quest to reach the teens in your community. Thanks for reading and if you have any questions, comments or suggestions for teen services topics I should cover, or if you just want to chat, I’d love to hear from you! You can contact me at adawley@lib.pg.bc.ca.

Amy Dawley is the Teen Librarian at the Prince George Public Library



Let's Read Together at Richmond Public Library

By Lee Anne Smith

In January 2010 Richmond Women's Resource Centre (RWRC) and Richmond Public Library received a grant of \$5000.00 from the Richmond Community Literacy Grant for the project **Let's Read Together**. Let's Read Together is a family literacy program where adults and children develop early literacy skills through fun activities and reading aloud together. The original goal of the project was to encourage South Asian women to become literate in English in order to better communicate and feel more comfortable in the community. As part of that goal we wanted to introduce participants to literacy resources in the library.

However, after speaking one on one with the participants during the first two programs, we learned that most participants came to the program to learn to speak English (adults and children) and to help their children learn to read. All but one participant was literate in their first language and most could read simple English. One woman came to the program to learn how to write her name in English – and she did!!

Based on this important participant feedback we added these goals:

- Introduce parents to the importance of reading aloud as an important literacy foundation.
- Introduce beginning phonics to parents of pre-kindergarten children who wanted to help their children get ready for school.
- Practice English language skills with early phonics.

Program Description

The drop-in program took place at the Cambie branch in East Richmond once a week for 20 weeks (April—June and September—November) from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm. The 90 minute program was comprised of three 30 minute segments:

Storytime - led by librarian - a 30 minute storytime featuring alphabet and rhyming books as well as songs and rhymes.

Learning Time - during this time adult participants were introduced to range of early literacy activities and English as a Second Language practice. Although the first 4 programs were delivered by a literacy consultant the rest of the programs were delivered by the project facilitator employed by the Richmond Women's Resource Centre. Due to the range in English levels,

everyone helped each other, which fostered a shared community spirit.

Children's' activities used to introduce beginning phonics were:

- Having the children and adults print their initials in a tray of sugar to provide a gross motor experience of print while saying the sound of the letter (tasty too!)
- Alphabet puzzles and games

Adult activities were:

- Introducing the sound of vowels followed by the consonants
- Making an index card book with each card having a letter of the alphabet, a word /picture of a familiar object from home that started with that letter –e.g. c for cat
- Finding letter combinations inside a short body of text (e.g., finding words that started with ch)
- Writing down rhyming pairs of words (e.g. fun/sun) and building simple sentences with the pairs of words
- Other simple exercises taken from phonics and ESL workbooks

Other important topics covered in the adult learning time were:

- The importance of reading aloud to children
- Introducing different levels of children's picture books (babies, toddlers, preschool)
- Library resources (phonics, ESL print resources, Tumblebooks, online adult language learning resources, Summer Reading Club)
- Community resources for literacy and ESL

An essential component of the adult learning time was free child-minding for their children. While the adults were engaged with their learning, the children played with literacy-based toys supervised by two professional child care providers. Fortunately, the program room in Cambie branch is large enough to accommodate the play area and the adult learning circle. Without this service, the adults would have had much more difficulty in learning.

Meeting time – for the last 30 minutes participants had a light snack and the project facilitator spoke one on one with the participants to learn more about their literacy needs and wants. The project facilitator also provided Punjabi translation; and several volunteer participants provided Mandarin translation.



Participants

The program was originally targeted at South Asian women and children; however, the program was drop-in and no one was turned away. By the middle of the program, the participants were evenly divided between South Asian-Canadian and Asian-Canadian families. Participants included both recent immigrants and established Richmond families. While originally intended to focus on women, the program was quickly adopted by fathers and grandfathers as well. The addresses on the attendance sheets showed almost all participants lived in the immediate neighbourhood around the Cambie branch. The average attendance was between 7—10 adults plus their children.

Publicity

In addition to in-library publicity (flyers, word of mouth, website features), the press release was picked up by two local newspapers. Flyers were posted at South Asian temples, food stores and neighbourhood businesses such as laundromats and restaurants. Flyers were also posted at several local schools including the Strong Start program rooms.

Outcomes

- Children learned alphabet recognition and sounds of letters.
- Adult participants learned to write the English alphabet, learned vowels and consonants, learned simple three-letter words with their own set of index cards.
- Adults practiced English pronunciation and learned new vocabulary.
- One adult learned how to write her name in English.
- Participants were better informed about and increased their use of library services and collections.
- Participants understood the value of playing and reading with their children.

The program was well received and most participants have expressed that they are now more comfortable using the library and reading with their children because of what they learned in the program. Library staff devoted one hour a week for 20 weeks and approximately 10 additional hours of coordination with the project facilitator. In addition to storytime delivery, the librarian assisted the projector facilitator with planning, finding resources and publicity. Although the project required several staff in addition to the librarian—two child minders and a facilitator/translator—these were provided by the Richmond Women's Resource Centre.

Therefore, significant staff resources on the part of the library were not required.

Let's Read Together was successful because of the commitment by both organizations to reach out beyond their walls. The mutual support of the participants was equally essential.

For further information about the project contact Lee Anne Smith, Branch Head, Cambie Library at leeanne.smith@yourlibrary.ca or 604-273-2223.

Let's Read Together Selected List of Titles

(Many titles repeated twice through the program)

Splash (Punjabi and English)	by <i>Flora McDonnell</i>
One Rich Raja (Punjabi and English)	by <i>Sheila Front</i>
Line and Circle (Punjabi/English)	
Chicka Chicka Boom Boom	by <i>Bill Martin</i>
Peek-A-Bloom	by <i>Marie Torres Cimarusti</i>
Potato Joe	by <i>Keith Baker</i>
Good Night Moon	by <i>Margaret Wise Brown</i>
Dancing Feet	by <i>Lindsey Craig</i>
Panda Bear Panda Bear	by <i>Bill Martin</i>
Eating the Alphabet	by <i>Lois Ehlert</i>
If You're happy	by <i>Jane Cabrera</i>
Let's say hi to friends that fly	by <i>Mo Willems</i>
The Bouncing, Dancing, Galloping ABCs	by <i>Charlotte Doyle</i>
What Colour is Your Underwear?	by <i>Sam Lloyd</i>
B is for Bulldozer	by <i>June Sobel</i>
K is for Kissing a Cool Kangaroo	by <i>Giles Andreae</i>
Come Rhyme with Me	by <i>Hans Wilhelm</i>
Rhyming Dust Bunnies	by <i>Jan Thomas</i>
Alphabet Animals	by <i>Suse McDonald</i>

Other juvenile library resources featured

Juvenile CDs featuring ABC songs and rhymes
 Tumblebooks – online books through RPL website
www.yourlibrary.ca
 Phonics books for children i.e. Flip-flap Phonics
 Picture books on CD – help with English learning
 Non-fiction DVDs
 Felt story – BINGO

Lee Anne Smith is the Head of the Cambie Branch of the Richmond Public Library



Winter and Wearing: A Storytime for Toddlers

By Pamela Fairfield

WELCOME EVERYONE

Tune: *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*

Welcome, welcome everyone

It is time to have some fun.

First we'll put our coats away

Then we'll start our busy day.

Welcome, welcome everyone.

I am so glad that you have come.

Name song

TEDDY'S HERE TODAY

Tune: *Farmer in the Dell*

(Bring out Bear and use for all children's names if group size is small enough!!!)

Teddy's here today.

Teddy's here today.

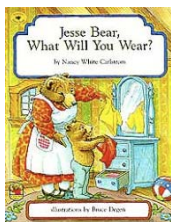
Let's all clap our hands

and say, "Hip Hip Hooray!"

Story Book:

JESSE BEAR, WHAT WILL YOU WEAR?

by Nancy White Carlstrom



Stretching Poem:

ONCE THERE WAS A SNOWMAN

Once there was a snowman,

A snowman, a snowman

Once there was a snowman,

Tall, tall, tall!

In the sun he melted,

He melted, he melted

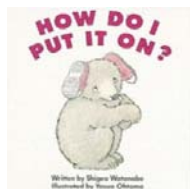
In the sun he melted

Small, small, small!

Story Book:

HOW DO I PUT IT ON?

by Shigeo Watanabe



Action Rhyme:

TEDDY BEAR, TEDDY BEAR

Teddy bear, Teddy bear,

Touch the ground.

Teddy bear, Teddy bear

Turn around.

Teddy bear, Teddy bear,

Show your shoe.

Teddy bear, Teddy Bear

That will do.

Teddy bear, Teddy bear,

Run upstairs.

Teddy bear, Teddy bear,

Hop in bed.

Teddy bear, Teddy bear,

Blow out the light.

Teddy bear, Teddy bear,

Say good night.



Felt Story by Pam Fairfield:

THE SNOW MAN

Tune: *The Muffin Man*

Rhyme:

CUTE LITTLE SNOWMAN

A cute little snowman

Had a carrot nose

Along came a teddy bear

And what do you suppose?

That hungry little bear,

Looking for his lunch

Ate that Snowman's carrot nose,

Nibble, nibble, crunch! OWCH!

Action Rhyme:

SNOWFLAKES

Tune: *Mary Had a Little Lamb*

Snowflakes whirling all around

All around, all around

Snowflakes whirling all around

Until they cover the ground.

Good-Bye Song:

NOW WE RISE UP!

Now we rise up, up, up

Now we go down, down, down

Now we go up, up, up

Now we go round and round.

Now we all clap, clap, clap

Now we all touch the sky

Now we all take a bow!

Now we all say, "Good-bye!"

Books to share with your children:

Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear? *by Bill Martin*

Whose Shoes? *by Anna Grossnickle Hines*

Animals Should Definitely not Wear Clothes! *By Judi Barrett*

A Splendid Friend, Indeed *by Suzanne Bloom*

Moon Glowing *by Elizabeth Partridge*

Froggie Gets Dressed *by Jonathan London*

Which hat is that? *by Anna Grossnickle Hines*

Under My Hat I have a Hood *by Karla Kuski*

Pamela Fairfield is a Children's Librarian at the Vancouver Public Library



Freedom to Read Week 2011

By April Ens

Freedom to Read Week will be celebrated across Canada February 20-26th, 2011.

Many library patrons are not aware that classic and contemporary books for children and teens are still frequently challenged in Canada and abroad. Freedom to Read Week is our annual opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of intellectual freedom for all people, including children and teens.

Observing Freedom to Read Week can be as simple or sophisticated as you like.

Create a display

Last year I didn't have a lot of space in my teen area so my display was very simple. I gathered lists of banned and challenged books from the Freedom to Read Week and ALA's Banned Books Week websites and displayed them in a duotang surrounded by a selection of challenged titles. I included lists of historical bannings, challenged classics, and Canadian and American challenges. Teens I spoke with were shocked at some of the books included, and excited to take something with a hint of controversy home to read.

If you have a little more time or space, pull out the padlocks and caution tape, or borrow a great idea from another library. Have you heard about the blindfolded mannequin at the Greater Victoria Public Library? Read about this and other 2010 Freedom to Read Week activities in the BCLA Browser Vol 2, No 2. Need a little more inspiration? See "Get Involved" at www.freedomtoread.ca and "Display Ideas for Banned Books Week" at www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/banned/bannedbooksw/week

Host an event

Invite teens to read passages from their favourite banned or challenged works. From modern classics *Catcher in the Rye* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* to more recent titles *The Golden Compass* and *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, there is a shamefully broad list to choose from.

Organize a family Read-In. Gather a basket of banned and challenged children's books for your volunteer readers to choose from. Include titles such as *And Tango Makes Three* or any title from the Harry Potter series.

Looking to dress appropriately? Order a t-shirt from BCLA's Intellectual Freedom Committee. Partial proceeds go towards the Lois M Bewley Intellectual Freedom Defence Fund: www.bcla.bc.ca/ifc



Share the news

Submit a description of your programs to the events calendar on the Freedom to Read Week website, and once the week is over be sure to let us know about your amazing displays and activities.

April Ens is the Children's Librarian at the Kitsilano Branch of the Vancouver Public Library.

A Quiet Library

by *The Loud Librarian*

I recently saw a coffee mug that had the following printed on the side: "library, n. Room or building containing screaming kids playing computer games and creating mayhem in what used to be a pleasant place for reading books and seeking information."

Funny. And, I hate to say it: true.

I'm a librarian. I hate noisy libraries. I like libraries to be hushed, serious places where all you can hear are pages turning and people sighing from the strain of thinking so deeply. I prefer silence when I'm reading and I think that a lot of other people do too. Oh. I also believe that those who use cell phones in the library should be jailed and/or tortured (but more on that another time).

Of course, the worst noise offenders are children. Children are just plain noisy. They are messy, demanding, temperamental, impatient, short little noise machines that ask too many questions. I, for one, believe that the world would be a much better place if we banned children from the library. Let them cry or whine at home. Let them ask "why" a million times an hour at school. Let them climb things and run around excitedly in the park.

Oh, did I mention that I'm a children's librarian? So, hey...don't blame me. You know how I feel about noise! I try to keep them quiet. I try to insist on manners and "library voices." But, you know what? That's as far as I'm going. And I'll tell you why.

Children are messy because they are exploring the world around them and they don't care if they get a little



dirty in the adventure. They're temperamental because they know what they want and they're not afraid to let their feelings show. They're impatient because somehow they must sense that there's so much to learn and so little time. They ask a lot of questions because intuitively they know that there will always be more to know.

Children are noisy. It's a fact. But children are libraries' most important customers, so maybe we'd ought to learn to be tolerant of their unique way of seeking. LIFE is noisy and confusing and filled with "no", especially for kids. Perhaps we should say "yes" a lot more, especially to children who are lucky enough to go to the library. They'll have time to find the need for solitude and peace later in their lives. Right now they need a place that encourages curiosity, loud debate and making choices. They need to know that libraries will welcome their questions and encourage their inquisitiveness. They must learn that learning is the coolest thing in the world and that libraries are worth shouting about.

Perhaps we adults should join the ruckus, ask more questions, and climb on things a bit more often. I promise to keep the library's children's department as quiet as I can, but when the noise gets on your nerves, consider that a noisy child in a library is much better than a quiet kid without a library.

Or, try what I do: read in your car.

Smitty Miller is the Children's Librarian at the Clearbrook Library.

From Gore to Space Travel - All for Kids

By Chris Miller

Teens facing the horrors of 7 more months left in school might feel like they need some escapist fiction. Here are three picks: a Gothic gore-fest set in the 19th century, a near future examination of how life could suck as a result of global warming and a science fiction novel dealing with an ark ship run by teens.

Using a palette of scarlet, gray, yellowish-white and pink — for blood, brain matter, pus and viscera — author Rick Yancey paints the disturbing picture of a Victorian-era monster hunter and his young assistant in *The Monstrumologist*. Early in the book, Dr. Pellinore Warthrop and his orphaned charge, Will Henry, learn that a pod of horrendous creatures lurks beneath a graveyard in their New England town. Known as "anthropophagi," the creatures are brutal, headless

humanoids with powerful arms, steely talons and gaping, shark-like maws in the middle of their chests.

The book starts slowly, with the gruesome examination of a dead anthropophagus, then picks up pace when Warthrop and Henry make a hair-raising visit to the graveyard. Unsure of how to exterminate the creatures, the monstrumologist reluctantly contacts Dr. John Kearns, a handsome, cultured, capable man who may be worse than the monsters he hunts.

In between scenes of action, the book drips atmosphere. Warthrop and Henry interview a dying inmate in a madhouse, examine a grue-spattered home and eventually descend beneath the graveyard into the creatures' underground lair.

Yancey's story is not for the faint of heart or sensitive of disposition. The most affecting scene features the clinical, room-by-room description of a house in which anthropophagi have torn a man, woman and four young children to pieces. The book isn't just gory, it is psychologically dark. All the characters — except for Kearns — seem haunted by mistakes, regrets and secrets from the past.

If you can stand the gore and disturbing themes, you will find a carefully told story with well-crafted moments of suspense and dread. Affecting a slightly archaic style, Yancey chooses words with surgical precision and creates characters whom you will think about well after you close the book.

In *The Carbon Diaries: 2015* by Saci Lloyd, global warming has led Great Britain to enact carbon rationing, which means families must cut back on their use of just about everything. Enter Laura Brown, ordinary teenager, who has grown up in London enjoying her creature comforts. Now, even using the hair dryer will earn dreaded "carbon points."

Outside Laura's home, the world is going mad. Blizzards, drought and rainstorms of biblical proportions batter England. The power goes out in the winter; water runs low in the summer. People take to the streets, protests turn into riots. The government uses police and soldiers to smack down resistance.

The stress of adjusting to a fearful new world proves too much for Laura's family. Her older sister buys plane tickets to Ibiza. Her father loses his job and starts raising a pig in the back yard. Finding home life intolerable, her mom leaves to hang out with a women's liberation group.



In the midst of this chaos, Laura tries to maintain a normal life, struggling to keep her grades up in school, flirting with the boy next door and jamming with her punk band, dirty angels. But as she discovers, “normal” isn’t what it used to be.

Adopting a journal style, Lloyd uses Laura’s sarcastic sense of humour to lighten the story which, thanks to some telling details, seems startlingly plausible. Small and large questions abound. Will Laura stop fixating on the guy next door and start dating her band-mate Adi? More importantly, will her family and friends survive the big storm that hits near the end of the book? Read to find out.

In *The Comet’s Curse* by Dom Testa, a passing comet has doomed human life on Earth. Particles from its tail carry a deadly infection that is causing adults to waste away. For some reason, though, everyone younger than 18 is immune.

Acting quickly, an international consortium of scientists designs a massive space ship, the Galahad, and crews it with the 251 best teenagers they can find, all 16 and under. The teens’ mission is to seek out a new world that will sustain human life so they can start civilization all over again. No pressure, right?

Shortly after the ship blasts off, things seem fine but soon a stowaway begins scrawling ominous messages in the corridors. It is clear that he wants to destroy the Galahad — and all hope for the human race with it. Aided by the ship’s computer system, an AI presence named Roc, Triana Martell and the ship’s ruling council must find and stop the saboteur.

With suspense, action and appealing teen characters like Martell and chief engineer Gap Lee, who secretly has a crush on her, *The Comet’s Curse* is a quick but entertaining read suitable for middle school and up.

Look for these books and others in your local library.

Chris Miller is the Young Adult Services Librarian at the Poirier and City Centre Branches of the Coquitlam Public Library. The original version of this article was published as a Good Read column in the Tri-City News, September 2010

Aboriginal Adaptation: Storytelling in the Digital Age

By Shamin Malmas

The ‘story’ is universally relevant. We are told stories, we read stories, and we tell stories daily. As Judith Saltman states in the *Riverside Anthology of Children’s Literature*, “the appeal of the story is universal and as old as time” (Saltman, 656). While oral transmission continues to be used as a means of communicating stories across time and through space, by and large in European society transmission of stories has been nominally textual for the past several centuries. For many aboriginal peoples the transition from oral to textual transmission of information has been more recent. While today, aboriginal peoples in North America are as literate as non-aboriginal members and participate in all forms of textual communication, they continue to use traditional methods of communication through the oral transmissions of stories.

These ‘stories’ are used for a wide range of purposes. As David Bruchac argues, the stories of aboriginal peoples of North America constitute one of the richest bodies of myth and legends found anywhere in the world (Bruchac, 64). It is therefore understandable that in North America there has been a continued appetite for the consumption of these stories by both members from within and outside the aboriginal community.

In Canada, the increased autonomy of aboriginal peoples has sparked controversy regarding the cultural appropriation of aboriginal stories (Keeshing-Tobias, 71). Ensuring that stories are told properly, respectfully, and with the appropriate nuance is difficult. The idea that an individual from one culture should be allowed to tell the story of another culture has been discussed, argued, and fought over on a number of occasions. As David Bruchac explains, the storyteller “must take the story from the printed page and blow the breath of life into it” (Bruchac, 69). This cannot be done unless the story has meaning for the one who is telling it. In the case of aboriginal stories, many aboriginal peoples do not feel that non-aboriginal storytellers devote adequate time and resources to understanding and appreciating the culture from which the stories originate (Keeshing-Tobias, 70). Those opposed to the telling of aboriginal stories by outsiders argue that these stories should be told by aboriginal peoples in order for audiences to receive a culturally authentic story.

Unfortunately there are simply not enough aboriginal storytellers active in North America to expose everyone to live storytelling experiences from authentic, aboriginal, storytellers. As Hopkins explains, aboriginal storytellers, like all members of society, are continually embracing



new ways of telling, experiencing and sharing stories. Recently, storytellers in aboriginal communities have embraced new materials and technologies to facilitate storytelling in a digital environment. Hopkin's argues that this shift does not threaten traditional storytelling but is merely a continuation of what aboriginal people have been doing from time immemorial (Hopkins, 341-344). Stories, specifically those originating in oral traditions, should be understood and defined, according to the ideologies from which they originate. By their very nature, stories that are passed down orally over the course of innumerable generations are continually changing. Thus, storytelling is generative, as it reveals a worldview, one in which truth is considered apart from fact, where originality exists within the copy, where change is an inherent part of tradition. Unfortunately the word tradition is often misinterpreted as static and unchanging when quite the opposite is true. It is through change that stories, and in turn, traditions are kept alive and remain relevant. In the practice of storytelling there is no desire for originality, as stories that are told and retold over time are not individual but communal: they are made by, and belong to, many (Hopkins, 344). Thus, introducing new technologies into the equation of storytelling does not detract from the tradition of storytelling, it only enables them to grow and evolve.

Mass media, including television and the internet have provided aboriginal peoples the opportunity to not only share education and health programming but also cultural and linguistic traditions in remote areas of North America (Baltruschat, 17). Digital storytelling is understood as a form of a short narrative told in the first person and enhanced by visual texts and symbolic imagery (Cherubini, 302). Considered a natural extension of oral storytelling, digital storytelling has been welcomed by many aboriginal communities. The metamorphosis of the oral tradition of storytelling into the digital medium creates a sense of audience for the elders who self-profess to be intermediaries from one generation to the next. Not only does this method of storytelling increase access to stories, it is a valuable research tool, visual aid and communication tool for both aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples (Farmer, 158). There was a time when the spectre of a digital divide underscored the lack of access to the internet that residents of more rural and less wired communities endured. While there are still many issues related to access, more and more the internet has become a conduit for aboriginal peoples to tell their individual and collective stories. The internet, being both a visual and aural, as well as textual experience provides a new means for aboriginal peoples to communicate and connect with other indigenous groups across the world.

In most aboriginal communities, Elders are considered the gatekeepers of wisdom and the conduits for the preservation and renewal of linguistic and cultural tradition. The Elders share counsel, advice, and guidance about maintaining harmony and balance in the community (Métis Nation Council of Women). They provide wisdom to daily life and bring order to chaos and are considered the teachers of heritage and survival and strength. Through the use of digital storytelling in aboriginal communities, many aboriginal and non-aboriginal people who do not have access to Elders, but who have access to the internet, have been provided with the opportunity to read and hear the stories that are a vital component of aboriginal culture. Thus the use of digital storytelling ensures that they will have access to these stories regardless of the environment in which they live. The metamorphosis of traditional stories into digital form fosters not only the sharing of oral stories amongst aboriginal peoples, but also the sharing of oral stories between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples mainstream society. Since the ability to hear these voices with an audience is vital when it comes to sharing stories, digital storytelling provides audiences with an accessible venue, the ability to hear stories told from authentic, aboriginal storytellers, and the possibility of user interaction with both the storyteller and story.

While not every Elder wants to have their stories displayed on the internet, many have recognized the internet as a new and important venue for teaching and sharing culture. In British Columbia there are a few organizations that work closely with aboriginal communities to train and facilitate digital storytelling initiatives; Shape Shyphter Studios, Port Alberni, is one such organization (SPARC, 6). Unfortunately the majority of these projects are not available online for public consumption. Many aboriginal communities continue to guard their stories for use within their specific communities. As we enter an age of increasing globalization the desire to understand and know the individuals and groups which comprise our society will only increase. Recently the publication of aboriginal traditional tales has increased. Small publishing houses across Canada have been looking for new and culturally sensitive ways to share stories in print form, hopefully with the same dedicated efforts, and aboriginal communities will soon be able to share their stories with a wider audience through the use of digital media and digital storytelling.

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Be Bold, Be Bold! The Influence Of Form And Format On The Negotiation Of Danger In Macdonald's "Mr. Fox" And Kimmel & Rayyan's "Count Silvernose"

By Sara Hathaway

"Bluebeard' is the stuff of nightmares: raised scimitars, forbidden chambers, corpses hanging from hooks, bloody basins and dismembered bodies" writes Maria Tartar in *The Classic Fairy Tales* (Tartar 138). Despite its terrifying gruesomeness, or perhaps because of it, Bluebeard has remained a popular folktale throughout the ages, appearing in a variety of versions and formats. Why are we fascinated with this violent tale of a cruel serial killer? Why does it continue to be told to audiences and included in collections of popular folktales? In some way, the story manages to give us a delightful scare without traumatizing us. In order to get at the deeper workings of this phenomenon, I have selected two of my favourite versions of the Bluebeard story for examination: "Mr. Fox" as told by Margaret Read MacDonald and *Count Silvernose* as told by Eric Kimmel and Omar Rayyan. Both of these versions are intended for younger audiences which makes the negotiation of fear and danger in the story even more important. Although both of the tales selected are in print form, MacDonald's "Mr. Fox" is a version intended for storytellers working with children whereas *Count Silvernose* is a picture book meant for older children. I have chosen these particular stories not only for their intended audiences, but also for their different formats. "Mr. Fox" and *Count Silvernose* illustrate how form and format influence both the narrative structure of a tale and the ways in which violence and danger can be mediated between the tale and its audience.

In her book, *Twenty Tellable Tales*, Margaret Read MacDonald presents selected tales for the beginning storyteller, including her version of "Mr. Fox." Mr. Fox is the English counterpart to the French Bluebeard and it is suspected to predate the literary debut of Perrault's Bluebeard in 1697 due to an allusion to Mr. Fox in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* (Opie 103, 104). In the tale, Lady Mary finds it suspicious that she has never visited the home of her betrothed, Mr. Fox. She goes to his castle where she finds the bloody bodies of a number of women. Lady Mary hides behind a cask when Mr. Fox suddenly returns home dragging a new corpse. He cuts a hand off the body and it flies onto Lady Mary's lap. The next morning at the wedding feast, Lady Mary tells the story of a 'dream' she had in which she recounts the grisly events of the previous day. She produces the dismembered hand as evidence and her brothers kill Mr. Fox.



Because this tale is intended to be told orally to a larger audience, it takes an interesting form in MacDonald's book. MacDonald writes the tale as she would tell it herself and she makes full use of the textual conventions available to her in the print form. Oral tales, particularly those for children, require a straightforward plot with clear character motivations. Children may not have yet mastered the complexities of language or long attention spans, so the language of "Mr. Fox" is made up of short, simple sentences and sparse descriptive details. As any good folktale, the plot is the driving force and there is little, if any, character development. What is interesting about MacDonald's written version is its use of textual conventions to instruct future storytellers on how the story should be told. Font features such as *italics* and CAPITAL letters indicate points of emphasis or increased tone. Punctuation marks, such as ellipses, indicate pregnant pauses, exclamations and breaks in the language. The text uses white space on the page to indicate the rhythm of the story:

So one day when Mr. Fox was away
"on business"...as he said ...
Lady Mary set out to see the place where she
would live (MacDonald 155).

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this retelling however, is its use of repetition to both build and control the sense of danger and suspense. In the story, various phrases are repeated and as they are repeated they are built up by textual features and extended phrases. For instance, with each sign Lady Mary encounters in Mr. Fox's castle, the suspense is heightened as additional phrases are added to the original message. The signs grow from "BE BOLD, BE BOLD" to reveal the full warning "BE BOLD, BE BOLD/ BUT NOT *TOO* BOLD/ LEST THAT YOUR HEART'S BLOOD SHOULD RUN *COLD*!" (MacDonald 156). The added phrases and inclusion of *italicized* emphasis on "too" and "cold" build a strong sense of unease and climatic danger. The same pattern occurs when Lady Mary tells Mr. Fox of her 'dream' at the wedding feast; and he replies in successively stronger repeated phrases until finally we reach "It IS not SO and it WAS not SO and HEAVEN FORBID SUCH SHOULD EVER be SO!" (MacDonald 159). By extending each repetition with a new phrase, the story increases the sense of danger by harnessing the jarring sensation of finding the unexpected in the familiar.

However, this is a carefully told tale that builds suspense while at the same time controls and mediates the danger. Although the unexpected additions to the phrases are a great source of unease, the repetition of those familiar elements is working to moderate the

threat. The familiar core of the phrase is a place of a safety that acts as a point of reference from which we can negotiate the unfamiliar element. This concept is applied in a larger sense during the confrontation scene at the wedding feast. Lady Mary retells the grisly episode at Mr. Fox's castle, but in her retelling we are comforted by the fact that we already know what she is going to say. This familiarity is the safe point from which we can process Mr. Fox's reactions. By knowing what is coming we have an element of agency over the situation: it cannot take us completely unawares. Trauma occurs when the body is unprepared for an event and does not have a reference experience to use to understand it. Without a familiar reference point or experience, the mind cannot process the event and the person becomes traumatized by this inability to understand and negotiate the event. The phrases build in an unexpected but fitting order. For instance, the core phrase of the signs' refrain warns us to take courage and be prepared: "be bold, be bold!" (MacDonald 156). The foreboding of the repeated signs at the castle prepare us for the gruesome scene we are to witness and subsequently that scene prepares us for the event's retelling in the confrontation scene. At each stage, we are given something familiar to prepare us for the next event.

The tale ends when Lady Mary inverts the repetition of Mr. Fox's protests and breaks the cycle of repetition; symbolically closing the event and removing the danger of unexpected elements appearing in the repetition. In response to Mr. Fox's final protest, Lady Mary subverts Mr. Fox's words and cries "But it IS so and it WAS so!!!" (MacDonald 160). In doing so, Lady Mary undermines Mr. Fox's danger and destabilizes the power of his repeated phrase by altering its form. She takes control of the unstable repetition herself and uses the danger of the unexpected in the familiar against the villain. The building cycle of repetition is broken when she does this; and the brothers cut the evil Mr. Fox into a "thousand pieces," thus firmly eliminating the danger and establishing a sense of safety for the listener (MacDonald 160).

In Eric Kimmel's retelling of *Count Silvernose*, with illustrations by Omar Rayyan, the form and format play a strong role again in the narrative structure of the tale and its negotiation of fear and danger. *Count Silvernose* is the Italian version of *Bluebeard* and Kimmel's retelling is based on Italo Calvino's tale in *Italian Folktales* (Kimmel verso). In this version of *Count Silvernose*, there are three poor sisters, the youngest of which is ugly, but clever. One day, *Count Silvernose* arrives and takes the eldest sister to be a servant in his castle. A week later he returns for the second sister, saying the first has died. He returns again for the youngest sister, *Assunta*, who



agrees to go in order to find out what has happened to her sisters. When they arrive at the castle, Count Silvernose gives her a ring of 13 keys leading to rooms of laundry she must wash. After forbidding Assunta to open the 13th door, the Count leaves. She opens the door and discovers a pit of fire where her sisters are being tormented by imps and goblins. Making a ladder out of the laundry, Assunta descends into the pit, beats the imps and goblins with her washing paddle and saves her sisters. Her sisters tell her they had opened the 13th door and the Count, smelling the brimstone in their hair, threw them into the pit. Assunta washes her hair and hides her sisters in a hamper of laundry placing her glass eye on top. When the Count returns, Assunta tells him to take the hamper to her mother's house to be ironed and warns him not to open the hamper. She tells him she has put her glass eye in the hamper and will see him if he tries to open it. He takes the hamper; and when he tries to open it, the sisters shout "I see you!" and he stops. When he returns to the castle, he tries to trick Assunta into the pit, but she pushes him in and escapes with the keys after breaking the top of the thirteenth off while locking him in.

The picture book format of this story has a direct influence on the narrative form of the story. It is told in a literary style with lengthier, more complex sentences. Although the version adheres to the folktale style of a driving plot and little character development, the characters are described in greater detail. Descriptive language, similes and metaphors are used throughout the story to add detail to the events and settings. Because it is a picture book, the illustrations are given as much weight as the text. The illustrations fill in details not found in the text and therefore have the power to negotiate the sense of danger in the story.

The text and language of the tale do most of the work in setting up the suspense while the illustrations serve largely to mediate this danger and undermine its power. The story is framed by statements of truth; both the dedication on the verso and the final line of the text state that "this is a true story" (Kimmel 32). The claim of truth brings an added element of terror to the already frightening text. The illustrations are done in layered watercolours as reconstructions of Kimmellino diPerugia's 1504 sketchbook (Kimmel verso). The choice of using this particular style was a conscious decision which supports the sense of historical truth. However, the manipulation of this style is how the illustrations take control of the danger and subvert it.

In the same way the choice of the artistic style adds credulity to the statements of truth, it also sets the story firmly in the past and therefore at a distance from ourselves. Rayyan plays with the concept of the story's

truth by adding contemporary details to the illustrations, such as red and white polka-dotted boxers in the laundry piles. These details are glaringly out-of-place with the historical style of the artwork and so remind the readers of the role of fiction in the story. The boxers also provide a bit of comedic relief which serves to undermine the grave seriousness surrounding the tale. The comedic details inserted into the illustrations mediate the moments of terror in the text. For instance, when Assunta descends into the pit to save her sisters the imps and goblins "[attack] her savagely" reads the text, but the imps and goblins depicted in the illustrations are anything but terrifying. One goblin is wielding a fish, another tickles Assunta's foot with a feather, an ox stands on the edge of the frame chewing daisies, a knight raises his sword to reveal heart dotted boxers and a small, bespectacled courtier poses haughtily to the side (Kimmel 18-19). The comedic illustrations offer an interpretation of the tale that visually negates the terrible threat and danger found in the text.

When the illustrations are not using comedy to moderate the suspense, perspective and colour come in to mediate. The final confrontation scene, where Count Silvernose attempts to lure Assunta into the pit, is drawn from an unusual perspective. We are above the characters, again distanced from them, and the perspective is skewed and curving around Assunta, a visual indicator of the shift in power between the characters (Kimmel 29). The use of colour also serves to undermine the threat of Count Silvernose. The text contains a mixture of colourless sketches and full coloured paintings. The full colour illustrations appear most real and immediate to the reader, and so there is always some element, such as perspective and/or comedic details, working in the picture to diffuse the power of full colour. The colourless sketches are often used to depict the more frightening scenes in the story, such as when Count Silvernose smells Assunta's hair (Kimmel 24). These sketches lack colour and stable lines and are therefore less immediate than the colour illustrations, which helps to distance the danger in the scene from the reader.

Considering the form and format of a tale is an important part of telling any story, particularly in frightening stories like Bluebeard variations. The form and format dictate the ways in which a story can be mediated to thrill audiences and keep the danger at bay. For MacDonald's "Mr. Fox," the storyteller will presumably be standing in front of the intended audience telling the story, already a more psychologically frightening situation than reading a book. A book can be closed, whereas a storyteller cannot always be turned off. The storyteller has the advantage of being with the audience, however, and can tailor or adapt the tale based on



audience reactions whereas the book is set in one particular form. In the picture book, the added advantage of illustrations is the ideal tool in subverting the danger of the story. But the storyteller must accomplish this using only their voice and gestures. Sparse details and repetition can be used to manipulate and control the danger in the story. It is through this moderation and negotiation of danger in different forms that the story of Bluebeard, and all its variations, continues to remain a popular story with audiences.

Sara Hathaway is an MLIS student at the School of Library Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia. An earlier version of this article was written for the class LIBR 522J: Folklore and Storytelling at UBC.

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Reviews

Pete the Cat: I Love My White Shoes by Eric Litwin.
Illustrated by James Dean. HarperCollins, 2010.
Audience: Preschool

Pete the Cat is my newest storytime favourite. I have harnessed its power to charm toddlers, kindergarteners, teachers, and caregivers. With a catchy song and repeating phrases, audiences can join right in. To top it off, the illustrations are funny, colourful, and strong in their simplicity.

Pete himself is one relaxed cat. Out on a walk, he steps in a large pile of strawberries that turns his beloved white shoes red. At this point we ask: "Did Pete cry?" and resoundingly respond, "Goodness no! He kept walking along and singing his song."

Pete the Cat is about accepting change and letting minor adversity roll off your back. While this is no easy lesson for a child (or adult) to learn, Pete reminds us, "No matter what you step in, keep walking along and singing your song... because it's all good."

To see author Eric Litwin give a live reading of *Pete the Cat* and hear how he sings Pete's song, check out his videos at www.ericlitwin.com

- April Ens, Vancouver Public Library

I Will Make Miracles by Susie Morgenstern. Illustrated by Jiang Hong Chen. Bloomsbury, 2008.
Audience: Preschool

This is the story of an unnamed boy, decked out in Breton stripes, listing his lofty aspirations. The rather trite take away lesson is that one must learn to read and write before taking on the world. The simplistic text is mistakenly juxtaposed with the broader story that is revealed through the truly remarkable illustrations. The book was originally published in French in 2006, with the English publication following in 2008. The classic navy and white striped top is the first clue that this is an adventurous little boy in a French tale. The second clue that this version of the story is a translation is that the English text feels like an afterthought, a disjointed and underwhelming partner to the rather epic images. Translated works often gain a certain *je ne sais quoi* by combining differing conventions, but *I Will Make Miracles* falls short. The intended grandeur seems almost possible, but is not realized.

The book is much larger than the standard picture book size. This leads to an expectation of scale that does not

disappoint insofar as the illustrations go. The vivid blues and reds of the illustrations, created with colored Chinese ink on rice paper, steal the show. The wonderfully disconcerting images show the small boy in a series of startling scenes. His figure is a familiar one, reminiscent of Max from *Where the Wild Things Are*. While most good picture books use tension and juxtaposition to their advantage, *I Will Make Miracles* does not strike the balance.

- Lara LeMoal, School of Library Archival and Information Studies, UBC

Alvin Ho: Allergic to Girls, School, and Other Scary Things by Lenore Look. Illustrated by LeUyen Pham. Schwartz & Wade, 2008.
Audience: Primary Grades

Alvin Ho is a grade two boy who is terrified of just about everything. Lenore Look's funny, sweet, and touching text is accentuated by LeUyen Pham's simple but emotive line drawings to create a gentle masterpiece.

Alvin is a superhero and aspiring gentleman at home, but he has never spoken a single word in school. This has not helped him gain any friends, at least not the kind he wants. Flea, a girl with a cool pirate eye-patch, has not figured out that he is "allergic" to girls, and gaily translates his terrified facial expressions for their teachers. Alvin fumbles through home and school life, learning through painfully funny accidents and misunderstandings. Throughout it all, his parents are there to sort him out, calm him down, and set him straight.

I'd recommend this book and its two hilarious sequels to shy children, brave children, and everyone else.

- April Ens, Vancouver Public Library

Return to Bone Tree Hill by Kristin Butcher. Thistle-down Press, 2009.
Audience: Teen

Return to Bone Tree Hill is a suspense-filled mystery by Kristin Butcher. Eighteen-year-old Jessica returns to Victoria from Australia to visit her Gran, but is haunted by a recurring nightmare that involves the murder of a young boy named Charlie. Jessica is convinced that she is the murderer, so she and her best friend Jilly set out to solve the murder, even if it proves that Jessica is right.

- Susan Redmond, Fraser Valley Regional Library



Will Grayson, Will Grayson by John Green and David Levithan. Dutton, 2010.

Audience: Teen

Will Grayson, Will Grayson was the first book with gay protagonists to place on the New York Times bestsellers list for children. The novel is a collaboration by two award-winning authors, John Green (*Looking for Alaska, An Abundance of Katherines*) and David Levithan (*Boy Meets Boy, Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist*). They write alternating chapters from the perspective of two high schoolers who share the name Will Grayson.

Both Will Graysons are complex and believable though not always likable, which is how I prefer my teen characters. Since most teens are at least a little self-centred and/or oblivious, I respect authors who address this quality. The Graysons are both hindered by social fears, but are dragged toward acceptance through their friendship with Tiny Cooper, a very large, very proudly gay football player who writes and stars in a musical about his own life. Tiny completely steals the show and is deservedly on his way to becoming an iconic character.

I loved this book, and relished the ride, up until the cheesy-hollywood-ending made me roll my eyes. I suppose I can forgive that.

- April Ens, Vancouver Public Library

Sunday Money: Speed! Lust! Madness! Death! A Hot Lap around America with NASCAR by Jeff MacGregor. Harper Perennial, 2006.

Audience: Teen/Adult

On your mark! Get set! Read *Sunday Money: Speed! Lust! Madness! Death! A Hot Lap around America with NASCAR*, by Jeff MacGregor. Jeff MacGregor and his photographer wife attended nearly every NASCAR race during the 2002 season. They met revered drivers and wacky fans, camped out in Wal-Mart parking lots and grandstands alike, and picked up a fair amount of NASCAR lore and advice (such as "Go big, baby, or don't go"). Reading this book is almost – almost – as good as having been on the road with the MacGregors.

-Susan Redmond, Fraser Valley Regional Library

Call for Submissions

YAACING is published four times per year and is always looking for submissions that might interest children's and teen specialists in BC libraries. We accept news pieces, articles, program descriptions and ideas, conference reports, and much more. If you would like to write a regular column, send us a brief pitch. Submissions should be no more than 2500 words.

YAACING invites your contributions to our new Review and Felt Story sections:

Reviews: Please send us reviews of books, blogs, websites, or other resources for our new review section. Submissions should be no more than 300 words. Longer reviews may be considered for publication as featured articles.

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The deadline for the Spring 2011 issue of YAACING is **February 15th, 2011**. Email your submissions to the editors at YAACING@gmail.com

