

THE Teaching Librarian

The Magazine of the Ontario School Library Association
ISSN 1188679X

Eric Walters makes summer reading fun

Learn how you can cultivate a culture of
summer reading

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Your Guide to
Research

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Meet Data Journalist Mona Chalabi

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Honouring the Best

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Measuring school library impact

Diane Oberg shares four approaches to research showing
how school libraries make a difference

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data @ your library

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data @ your library

Special Note for this Issue

The *Teaching Librarian* is the Ontario School Library Association's print magazine. Written and edited by OSLA member volunteers, it contains resources and ideas to strengthen professional practice in school libraries.

At the time of publication in May 2020, Ontario schools are closed and a state of emergency is in place across the province due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the shift to teacher-led remote learning, school libraries are essential to supporting students and teachers alike to navigate online platforms, access digital resources and connect at a distance. This time has also presented those in the school and library world with unique challenges in serving their communities.

The theme of this issue – data @ your library – was planned in advance, but it comes at a time when data—and being able to tell stories from data—is more important than ever.

Because the OLA is unable to physically print and mail copies of *The Teaching Librarian* to our 1,300 OSLA members and *Teaching Librarian* subscribers, we have decided to publish it digitally.

We have also decided to make it available publicly free of charge.

A subscription to *The Teaching Librarian* is an OSLA member benefit. To support our community during this time, the editorial board, OLA and OSLA wanted to ensure that this important information was available freely and openly for readers to share with colleagues, parents, and others without any barriers.

We hope that you enjoy this issue and the ideas and articles are valuable to you.

Consider reading back issues of *The Teaching Librarian* at accessola.com/tingl, including a special edition released in September 2019 that focused on “The State of School Libraries.”

OSLA is a division of the Ontario Library Association that provides a common voice for school libraries through advocacy, leadership and continuing education. If you are not currently a member, consider joining to receive future print issues of *The Teaching Librarian* and to become part of a collective voice that advocates for equitable access to school libraries across Ontario. You can do so at accessola.com/join or by contacting the OLA Membership staff at membership@accessola.com.

Take care and stay safe. ■

Stay
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stay
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Unlimited Access to Online Learning

Employers, are you seeking virtual options for staff professional development?



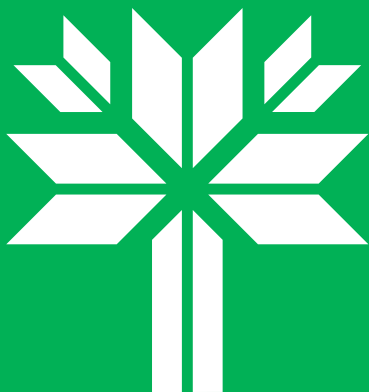
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Reading for all

The Forest of Reading® is Canada's largest recreational reading program, with over 270,000 readers taking part every year. Our mission is to instil the love of reading across Canada.

The password website, previously only available to paid registrants, is open for free. In these unprecedented times, it is important children, parents, educators and library staff to access all resources. We hope these resources are valuable to you and we encourage you to support the Forest, when registration for the next program year opens in October.

Access resources at forestofreading.com



Forest Of Reading

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Volume 27, Issue 3



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TingL Mission

The Teaching Librarian

The Teaching Librarian (TingL) is the official magazine of the Ontario School Library Association (OSLA). It is published three times a year to support OSLA members in providing significant and effective library programs and services. *The Teaching Librarian* promotes library programs and curriculum development that furthers exemplary educational objectives. The magazine fosters effective collaboration within the school library community and provides a forum to share experience and expertise.

TingL References

The Teaching Librarian is a general magazine for OSLA members and not a scholarly journal. If your article does require citation of sources, please provide them within the text of your article or column with as much or as little bibliographic information as necessary for identification (e.g. book title, year). If you feel that the works you are citing require full identification, please provide a bibliography at the end of your piece, formatted according to the latest Chicago Manual of Style (16th edition) or APA Style.

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TingL Submission Guidelines

Please Note: Themes are subject to change.

September 2020 V. 28, Issue 1	“Curriculum @ your library” Deadline: May 31, 2020
January 2021 V. 28, Issue 2	“Diversity @ your library” Deadline: September 30, 2020
May 2021 V. 28, Issue 3	“STEAM @ your library” Deadline: January 31, 2021

Articles of 150-250 words, 500 words, or 800-1,300 words are welcome. Articles, when approved, should be accompanied by high quality images and/or graphics whenever possible. Text must be sent electronically, preferably in a Microsoft Word (or compatible) file. Images or graphics must be sent separately in a digital format, such as .jpeg, .png, .tiff, or .ai. The minimum resolution must be 1000 px at 150 dpi. With photos that contain a recognized individual, please secure the individual's permission in writing for the use of the photo. Photos taken at public events or crowd shots taken in a public place do not require permission from the subjects. All submissions are subject to editing for consistency, length, content, and style. Journalistic style is preferred. *The Teaching Librarian* adheres to Canadian Press Style. Articles must include the working title, name of author, and email address in the body of the text. OSLA reserves the right to use pictures in other OSLA publications unless permission is limited or denied at the time of publishing.

When writers consent to having articles published in *The Teaching Librarian* magazine, permission is also granted to online distribution of the periodical through accessola.com and educational databases, without expectation of financial compensation. Ownership and copyright of the article is still retained by the original authors. Any questions about submissions should be directed to the Editor of *The Teaching Librarian*: teachinglibrarian@outlook.com.

TingL Subscriptions

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The Editor's Notebook



Caroline Freibauer

As I write this piece, we are physically distancing to flatten the curve of COVID-19 infection. And I keep thinking about Julian, a Grade 10 student at my high school.

Julian is a genius-level smart student who eats lunch by himself every day because he has trouble connecting with others. After weeks of leaving notes and hand-written comics, we agreed that he would help shelf books in the library for community service hours.

Julian is tiny – he must weigh all of 80 pounds – and quick. Blink and you miss him zipping through the library. Over time, he slowed enough to ask questions and chat. When he came out to our annual birthday party for William Shakespeare last spring, I started to cry. There he was at the front of the room with the rest of the partygoers, hurling Elizabethan insults with more than his body weight in venom.

What happened to the Julian who couldn't look me in the eye for more than 10 seconds?

Every day amazing things happen in the school library learning commons. Teacher-Librarians, library technicians, professional librarians and all staff who work in this school hub, know how indispensable it is for fostering inquiry, innovation, critical thinking, creativity. It's a meeting place for students who want to collaborate on projects, study for tests or share ideas. It's a quiet place to read. It's a centre for acquiring, as well as creating, knowledge. And with trained staff, the library learning commons can be transformative for students, like Julian, as well as educators.

But how do we convince the rest of the world? How do we show them that we do make a difference?

We work to tell our stories at meetings and at dinner parties, in presentations and in letters, online and offline, in lineups at the movies and by making movies. Every chance we get, we tell our story, but it seems to fall on deaf ears. We know this is true because school boards continue to spend money allocated to school libraries on other initiatives. And the Ministry of Education is reluctant to make it mandatory for these jurisdictions to direct school library money to libraries.

How do we convince them? The Ontario Library Association's consultant, Counsel Public Affairs, has reported that ministry representatives are most interested when they learn about research initiatives, such as the Ontario School Library Impact Project, which seeks to measure the impact of high school library programs on post-secondary success. They want data.

So, let's give it to them.

But it's easier said than done.

Most of the magic we make in school libraries is difficult to capture. How do we measure impact on student achievement? How do we tell the stories of metamorphosis? How do we introduce them to all the Julians in the library learning commons in a way that they will care?

This edition of *The Teaching Librarian* is a first step in trying to answer that question. We have stories about research projects, ways to launch your own research projects – big and small – and some tools for capturing that research in visual formats. We've even provided a brief guide with links to the Canadian School Libraries' tremendous research toolkit.

The resources we offer are not exhaustive. But hopefully they will inspire you to start. And, when you do, please share your findings on your own social media networks, with the Canadian School Libraries journal or Treasure Mountain, the national school library think tank. You can write articles for Open Shelf, the online publication for the Ontario Library Association. And, of course, you can send articles to *The Teaching Librarian*.

I wonder what Julian is doing now. Last October, he made another breakthrough by joining in a Magic the Gathering card game at our school's first ComiCon event in the library learning commons. We had hoped to host more of these game nights but teacher job action during the year made it difficult to plan.

Just before we were set to leave on our COVID-19 enhanced March break, Julian stopped by to ask when we were going to have another game night. I wanted to cry again.

"Soon, I hope." ■

President's Report



Maureen McGrath

Council Continues Advocacy Work

It is fitting that the last official job of the term as president of the Ontario School Library Association Council is the AGM at Super Conference. After this, the vice-president assumes the role for the year.

For those who attended this year's conference, or have attended in the past, you know that you leave feeling exhilarated: buoyed by new ideas; inspired by others working in our field; and motivated by the voices of so many intelligent, innovative and creative people.

In the words of the planners: "Super Conference 2020 will embolden us to explore our dreams, learn from the dreams of others, and think of the ways we can put our thoughts, ideas, and dreams into action – actions that will shape library communities today, tomorrow, and into the future."

What better way to begin the work of our new council!

Library learning commons educators are the front line of shaping the future. We are the dreamers, the provokers and often those who inform the culture in our buildings. Council is here to support you, and to build on that work.

In these challenging times, when so many feel their job roles are threatened, it is essential to have a space like Super Conference to celebrate and empower each other. Through the good work of our By-Law Committee, a motion was passed at the AGM to make our language, and thus the work of council, more inclusive. The Ontario School Library Association recognizes that the landscape of the school LLC has changed, and we must represent the diverse qualifications of our members. With collaboration between a teacher-librarian and a technician, a library clerk, a library technician, a learning resource assistant, or experienced and trained library educators of any title, we can create a thriving LLC to enhance the education and daily experiences of the students in our schools.

We also need people who are willing to raise their voices to advocate for the impact of the Library Learning Commons in schools. Council is filled with these dreamers – educators who

are willing to voluntarily meet four times a year on a Saturday because they believe in the future of our students and the power of the LLC to support their journey. Over many years, council has established a strong foundation on which we will continue to build in the year ahead.

The council's work centres around advocacy, leadership and continuing education. In the year ahead, we will commit to pursuing this important work with following initiatives:

- We will continue to advocate for all library educators in raising our voices to the Ministry of Education and school administrators so we can support your work of building a community of critical thinkers through inquiry, collaboration and creativity. Our Member Outreach Committee will continue its work, and, with the support of OLA, lobby our government for greater acknowledgement and accountability.
- We will continue to lead by building on this community of people who love our jobs by celebrating our accomplishments and spreading the word about good things that are happening. In this way, we can continue to grow and learn from each other. As a council, we will be analyzing the results of our member outreach survey to respond and adapt accordingly to our members' voices. As well, make sure you follow us on Twitter @OSLAcouncil and participate in the Our Library Rocks campaign and our Twitter chats!
- We will continue to educate by creating professional development opportunities and resources to support the work in LLC. Look for updates on our foundational document T4L, find us at conferences like Bring IT, Together 2019, and OLA Events, Super Conference and Treasure Mountain, and tap into our OSLA webinars and book club.

I am proud and humbled to take on this role of OSLA president, following a long line of dedicated professionals. Please feel free to reach out if you want to talk. And, in the meantime, dream on. ■

Meet the Author

Mona Chalabi

Angela Thompson

Data Journalist Potential Ally for Libraries and Librarians

Mona Chalabi is a data journalist and presenter who has worked for the publication *FiveThirtyEight* and is currently the data editor for *The Guardian*. She was a keynote speaker at the 2020 OLA Super Conference, where she spoke about data visualization. She may be followed on Instagram and Twitter @monachalabi.



TingL: How did you end up working as a data journalist and presenter?

I used to work for the United Nations doing statistics and monitoring evaluation and quickly became interested in disseminating the information further. I did a one-day workshop on data journalism where I learned some of these techniques and I have been doing it ever since.

Why did you go into data journalism specifically?

I was hoping to be able to reach the people who were depicted in the charts so that they would be able to question my assumptions and make sure that the information was accurate.

Collaboration is a key skill in education and in any work scenario, what role does that play in your process?

I am constantly collaborating with people who have collected the data and with academics who are able to infer the “why” of the data. Very often I am just showing how something has changed as opposed to why it has changed. I also am collaborating with non-experts to make sure that my data visualizations make sense.

What is the importance and influence of social media on how you do your work?

Social media has been really, really powerful in terms of giving me access to new audiences – people who don’t consider themselves avid news readers or academics much less data experts. But I am getting these pieces of information in front of them.

Accessibility of data was mentioned as one of your key concerns. Please describe some of the experiments that you have done adding tactile or auditory elements to your data depictions?

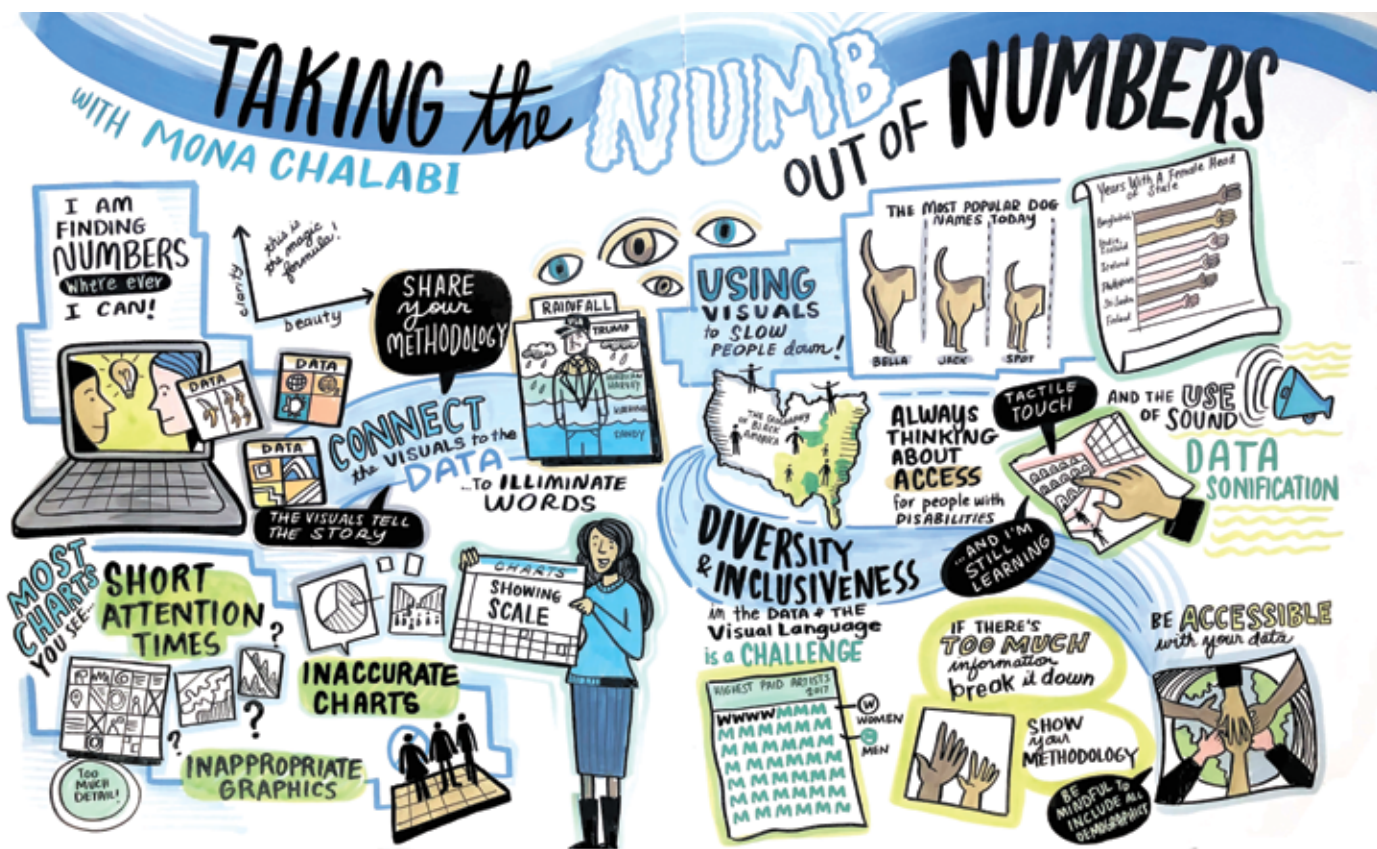


Image created and provided by ThinkLink Graphics.

In January of 2019, I went to Hong Kong and collaborated with a fantastic friend called Emmy the Great (Emma-Lee Moss), who is an amazing musician, turning data about migrant workers into sound. I'm experimenting with all kinds of things in terms of data sonification at the moment.

What are some of the current global issues that are closest to your heart?

Everything to do with social justice. I'm also really fascinated by the ways our bodies work. Reproductive justice, gender justice, you name it.

Positive vs. negative representations of data are tough to find. Why do you think this is the case?

Some of it comes down to data collection. I'm not sure how I can tell positive stories about Black History Month if there hasn't been data that is collected that asks more positive questions about the experiences of the Black community. So, I think I am slightly hamstrung by that. But I still think it is a worthwhile pursuit.

Any final words? Anything you think we need to know?

I've been kind of amazed at how positive the message is and how optimistic. I kind of thought that libraries were in a bad situation. I think library cuts are a real thing across many Western countries right now. I did a piece years ago for FiveThirtyEight where a colleague of mine said his mom worked as a librarian and he wanted me to do a piece about how the number of librarians across the U.S. had dwindled over time. It was such a shocking chart. I think librarians are my biggest group. I also gave a talk in North Carolina to a librarians' association and I was shocked to learn that librarian studies has the lowest employment rate of any degree, which is also really, really depressing. And it is a depiction of, not only where libraries are at, but where people anticipate them being because they don't see that as a valuable skill set.

I appreciate the positivity here (at the OLA Super Conference) but I think I'm also hoping to learn. There's a fight to be had here and how can I be a useful ally in that fight to save libraries? ■

Book Buzz

Joanne Sallay

Storytelling Platform Data Identifies Bestsellers

This issue's theme – data @ your library – could not be more relevant with artificial intelligence revolutionizing so many industries. Naturally, I wondered how to connect this to reading, student learning, and school libraries.

I first learned about the Wattpad app from a magazine article, “Revenge of the nerds: How reading app Wattpad is using AI to create the next Disney.” I downloaded the free app to learn first-hand how data and technology are being used to change the book industry as we know it, energizing a new generation of readers and writers. The majority of the Wattpad community is under 30 years old with 90 per cent of users identified as millennials or Gen Z!

At the 2020 OLA Super Conference, I had the opportunity to meet some of Wattpad's Canadian authors signing books. Many of these books gained their popularity from first being shared on the app. From the long lines of people waiting to receive a copy, it's obvious I was not the only one excited!

To learn more about this unique community and how teacher-librarians can incorporate technology into their libraries, I interviewed Deanna McFadden, publishing director at Wattpad.



For those new to Wattpad, please describe the online platform and community, and how data and AI are being used to shake up traditional book publishing?

Wattpad is the world's leading social storytelling platform for readers and writers, home to a global community of more than 80 million people who have written more than half a billion uploads. One in three North American teenagers has a Wattpad account, and there are 23 billion minutes spent on the platform in any given month. The community is among the safest and most supportive online, and we have Wattpad users in almost every country around the world. The vision for our company is to entertain and connect the world through stories.

We bring something completely unique to publishing: an engaged global community, the most diverse set of writers on the planet, and the technology to find every type of hit imaginable.

Understanding stories is a combination of art and science. We use a combination of our Story DNA machine learning technology and our human publishing experts to find great stories. Our technology allows us to analyze a range of metrics to understand and identify which stories have the potential to become hits. We look at the different ways users interact with a story, including the number of reads attached to an individual story, reading time, commenting, shares, and more. Then there is growth and velocity for each of these things (how fast it is growing), compared to everything else or compared to similar content. All these things help us make data-informed publishing decisions.

But humans remain critical to this process! Our publishing team are industry veterans who know what makes a great story. Once our data helps us identify stories with strong potential, our publishing and editorial teams help guide writers through the editing process to turn their Wattpad story into a published Wattpad Book.

Beth Reekles is a Wattpad success story, publishing *The Kissing Booth* at age 15 on Wattpad. Her teen romance accumulated nearly 20 million reads before it was published by Random House Children's Books and adapted to film on Netflix. How can educators encourage aspiring student writers to try your storytelling platform?

A great way to think about Wattpad is as the world's largest book club! It's an incredible place to find new stories and writers in every genre. In a time when the publishing is coming to terms with its own privilege and questioning whose stories have been silenced, Wattpad is a place to find new stories and voices from all over the world.

For writers, Wattpad is a thriving community of people who love to create amazing stories! There are more than four



Jessica Cunsolo signing at the Ontario Library Association's Super EXPO



Nandi Taylor signing at the Ontario Library Association's Super EXPO

million writers on Wattpad every month. We encourage every type of writer to come and share their work. They'll be able to get feedback from readers directly on Wattpad, they can engage with other readers and writers in the community. We also offer several resources to help writers develop their craft. Our Content and Creator Development Team is always on the look-out for exceptional new talent to invite into the Wattpad Stars program. And finally, when writers become popular and show a lot of potential, they may be published as part of Wattpad Books, get a TV or film deal with Wattpad Studios, make money as part of our Paid Stories program, or be eligible to work with brands.



Who are some Canadian Wattpad authors to watch for?

We have some wonderful young Canadian talent on the platform! From the incredible success of Jessica Cunsolo's *With Me* Series (*She's With Me*, *Stay With Me*, *Still With Me*), a really fun thriller/romance that'll have you on the edge of your seat through the entire ride, to *Given* by Nandi Taylor, which is an Afro-Caribbean inspired

fantasy. This summer we've got a wonderful novel by London Ontario-based Taylor Hale called *The Summer I Drowned* about a teenager who goes back to her small town to face her fears after almost losing her life five years previous only to discover everything has changed...it's a terrific book!

How does Wattpad strive to achieve diversity in the stories and genres shared?

Empowering and elevating a diverse group of storytellers is foundational to Wattpad Books and a core value of who we are as a company. It's part of what makes Wattpad unique, it's something publishing needs more of, and something people want!

We develop our Wattpad Books lists through an intersectional lens. We will always be conscious of who we are publishing and

make sure we are elevating unique and creative voices from marginalized communities. We've had industry-leading success in this area so far.

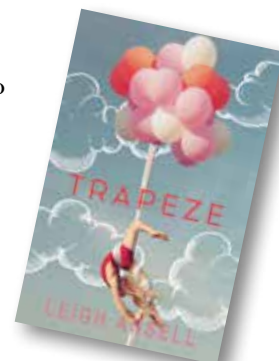
We have just finished a month-long promotion for Black History month showcasing the amazing black storytellers we have on the platform, and this May we're publishing *The Invincible Summer of Juniper Jones*, a coming of age tale set in 1955 Alabama where a young biracial boy encounters both prejudice and outright racism for the first time. It's a stunning novel that was written, talent managed, edited, and whose cover designer, were all young black women. We've also published incredible #OwnVoices stories like V.S. Santoni's *I'm a Gay Wizard* and Nandi Taylor's *Given*. And we've done all of this in just a year into Wattpad Books' existence!



Wattpad has been credited by tapping into the youth markets of millennials and Gen Z. What advice do you have for teacher-librarians on how to incorporate Wattpad into student learning and school libraries?

We're entertaining and connecting the world through stories! As the group of people who are often the first to get young people excited about reading, librarians will understand this mission better than anyone else.

Knowing and encouraging students to broaden their use of technology to include Wattpad, to help them seek out stories that are comforting and challenging, that reflect what they are experiencing in their everyday lives, is a terrific place to start. Seeing yourself reflected in the stories that you're reading is such a gift, and there's truly something for everyone on Wattpad. ■



The Eric Walters School Library Summer Lending Program

Are You Ready to Set Your Books Free?

For elementary and secondary students across the country, summer means an idyllic two-month vacation from school to enjoy the fleeting warm weather, all manner of outdoor activities, family vacations and a chance for leisurely reading.

For many children the summer is full of opportunity, stimulation and growth. However, a body of research indicates that, for many children who do not have access to books and reading, the summer may leave them ill-prepared for the new school year. Even the most avid readers may find it challenging to discover enough choice in reading materials to keep them engaged over summer.

School libraries have collections developed particularly to engage young readers, yet elementary and secondary students have no access to these resources over summer. To many, including the editors of the *Canadian School Libraries Journal*, this made little sense. (Full disclosure: I am one of the editors and chair of Canadian School Libraries.)

For two successive years, the *CSL Journal* published accounts of successful initiatives to support summer reading and promoted the idea with our tag line, *Keep them reading, thinking and making*. “Is there more we can do from the library learning commons to get more books into the hands of students and also spur them to keep on learning over the summer break?” was the question put to readers across Canada.

The Summer Lending Challenge is Born

In spring of 2019, best-selling Canadian author Eric Walters got involved with his *CSL Journal* article, “School Is Out for the Summer and Your Books Should Be, Too.” He challenged schools across Canada to get books in their libraries out over the summer and into the hands of the students who want to read. Walters’ call provided a wonderful opportunity for Canadian School Libraries to investigate whether summer lending programs in school libraries could be successful, and, if so, what factors would contribute to that success.

Reaction to Walters’ article on social media was huge, and, before we knew it, over 150 schools had signed up. Walters

sought and received endorsement from Canadian Children’s Book Centre (CCBC) and the Canadian Society of Children’s Authors, Illustrators and Performers (CANSCAIP). Both organizations actively promoted the idea via their own channels. He also received generous support from Orca Book Publishers, who agreed to provide program incentives. And so the Eric Walters Summer Lending Challenge was born.

Findings from the Research

Through a detailed survey, the researchers sought to answer the questions:

- Can summer lending programs in Canada’s school libraries be successful? And, if so, what factors would contribute to that success?
- What would be the benefits of implementing summer lending in Canada’s school libraries?

Over 80 per cent of survey respondents reported positive results with summer lending through the school library learning commons. The benefits of summer reading were consistent with existing research, but also revealed some unique outcomes. While the literature does recount involvement of school libraries in some successful summer reading programs, the potential of this simple model of summer lending from school libraries had not been fully explored.

Our study provides substantial evidence that summer lending programs have a positive impact on students. One might expect that students would appreciate the opportunity to borrow books from the school library over the summer but we were pleasantly surprised by the depth of student responses.

Respondents reported on student engagement in reading, appreciation of choice and time to read books without constraints, as well as gratitude for the opportunity to borrow the books for the summer and for the trust granted to them to be responsible and return books in September. These findings were replicated many times in various schools. Positive responses were noted by those leading the summer reading programs, as well as by many teachers, parents and

administrators.

Factors Contributing to Success

Specific themes emerged as we analyzed the survey responses.

Access: A summer lending program initiated by the professionals in the school library learning commons has proven to contribute to participation and positive results. Our research indicates that simply lending books from the existing collection makes good use of excellent resources without further investment. Loss of books is minimal and considerably less expensive than purchasing a few books for students to own, as is typically done in many summer reading programs. Even students with books at home appreciated having increased choice. Public libraries are important, but many students remarked that it was a challenge to just get there. Access to books children want to read is key, and the school library is a natural and inexpensive solution that is already in place.

Choice: Over and over again in the literature review, previous researchers proclaimed the importance of giving students choice of personal reading materials to ensure summer reading engagement. This success factor was confirmed in our research by both students and other stakeholders. Students really appreciated the freedom to select books they wanted to read and the luxury of borrowing several books by their favourite authors or even a whole series. As expected, freedom of choice was an important factor in the success of summer lending from the school library learning commons. One special aspect to our study was the mention of having a professional on hand to guide student choices when needed.

Trust: Probably the biggest inhibitor to try summer lending from the school library is the fear of book loss. Our study sheds new light on this roadblock. Responsible behaviours cannot grow without opportunity and trust. Our findings indicate that students were thankful for the trust they were granted to care for and return borrowed materials. This factor was repeated again and again in responses from both students and other stakeholders. This trust translated into student engagement in borrowing books, appreciation for the program, and responsible follow through in returning books in September. The gains in building trusting relationships with students outweigh the minimal loss of books. This factor seems to be unique to our study and it is hoped this finding will put to rest the book loss syndrome for schools in the future.

The benefits of summer lending became clear through the research, and Canadian School Libraries can confidently make recommendations to school library professionals for continuing the success of and extending school library learning commons summer lending programs.

Benefits of Implementing Summer Lending in Canada's School Libraries

- Engaging students in reading to address the summer learning slump.

- Building a community of readers within and across schools.
- Putting books into the hands of students during the summer and all year.
- Getting more out of school library collections.
- Building responsibility and trust.
- Making reading a yearlong habit.

Realizing these benefits requires support from school administrators and teachers. Summer lending is a positive influence on placing the library learning commons at the heart of literacy and school-wide improvement.

Recommendations for School Library Professionals for Continuing the Success of and Extending School Library Learning Commons Summer Lending Programs

- Share this CSL summer reading research widely and discuss the potential positive impact for students in your school or school district.
- Ensure that access, choice and trust are key factors in designing your summer lending program.
- Discuss the impact that administrative procedures can have on determining the success of summer lending. Consider increasing lending limits and streamlining processes to facilitate student loans and to reduce losses.
- Invest in promotional activities to engage teachers, parents and students in participation.
- Collect school data, and analyze and share results with administration and your school community.
- Continue to build connections with local public libraries and collaborate on ways to engage more students in summer reading, including overcoming potential barriers to access.

Ideas to Consider for Extending Programs to Build a Culture of Summer Reading

- Utilize online collaboration spaces and technologies and social media for discussions and activities to get students reading, thinking and making.
- Investigate how the virtual school library learning commons can increase equitable access to quality reading materials.
- Reach out to reluctant readers and special needs learners throughout the school year and encourage them to continue connecting with books over the summer.
- Consider the needs of reluctant readers and special needs learners by providing access to appropriate texts and technologies.

Are You Ready for Summer 2020?

Plans are already underway for the second year of the Eric Walters Summer Lending Challenge. Walters is figuring out ways to connect virtually with summer readers but if some schools reopen, the hope is that they will still be able to lend books to help facilitate this initiative. The CSL summer reading research project will be postponed until 2021. ■

Eric Walters and the Tweet that Launched a Movement

It started with a tweet.

During his time as writer-in-residence with the Toronto District School Board, author Eric Walters had piloted successful summer reading programs. On May 16, 2019, he took to Twitter to issue the following challenge: “As summer approaches, consider a summer lending program. Let students borrow ten books over the summer. So much better to have the books in their hands instead of sitting on the shelves. I’ve seen this work with a return rate that is amazing! Keep them reading!”

Hoping for 20 to 30 schools to commit to a summer-reading program, he offered to send packages with autographed bookmarks and posters to participating schools.

As the idea began to catch on, Anita Brooks Kirkland, chair of Canadian School Libraries and editor of the *Canadian School Libraries Journal*, asked Walters to write an article outlining his vision of summer reading. With the endorsement of CANSCAIP and the Canadian Children’s Book Centre, word continued to spread.

Knowing that the fear of losing books was preventing some schools from participating, Walters contacted Orca Book Publishers about offering deep discounts to schools who signed up for summer reading so that they could replace lost books.

Registrations continued to come in, right up to the last week of school. Walters ended up with more than 150 participants. “One school in Arkansas got involved, so we went international,” he enthused.

Walters provided packages to each school, which he mailed at his own expense. This translated into 6,000 bookmarks and 600 posters. There were many envelope-stuffing sessions with his family members, and numerous trips to the post office.

Passionate about literacy, Walters has a talent for reaching the most vulnerable students and a heart-felt desire to see them succeed. The reading project is a simple and effective way to combat summer slide, the loss of literacy skills while students

are out of school. Summer slide affects students without access to books. Families that don’t have books in their homes also tend to be ones that do not access public libraries.

“By using the school system, we are able to reach the most vulnerable who don’t have books in their homes and are hesitant to use the public library system,” Walters explains. “Summer reading allows all people to use the library books, but it affects the least advantaged the most.”

Some families may be hesitant to use the public library system as they are afraid of fines or the cost of lost books. They may not understand that it is free, or they may not have transportation to or from the library. But they are familiar with the school library, and the students are already there and able to select their books.

“We need to make these library books available,” Walters said. “The people participating in this program treasure the students more than the books. This really says what public education is all about.”

The program saw 28,042 books signed out, with 43 per cent of participating schools reporting no losses. The other 53 per cent of schools reported low losses. In many cases, this is a better rate of return than regular circulation during the school year.

The program also saw 74 per cent participation in a survey which provided the data for Canadian School Libraries’ research, spearheaded by Brooks Kirkland and Carol Koechlin. See a report of their findings on page 14.

Walters is hoping to start promoting summer reading even earlier this year. CANSCAIP and OLA are endorsing the program, and Orca will be providing support for the mailouts. Walters will be bringing in more authors and illustrators to supply to participating schools autographed items and even some original artwork.

Interested in signing up for summer reading at your school? Sign up at canadianschoollibraries.ca/subscribe. **I**

The Data Behind the Dream

AN #OLASC 2020 REVIEW

We laughed. We cried. We sang our hearts out and strung string around buttons. This year's Ontario Library Association Super Conference, Jan. 29 to Feb. 1, was successful, despite some challenges related to picketing by different education unions. There were many highlights at the conference.

Stephen Hurley/VoicEd Radio, OLA Media and Communications Award winner made an appearance on Jan. 29 and 30. Hurley set up a studio right by the registration desks so he could capture the stories and voices of all sorts of Super Conference participants, speakers and volunteers. Go to voiced.ca/project/ola-super-conference-2020 to listen to more than a dozen conversations from authors Mahtab Narsimhan and Helaine Becker to Heather Stoness, OSLA Teacher-Librarian of the Year.

The OSLA AGM and Awards presentation was extremely moving. Our data wall mosaic experiment seemed to garner interest and was quite interactive, especially for the wonderful volunteers who offered or were enlisted to cut string for the task. There wasn't a dry eye in the room when Tim Pedersen, OSLA Administrator of the Year, spoke about his love for school libraries and read the audience a picture book to conclude his speech. Congratulations also to Tim Boudreau, OLITA Technology Advancing Libraries Award.

There were so many great sessions that'd it be foolish to try and list them all. Thank you to out-of-towners, such as Angela Stockman and Trevor McKenzie, for travelling all the way to Toronto to share your insights with our eager attendees.

OSLA Spotlight speaker Shakil Choudhury was riveting. As I wrote on my blog mondaymollymusings.blogspot.com/2020/02/ola-sc-2020-day-3-reflections.html, even the ThinkLink graphic artists creating the sketchnote of his talk were captivated by Shakil's presentation.

The OLA all-conference keynotes were exceptional. Thanks to Farrah Khan, Mona Chalabi and Choir! Choir! Choir!

Treasure Mountain Canada 6, held on the evening of Jan. 31 and all day on Feb. 1, was another cluster of deep thinking and rich learning opportunities. Speakers included Eric Walters, Garfield and Laura Gini-Newman, Deborah Dundas, Leigh Cassell, Anita Brooks-Kirkland, David Loertscher and many table-talk speakers. For an overview of the think tank discussion, check out the Treasure Mountain blog (tmcanda.blogspot.com). **!**



School Library Impact: Seeking Evidence

How can we show that school libraries are making a difference in student learning? Teacher-Librarians working in educational environments that place a strong focus on teacher accountability and on student achievement need to be able to show that school libraries, properly equipped and staffed, can make a difference in student learning. Here are five possible approaches for doing this, using examples from the school library literature and from my own work as a researcher and as a supervisor of graduate student researchers (see, for example, Oberg, 1998). The first four approaches are ones that could be used by individual teacher-librarians in their schools; all five could be used by school library associations, by education departments, or by school library researchers in universities or other research-intensive agencies.

1. Using research findings from the school library field

Knowing and being able to cite the research from the school library field is basic to the professionalism of every teacher-librarian; fortunately, there is no shortage of research in our field. In the United States alone, there are over a thousand doctoral dissertations, thousands of master's theses and projects, and thousands of research projects conducted by university faculty and by government and private-sector researchers. In Australia and Canada, the quantity of research being published is small but growing. Useful summaries and analyses of the school library impact research have been published by Haycock (1992), Kachel (2013), and Lance and Kachel (2018). We can draw from those research summaries to provide evidence of the contribution that school libraries and teacher-librarians make to student learning. For example, Haycock points out that "Students in schools with well-equipped resource centers and professional teacher-librarians perform better on achievement tests for reading comprehension and basic research skills" (pp. 18-19) and that "The development of student competence in research and study skills is most effective when integrated with classroom instruction through cooperative program planning and team teaching by two equal teaching partners—the classroom teacher and the teacher-librarian" (pp. 22-23).

2. Analyzing the results of national, state or provincial testing programs

This approach can be used by individual teacher-librarians or by associations or education departments. I draw my

example here from my experience of the achievement and diploma examinations used in the province of Alberta. Every school in Alberta is given the results data, and the education department recommends that school results be analyzed at the local school level. The department gives suggestions for interpreting and analyzing individual school results, including item analysis and examination of program emphasis (skills or content) and instructional practices such as methodology and resources, all of which can be used to raise questions about the use of the library for teaching and learning.

Each year the examiners provide statements on the overall performance of students on the examinations. These statements often give useful starting points for checking a school's results and for presenting points for discussion, either affirming the library's contribution to positive results or offering library involvement in the efforts to improve weak results. Often the examiners' statement reads as if they were specifically making a call for increased library involvement. For example, in reference to students' performance on part of the Grade 12 Social Studies exam, the examiners stated that students just meeting the acceptable standard of performance experienced difficulty with questions involving various critical thinking skills and the application of knowledge to new or unfamiliar situations. In contrast, the examiners stated that students achieving the standard of excellence were consistently able to interpret and evaluate information and ideas, and to review, analyze, and synthesize information.

The Alberta examinations include both knowledge-based and skill-based questions. In general, skills questions comprise 60 per cent or more of the exam. In many cases, students perform better on knowledge questions than on skills questions. Identifying weaknesses in performance on skills questions could be used to help present a case for increased student use of the library for developing the skills needed for evaluating and using information effectively.

3. Using locally available library and test data

This is an approach that can be easily used in any school that has a library automation system that can provide data about the circulation of library materials. If your library circulation data can be pulled up by class and by individual teachers and if your school has used some kind of standardized testing program, you will have two sets of data (library use data and

test score data) that can be compared. In an elementary school in which I was researching several years ago, the principal and the librarian used these data, along with data related to collaboration, to provide evidence that library use was related to student learning. They found that, for Grades 2-5, scores on the reading and reference subtests, taken from their standardized testing program, began to climb as library use increased. For example, the Grade 3 class which had the highest circulation of materials and whose teacher had the most collaboration with the librarian reached 95 per cent mastery on the reference portion of the test and 81 per cent mastery on the reading comprehension portion. Another Grade 3 class with a low circulation of materials and whose teacher had not collaborated with the librarian, scored only 19 per cent mastery on reference and 52 per cent mastery on reading comprehension. The principal provided that information to the staff as a whole and to the individual teachers to demonstrate the power of regular library use in improving student achievement.

4. Carrying out action research or teacher-researcher projects

Using the action research approach involves teachers working together to identify a problem of practice and then working through cycles of planning, acting, and reflecting to address the problem (see, Sykes, 2013, for a useful guide for those new to action research). The problem to be addressed might be student plagiarism or perhaps low levels of skills and interest in reading — any significant concern shared by the teachers in the school. An example of this is the action research project centred around the problem of how to get junior high students involved in more active learning in science. For an account of the work on this problem, by the teacher-librarian and a group of science teachers in a junior high school, see Karen Loerke's report of her research on teaching Kuhlthau's information search process (Loerke, 1994; Loerke & Oberg, 1997).

Using the teacher-researcher model, the teacher or teacher-librarian works with a class or small group of students to develop an in-depth understanding of student learning in a particular area of knowledge which can then be shared with the school and its community. An example of the work done by a teacher-researcher on the nature of the research process with very young children is Pam Steeves' work with a Grade 1 and 2 class (Steeves, 1994). Another strategy might be for the teacher and/or teacher-librarian to develop rubrics for understanding and evaluating students' research work, from process through to product. Observations, student interviews and discussions as well as examination of student work could then be used to assess student understanding of the research process and to assess the quality of student research products.

5. Using statistical data that is available or easily obtained

This approach is typically the basis of a large-scale study conducted by researchers, or by associations or education departments able to fund the work of researchers. An excellent example of this is the Colorado Study (Lance, Welborn & Hamilton-Pennell, 1992), which was supported by a \$70,000 research grant from the United States Office of Education and involved 221 Colorado schools. The study used

four categories of data that could be easily obtained or that was already available. Only the library media variable data had to be collected especially for the study; a survey of all of Colorado's 1331 schools collected data such as library (LMC) staffing, collection development, and librarians' involvement in curriculum and instruction. The other three categories of data were available from the United States census bureau and from the Colorado Department of Education.

The study resulted in three major research findings. First, students at schools with better funded libraries tended to achieve higher average test scores, whether their schools and communities were rich or poor and whether adults in the community are well or poorly educated (see also, Haycock, 2011). Second, the size of the library's total staff and the size and variety of its collection were important characteristics of library programs which intervened between library expenditures and test performance; that is, funding was important primarily to provide adequate staffing levels for school enrollment and to provide a local collection which offered students a large number of materials in a variety of formats. Finally, students whose librarians played an instructional role—either by identifying materials to be used with teacher-planned instructional units or by collaborating with teachers in planning instructional units—tended to achieve higher average test scores.

The first Colorado study was and continues to be replicated in many U.S. states (see lrs.org/data-tools/school-libraries/impact-studies).

Guidelines to Consider

Possible approaches to showing that libraries can make a difference in student achievement range from major and costly evaluation projects to small and inexpensive approaches that can be used at the local school level. Every approach will take an investment of time and energy, if not money, as well as a plan for collaboration with the individuals and groups that have a part in deciding what role the school library can play in the improvement of student learning in your school, your district, and your province. Be sure your team includes people with research-related knowledge and experience.

Research findings are not persuasive in and of themselves. They have to be shared with others, in meaningful ways, over time. Many people, including educators, are suspicious of research and researchers. Research done closer to home is more likely to be considered and perhaps to be viewed as trustworthy. And, although many people demand statistical data to support research findings, it is important not to forget that people also respond strongly to data in narrative form—stories, case studies, or brief scenarios. Whatever approach you decide to take, I recommend that you put together a research team and that you start small. Even small projects can be very demanding of time and energy.

Note: The ideas presented here have been shared by the author in various forms to various audiences over the past three decades. ■

references continued on page 20

...continued from page 19

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OSLIP UPDATE: ONE YEAR ON

By Marc d'Avernas

There is a lot of talk about data these days: quantitative measurements, performance indicators, analytics, big data, visualizations — and so it goes. It makes sense that the proliferation of technology would create more and more data points, which in turn need to be analyzed, digested and explained. But why is there not as much talk about research? After all, without research, data are just words or numbers. Research is the key to unlocking meaning and value.

The Ontario School Library Impact Project (OSLIP) is now well into its second year. At the OLA Super Conference 2019,

six members of the core committee — which includes me — sat down for the first time and hammered out details that we hope will result in interesting insights come 2021. Most recently, we have been reviewing the data obtained from the first version of the postsecondary student information literacy survey. Next, we will be releasing the second version of the survey, as well as conducting qualitative interviews.

To follow along, visit the OSLIP page on the OLA website at bit.ly/OSLIP. We have recently added presentation slides, as well as a copy of the Fall 2019 survey questions. There's more to come in 2021. So, stay tuned. ■



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This project has been partly funded by the Government of Canada through the Digital Literacy Exchange Program.

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How to Conduct Research

So, you wanna do some research? Here's a handy guide with facts and tips shamelessly borrowed from the Canadian School Libraries Research Toolkit.

To learn more, check out the entire kit: canadianschoollibraries.ca/research-toolkit/

WHY RESEARCH?



"Why do school libraries matter today, particularly in the context of an educational world that increasingly relies on diverse, complex and often conflicting sources of information?" The answer lies in student outcomes – specifically, what school librarians can do in their instructional practices to ensure those outcomes.

Todd, R. (2008). *Evidence-based manifesto: If school librarians can't prove they make a difference, they may cease to exist. School Library Journal* 54(4).

1. **Do we matter?** Do school libraries make a difference?
2. **To measure outputs.** Great opportunity to count things: classes coming to library, books circulated, programs offered, etc.
3. **To measure outcomes.** What did the students, teachers or other stakeholders gain from the lesson, presentation, initiative?
4. **To measure impact.** What are the larger effects over time? For example, are student grades increasing now that they know how to research more deeply?

What do you want to know?



Quantitative: This is anything you can count. It could be number of students coming to the library or a vote to choose the one book everyone should read.

Qualitative: This information fills out the how and why behind the numbers to help tell meaningful stories and to drive future programming. Data collected could be survey responses, photographs, video and student work.

Do you want to **measure big changes** or is happening in your library learning com

Start small if overwhelmed! Build up to research.

Literature review. Take time find out what school board does not have access to d library.

Use your research question as a guide to do I need to collect, how will it be analyz

Consider **using a Logic Model, Gantt ch** to map out your plan.

What's your question?



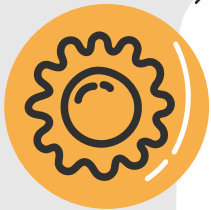
Consider what is happening in your library, in your school and across the district when developing a research question.

Three possible types of research questions:

1. **Descriptive:** a snapshot of what is happening
2. **Comparative:** measuring one thing against another
3. **Causal:** measuring the effect of something

Check out the Question Formulation Technique to help develop questions: rightquestion.org/what-is-the-qft

How to gather information



Counting: Your library information software collects so much information.

Interactive Displays: Set up a display which asks question of the day

Photos and Video: Record events or conduct spontaneous interviews

Surveys: Top tips for designing surveys:
1. Identify the goals. Be clear about what you want to learn.
2. Develop the questions. Make sure they repeatedly show the same result, and measure what they are supposed to measure.
3. Test your questions before using them.

Focus groups: Follow a specific protocol. Learn more at bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/vpsa/pdf/assessment/focus.pdf

Analyzing the data



What story do the numbers tell? **Ask critical questions** about your numbers.

For example, more students choose memoirs over fiction. Why? How will that change collection development?

Coding is the process of labeling and organizing your qualitative data to identify different themes and the relationships between them.

Learn more at getthematic.com/insights/coding-qualitative-data/

Sharing the results



Presentation: create a report, PowerPoint, workshops, or video, or share on social media

Visual representation: use online tools, sketchnote, draw a picture, or create an infographic

Use the results to **make a change** and plan new research

Make a plan



just do a quick check on what commons space right now?

bigger and more complex

that research is out there. If your databases, then check with your public

to organize your planning: what data ed, how will the results be shared?

art or favourite project-planning app

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Kimberly Senf

Visualization Tools Showcase School Library Learning Commons

You've collected your data, now what?

After you've gathered the numbers for database usage, curriculum statistics, teachers collaborated with, library website traffic, collection usage, library use before and after school, you must put these numbers into an understandable format for your stakeholders. Many online resources are available to help turn your data into visuals that will ensure your intended message is delivered.



visme

Visme lets you create customizable graphics that highlight the stories that you want to share with your

audience. The infographic templates are categorized into Timeline, Process, Comparison and Reports and Charts. There are more templates than you will ever get around to using, but that also means that there's something there for almost any niche data need you might have. Easy to use, the Visme site feels intuitive as soon as you start investigating what it has to offer.



VENNGAG

Venngage offers many customizable infographics, brochures, charts, diagrams and

report options that will help you share your hard-earned library data with those that need to see it. When setting up your profile, the platform asks you to choose the designs you most like, so it can share similar style templates with you. Is this necessary? No. Will some people like this feature? Of course. Presumably, you can access all template styles on the site after you've chosen your favourites, but you might have

to scroll down a little further. One of the downfalls of this tool is that, to download your designs, you must upgrade to a premium membership.



Google Sheets

Among other online tools offering similar creative options for infographics and reports are **Canva**, **Piktochart** and **Adobe Spark**. All contain multitudes of templates to satisfy almost any design need and all let you customize the templates to fit the story that you want to tell. All the platforms are available for free, with a premium version that comes with a price tag. Stick with the free versions as much as possible since, for the most part, you need pay nothing to get infographics and reports that will allow you to share your data with those that need to see it (unless you want additional template access).

If you're looking for a tool to help you analyze your data, consider **Google Sheets**. The functionality is there to summarize and analyze the data in the Explore button, where pivot tables can be created with the click of a button.

Data help us advocate for the school library and the many valuable services provided. Many aspects of how the library is used and how librarians spend their days can be lost if people do not see the space bustling with students at the right time. These data visualization tools may make all the difference in showcasing all the activity that takes place within the (sometimes) quiet library walls. ■



Beth Lyons

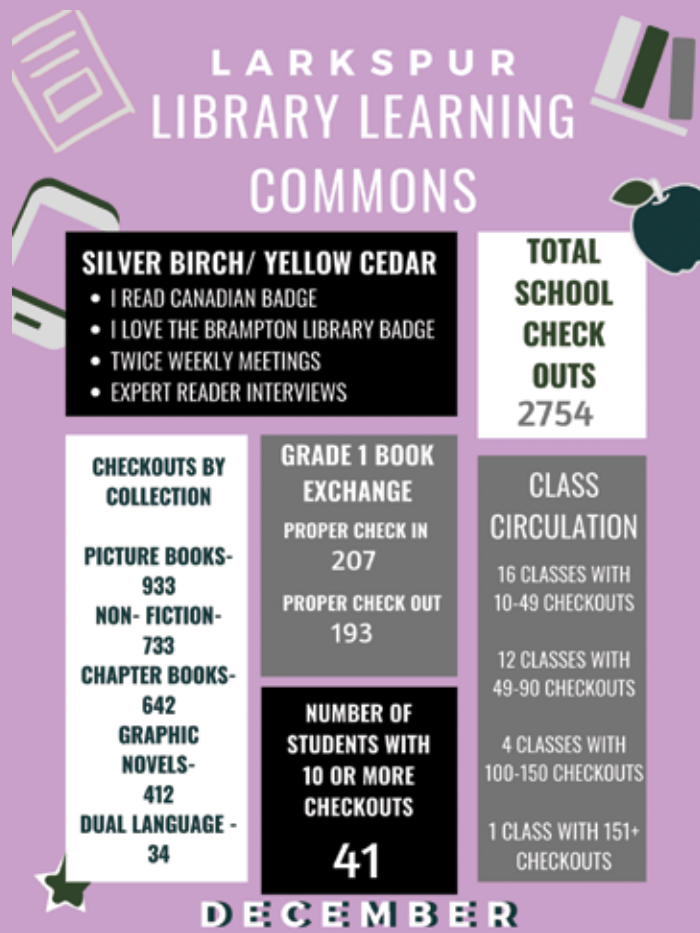
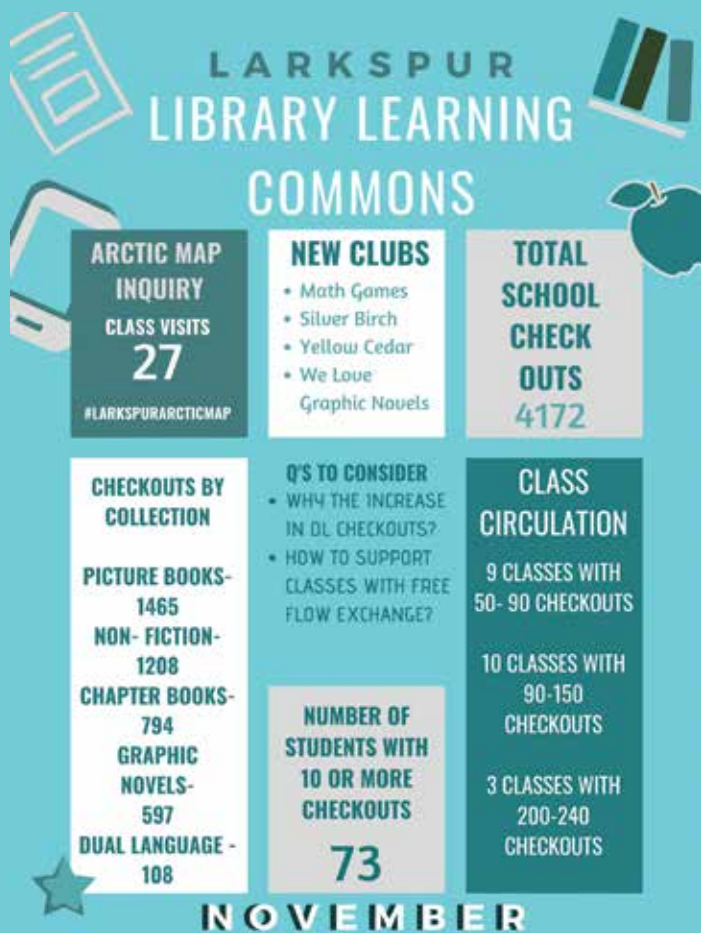
Using Infographics to Tell Your Library Story

I am the teacher-librarian at Larkspur Public School, a large K-5 school in the Peel District School Board. The school population is 850-plus students, of which about one-third are in kindergarten. Working with such young learners in the library learning commons and having the space used by classes for co-teaching and inquiry based learning means that it is imperative that our space is flexible, open and able to be accessed independently and confidently by learners, some as young as three years old.

We adopted a free flow book exchange model two years ago with students in Grades 1-5 visiting the space in small groups throughout the day. Free flow visits to the library learning commons mean more than just access to books. They mean our students can develop independence and self-regulation as it relates to their education. Students can explore STEM/STEAM challenges using a variety of materials. We have

many STEAM tinkering and creation stations in the Larkspur Library Learning Commons. The most popular materials are Keva planks, loose parts, cups and other items for building, Lego and art stations. Students feel empowered to make the space their own and will often move the furniture, rearrange the materials and request resources previously explored in order to enjoy their maker experience within the library space. They can research as needed to collaborate with classmates. Time to slow down, think and settle is often necessary for students during the busy school day. The library can offer a space for students to take a wellness break and re-centre themselves so they are ready to focus on learning. The free flow model provides students with voice and choice during the school day.

As part of my Teacher-Librarian Specialist AQ in the spring of 2019, I created two infographics to share the story of our



library learning commons. One focused on the use of the space by students in small groups during free flow book exchange and one focused on how educators used the space to co-teach inquiries that had been co-planned with me. I found that I really enjoyed the melding of images and texts to share the story of our library learning commons and to reflect on how the space might continue to evolve to serve the needs of our learning community.

As this school year progressed, I also have been collecting data about our circulation statistics, use of the library space by classes for co-teaching and collaborative inquiry, as well as other events and presentations brought into the learning commons. At the end of each month, I created an infographic to share the data with our stakeholders and to reflect on how the space might serve our learners. It has been interesting to watch the patterns and data related to book circulation to learn what our readers are most interested in reading. It has helped me make better decisions regarding the purchase of new titles for our collection and how to best highlight underused sections of the current collection.

As I reflect on the first four months of the school year and the infographics I created about the use of our space, I wish I had incorporated more images and visual data. My original plan was to provide a quick snapshot of each month so that

we could easily see the data related to circulation and use of the space. Moving forward, I think my infographics would provide more scope for learning and reflection if I split up the data related to circulation and inquiry in order to tell a more visual story of each. I would like to use data related to student voice as well — perhaps a survey about the section that had the highest circulation that month? What books/topics are the students enjoying? What areas do the students think need to be updated? Whose voices are missing from our collection?

Moving forward, I would like to highlight the co-planning and co-teaching that happen in our space as well, possibly by creating a separate set of infographics. That way I could include more visuals and photographs of our learning in action, as well as quotes from students that are collected during an inquiry. What images would best highlight the inquiry process as educators and students work through it together?

Overall, I have really enjoyed creating a monthly infographic related to our library learning commons and the ways in which our learning community uses the space. I think there is room for growth and improvement in how we can use infographics to tell the story of our space and how we can capture and share the voice of the learners in it. ■

Creating Stunning Infographics: It's Easier than You Think



Infographics are becoming increasingly popular. These visual representations of information can convey a lot of data in an attractive and easy to digest format. Infographics can include charts, graphs and other visuals, and they have minimal text. They can be a great way to convey information to your own school community through posters and social media. For example, infographics can be used to highlight library resources, statistics or achievements. Having students create their own infographics will help them to synthesize and creatively represent their learning.



It is now easier than ever to create attractive infographics, even with little or no graphic design experience. There are a variety of free tools available online. Canva and Piktochart are both easy to use websites that have both free and subscription-based services.



Canva (canva.com/create/infographics) has lots of templates and more than two million photos, icons, and illustrations (although, be aware that there is a \$1US charge for premium images). You can access Pixabay and Pexels through Canva. You also can upload your own images. A limitation of Canva is that charts and graphs must be uploaded because the program lacks the capacity to create or populate them.

Piktochart (piktochart.com) is great if you want to create charts for your infographic. There are a variety of styles available that are easy to label and populate with your own data. There is even the capability to link to Google Sheets for dynamic data. You also can add maps or use video content from YouTube or Vimeo.





Whatever program you choose, here are some tips to keep in mind:

- **Compile:** Plan what information you want to share.
- **Catchy title:** Get readers' attention.
- **Concise:** Be succinct and be sure to use related graphics that will enhance the content.
- **Clean:** Keep it simple and uncluttered. Use legible fonts and no more than two font families. Use contrasting colours so that your design really pops and is accessible for your readers.
- **Citations:** Don't forget to cite your sources.

Infographics in the Classroom: An Interview with Sarah Prendergast

Having students present their research in the form of an infographic can be a fun project that builds 21st century learning skills, critical thinking, and creativity. Sarah Prendergast, a long-term occasional teacher at Bayside Secondary School, in the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board, has her students create infographics for several assignments.

Here is how she is using infographics in her classroom:

What are the assignments that you give to students that use infographics?

I used infographics for three assignments. The first is for Grade 8 French-immersion geography. The students were tasked with choosing a theme to research for their statistics connected to the curriculum. For example, food around the world, access to water, annual income per family, etc. The second and third are for Grade 8 health where they were tasked with creating an infographic about bullying and its impacts, as well as substance abuse.

Why did you decide to use this format?

I decided to use this format because I wanted my students

to practise research skills. I wanted them to be able to use the internet effectively to research multiple websites, decide if their information was reliable and then select specific information that they thought was the most pertinent to their subject.

What are the curriculum connections?

I connected my infographic assignments to geography and health. There were connections in geography using the geographic inquiry process — quality of life, economy, gathering and organizing data, interpreting and analyzing data, evaluating evidence and drawing conclusions, comparing findings to selected quality of life indicators and more. For health, it was connected to the healthy relationships, personal safety and substance use strands.

What programs/tools do the students use to create their infographics?

Students mainly used Canva, a free website to create their infographics. Some used PowerPoint but found it much more difficult.

What are some of the challenges?

One challenge was making sure that students understood the differences between an infographic and a poster. They had to include seven to 10 statistics, as well as images and graphs that supported their data to get a Level 3. Also, some students had difficulty narrowing down and sorting through their research.

What do you think makes a great infographic?

I think a great infographic is one that is clear and concise. It only contains information that is important and supports the topic. It has images, graphs and other visual aids to support the information it provides. It's visually appealing and draws the reader's eye.

Any other tips for using infographics in the classroom?

This is a great activity to really get Grade 8s prepared for the kind of research that is required in secondary school. My tip would be to review how to tell if a source is reliable before starting (i.e. publication date, author, website validity, etc.) as some students have difficulty picking reliable resources. I also provided some sites to start with, so they weren't totally overwhelmed. My students had to turn in a bibliography so I could ensure they were using good sources. ■



Caroline Freibauer

Data Project

I'm not sure when it happened, but I do know there was an epiphany, a moment of enlightenment, which set me and some colleagues at Assumption College School in Brantford on a difficult road of discovery.

We were working hard on our third Teacher Learning and Leadership Project – a defunct Ontario Ministry of Education program that supported teacher-led professional development. The project saw our team of eight learn about integrative thinking with guidance from the Rotman I-Think initiative. We were hoping that integrative and innovative thinking would help us with our quest to get better at inquiry-based learning. Up to that point, we had completed three TLLP projects, with no idea whether we were making any progress. Sure, we were learning, collaborating and creating. But, other than counting bodies – at one point we had 20 teachers from nine schools working together, we had no way of measuring our success. As a teacher-librarian, I wondered if I was making a difference.

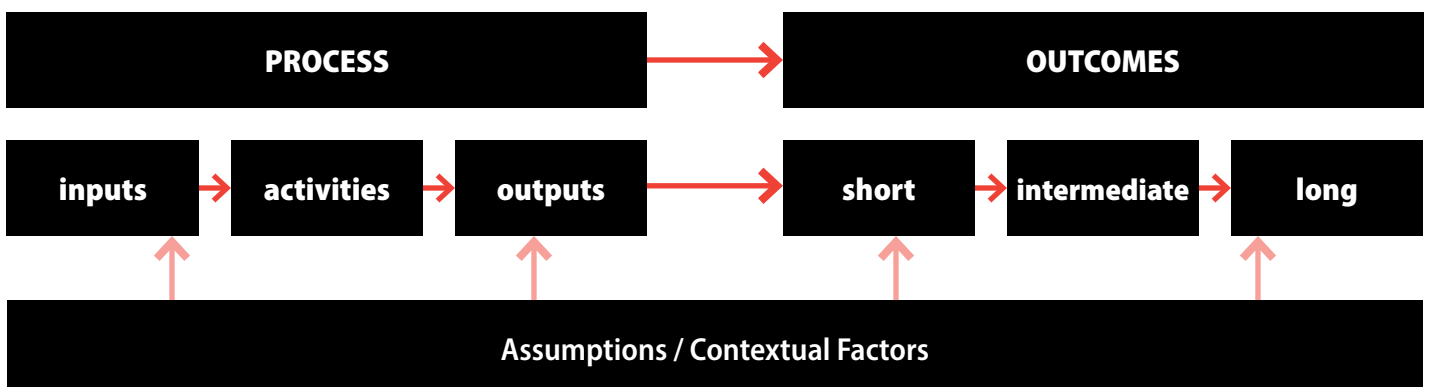
It was time to learn how to gather and analyze qualitative data. The solution was simple: write another grant proposal. We received a Provincial Knowledge Exchange Grant to help learn how and to ensure we shared our learning with others. If this was a hero's journey quest — which it is — this would be the

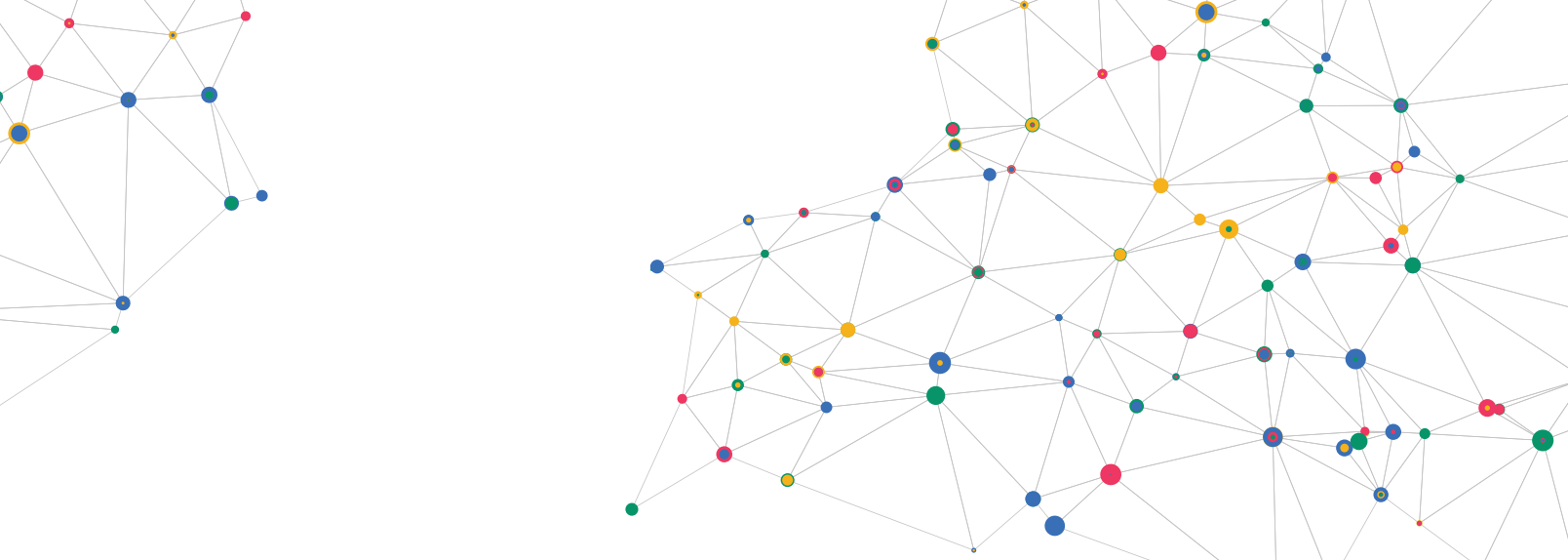
point where we crossed the threshold, with no turning back. And that's what happened. There was no turning back.

We hired an expert to work with us for the year, to teach and guide us in the mysterious ways of qualitative data. This person had the expertise to teach us everything we needed to know about organizing and gathering data that didn't involve straight-forward counting. She made PowerPoints, showed slides and even baked cookies. But we were still stuck on the organizing stage: the logic model – a graphic roadmap which helps organize the inputs, outputs and outcomes of a project. They are sophisticated tools used primarily for developing and assessing larger and more sophisticated projects than we were ready to tackle. If you search online, they are primarily used by health-related organizations. To learn more, check out the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control website for a good overview: cdc.gov/dhbsp/docs/logic_model.pdf. (Ironically, I was putting this together during the COVID-19 state of emergency.)

We couldn't get past the complexity of this logic model planning tool. We were stuck and I didn't know how to move our group forward. As I was beginning to despair, I came across a TED Talk by Giorgia Lupi, an information designer

Layout of a General Logic Model





who co-founded a data-driven research firm. She co-authored, with Stefanie Posavec, a London-based information designer, a book that captured a year-long data experiment. The pair spent the year setting weekly data-collection challenges — the number of times they looked at the clock in one week, the number of different spaces they went through in a week, etc. — capturing the results as drawings on postcards, which they mailed to each other from their homes in New York and London. At the end of the year, they collected all their drawings and published them in a beautiful book called: *Dear Data*.

This discovery was another epiphany. I learned that gathering data doesn't have to involve a complicated planning process. It can begin with a simple question with the results expressed in a drawing. This all seems obvious now with so many educators catching Sketchnote fever or using online visualization tools to display findings. But at the time — about five years ago — it was a revelation. And, suddenly, we all felt free to explore.

One colleague, Liz LeMaitre, head of Canada World Studies at my high school, embarked on a department-wide inquiry to help Grade 9 students improve their writing. She began with a survey of students that determined that they felt peer editing would help improve their writing. Consequently, they implemented a peer-editing process. Teachers collected completed writing pieces to compare with previous work and then ran focus groups with the students to find out what they thought. In the end, the students said that peer editing only worked if two students of equal ability worked together. Students not confident with their writing would be embarrassed to work with someone who had stronger skills. At the same time, strong students would see no value in having classmates with weak writing skills read their work. This valuable feedback informed future peer-editing sessions.



Developing survey questions, analyzing focus group and survey data were all skills that



BHNCDSB data research team shares learning at Reading for the Love of It.

we continued to develop as we worked through our inquiries. We learned how to identify themes in qualitative data. We also learned that it is important to go through the responses several times to see what emerges. It is time-consuming work. And it is a skill that we will continue to develop.

Sharing our new-found knowledge has not been easy. Any time we tried to put together a presentation on our findings with tips and tricks, people appeared interested but then signed up for different sessions. At a professional development day for the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board, we gave a spectacular, interactive presentation to four people, while the room next door was filled with teachers wanting to learn more about meditation.

As important as it is, learning about data is not appealing.

Undaunted, we used the last of our grant money to put together a booth for the Reading for the Love of It conference. We were the first teacher group ever to have a booth at this popular conference. We created banners, loaded thumb drives with information and distributed pamphlets and pens. It was a brief high. But when it was all over, we realized that there was more work to be done.

Just as a hero uses newfound knowledge to head on to the next quest — a teacher-librarian looks for a new inquiry to generate data showing that the school library learning commons makes a difference. ■



Need a question answered?
Just Google it.

Google has become a verb. Students google to find answers to just about anything they are curious about.

However, “just googling” is not necessarily the best way for a student to research. That is where databases come in. Although the name database may sound nerdy and boring, school boards across the country are investing heavily in educational databases that help students research.

In *Together for Learning School Libraries and the Emergence of the Learning Commons*, under ideas to consider when creating a learning commons, it suggests to “invest in e-books, databases, video-streaming and other relevant digital resources.” These digital databases are age-appropriate, current, curated and relevant, which is why students need to be familiar with them. Databases for students are much more focused on articles and scholarly books than the World Wide Web.

Katie Birch, vice-president of product management at ProQuest Information Solutions, suggests students use databases over Google because “in the era of seemingly

limitless access to information – including ‘fake news’ – it’s critical for young researchers to have access to dependable sources and critical context that the open web simply can’t match. ProQuest databases give students access to reliable, authoritative and age-appropriate content that matches their curriculum. Designed and curated with input from subject-matter experts and librarians, ProQuest databases are user-friendly and highly visual.”

Many databases include encyclopedias. Gone are the days of the door-to-door salesperson toting heavy sets of books that became out of date as soon as they were printed. Encyclopedia databases, such as Britannica School or the Canadian Encyclopaedia, are often a great place to start research. Add to that, free clip art (sites like Britannica Image Quest), free music (sites like Naxos Music Library), and students have most of the information they need to complete a project, right on their school databases.

The Ontario School Library Association’s mission statement states that it “facilitates dynamic learning experiences utilizing the best available resources, technologies, strategies and learning environments and promotes a love of reading and a sense of wonder and inquiry.” Databases lead to achieving those mission goals.

For many school boards, primary and junior students use Pebble Go or Pebble Go Next, two sites that quickly get to the facts for science projects. However, these sites are American. So, if you are looking for anything specifically on Canadian history, they will not be helpful.

Kids InfoBits by Gale is another helpful site with magazines, books and news for Kindergarten to Grade 5. As with many sites, there is an audio button available, which enables the information to be read to students. That means students should bring their earbuds or headphones with them.

At the high school level, databases become more sophisticated, providing access to everything from scholarly articles to current events. Companies, such as Gale, ProQuest or EBSCO, provide databases that can execute power searches on almost any topic.

But how do you get a high schooler to use a database versus Google? The biggest benefit is efficiency. When they become efficient using a database, students can complete their project faster. Most high schoolers appreciate that.

If used correctly, databases can make life easier. Ann Cameron, senior product manager for school and public library databases at EBSCO, says that “assignments, such as research papers or class presentations, often require students to consult a certain number of primary sources, reference books or peer-reviewed articles. The reliable, high-quality content found in EBSCO research databases is curated specifically for the market. To support school curriculum programs across all subject areas and grade levels, EBSCO’s school database content is selected for: its age and developmental appropriateness; literary merit or contribution to the field of knowledge, reputation and qualifications of the author, creator or publisher; significance, timeliness or permanence of subject matter; clarity and accuracy; and representation of diverse points of view.” This type of database is a lot more specific than Google, and will, in turn, provide more useable, accurate results for students to consider.

Lemma Shomali, director of kindergarten to Grade 12 product for Gale, said that databases can help all learners succeed. Gale notes that, “Whether it’s integration with G Suite for Education, Microsoft 365, or any number of learning management systems, easy access to our products is followed with robust content and comprehension tools, like document translation, text to speech, and highlights and notes. Our products are designed to support visual and auditory learning and have high levels of accessibility, ensuring that we meet the needs of some of the most diverse populations.” If taught how to use databases correctly, students can succinctly complete projects with accurate information while promoting critical thinking, analysis, synthesis and evaluation skills.

Databases are not cheap. So, databases available to a teacher will depend on what the school board has purchased. Each board spends library funds according to its own criteria. If your board is light on data, students also can try public libraries. Again, budgets dictate database availability. ■

Here are some examples of databases:

Primary Junior Students:

- **Book Flix:** includes an assortment of online books available to read
- **Britannica Image Quest:** images and photos available with permission for use
- **Britannica Online School Edition:** an encyclopedia with current and curated information
- **Cambridge Dictionaries online:** an online dictionary
- **The Canadian Encyclopedia:** an encyclopedia all about Canadian things
- **Kids Infobits:** includes magazines, articles, news and media for grades K-5
- **Pebble Go:** a first attempt database for young children for research – students can have the information read to them
- **Pebble Go Next:** a science and American social studies database
- **Research Context:** a GALE site, for videos, newspapers and magazines geared towards grades 6-8
- **Av2 world Languages:** ebooks by subject and reading levels in multiple languages (English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Russian, Mandarin, German, Hindi, Korean, Tagalog)
- **PowerKnowledge:** information on earth space science, physical science, life science

Intermediate and Senior Students:

- **Gale:** includes databases on almost every topic including Canadian Reference Centre, CIA World Fact Book and MacLean’s Magazine
- **EBSCO:** databases including Canadian Points of View, Canadian Reference Centre and Canadian Literary Centre
- **ProQuest:** resources include primary sources, STEM database and CultureGrams in addition to many other databases





Data on the Rise:

Finding Value Despite Diminishing Circ Stats

Kasey Whalley

Circulation stats are among the key numbers libraries share to prove their value to stakeholders. Libraries often have used collection size and circulation numbers as proof that they hold valuable resources for their patrons. So what do we do when our circulation numbers start to diminish, and our collection development becomes constrained by budgets, space and need? Collecting and analyzing different data can help library professionals validate use and continue to secure support from stakeholders and decision-makers. This becomes especially crucial in a school library learning commons as we strive to meet ever-shifting student and classroom needs. Teacher-Librarians and technicians *know* the LLC has value, we see it every day. Supporting this value by using data is a necessary challenge if we want to prove how important and impactful LLCs are to decision-makers and stakeholders. It also provides us with a unique opportunity to build a data-centric story that better reflects the work done in LLCs and further enhances understanding of school libraries.

Beyond Circulation

Circulation statistics are usually easy to collect as many integrated library systems have a standard circulation report.

Circulation stats are factual and easily understood numbers with which many decision-makers are familiar. The stats can be used in many different ways. They can be broken down by grades or dates. They can be used to illustrate the average amount of checkouts over visits, or as a snapshot of the percentage of your collection that is being used. All of these are valuable points, but LLCs have moved beyond just circulating print material. If we continue to rely on this data, even with varied analyses, we run the risk of misrepresenting our diverse programs and services. Moving away from, or expanding on, circulation stats will begin to enrich the story of what libraries are. The quantity of print material (or print and digital if you include e-book stats as well) being moved in and out of the library is an important number to know and share, but is only a small fraction of the rich data pie that you can serve to stakeholders.

Where, When, and How Should We Collect Data?

The great thing about freeing ourselves from relying solely on circulation stats means we can start to count whatever data we believe can have an impact and reflect the true nature of what we do. Think of the times when students interact with a part of the library: that is a moment to make

meaning from data. Even the simple count of how many students use your space to study during lunch periods the week before exams, or the number of class visits you have in a week can be a powerful number. Think about both complex and simple data that can help show what your library truly does for students. Start by examining what you'd like to learn more about or interesting moments when you think exploring an event could provide some insight. By expanding the type of data you collect to include different parameters, librarians and technicians can begin to have a more complete understanding of how, when and why their libraries are being used.

The important part in this process is collecting data that accurately represents your library and the impact it is having on student success. However, as we collect data, we need to be aware that we work with minors. Being diligent about scrubbing (anonymizing) and protecting any data that may provide personal or specific information about our patrons is crucial. We often want to paint a big picture of what our libraries do and how we are successful, and this can be done using data-based stories. Combining personal anecdotal stories with verifiable data means we can create a clearer picture of our impact on student success.

The Power of Qualitative Data

Counts and rates are important parts of any library story – knowing how many or how often is important to gaining a base-level understanding of your library usage. These statistics are especially useful if you've just transferred to a new library or district and you want to get a feel for how the LLC is used, who is using it, and where there may be gaps in programming, collection or services. Yet, numbers are only a part of the story. Using qualitative data – non-numerical data – can help us solidify our understanding of our impact and prove our value to stakeholders. Qualitative values can be trickier to deal with simply because they don't always fit into neat boxes. Instead of recording every time a student asks for a book, try recording the book they were looking for, if it was for a class, if another similar book would suffice (and why/not), and if they left with their first choice book or another. These data points are often part of the reference interview, and we would likely notice them in a peripheral manner, even if they aren't recorded. You also can create an open-ended survey that allows students to use their own words to describe why they came to the library and look for patterns in their responses. By recording these qualitative points, we can start to compare them to our success criteria. We can discover trends throughout our processes and use them to help build data-based stories for ourselves and our stakeholders.

Data as a Storyteller

One thing to keep in mind when looking for new data points and statistics is what kind of story we want to tell with the data we're collecting and analyzing. We talk about our libraries to other professionals, sometimes even defending the work we

do. With declining circulation stats, the story we tell needs to be supported by other data-rich statistics. Shifting the way we collect information, and the type of data we collect and analyze, means we can better explain our work and prove our worth. This shift can help us define and defend the library's role in a school, especially with constraining budgets and misunderstandings of our work. Stories are powerful tools we use to help people understand, empathize, and connect with one another. Data can help us create powerful stories that speak to our stakeholders that is reinforced by recorded and verifiable data. Our story can be expanded to include more than the books on our shelves; it can begin to illustrate the amazing and impactful work being done in LLCs across the province.

Steps to Thinking about a Data-Centric Library Story

Identify the story you want to tell

- What kind of successes do you wish to share with your stakeholders?
- How do you define your library beyond (or including) circulation?
- What types of programming or services most exemplify the work you do?

Discover the data you can collect

- On which interactions can you record numbers, rates, or qualitative data?
- Is there complex data (qualitative) and simple data (numbers) that you can record?
- When are the moments you believe data can support your programs or services?
- Have you explored other library's infographics or data displays for inspiration?

Approach data collection seriously

- Have you created specific, unbiased criteria for collecting data?
- Are all employees who will be collecting data aware of and adhering to the collection process?
- Is the data being collected verifiable and relevant?
- Are you collecting only the necessary data for your analysis?
- What protections of sensitive data are in place?

Analyze the data for relevant meaning

- What information can you garner from the data you collected?
- What assumptions are you making about the data?
- Have you looked at different ways to analyze the data?

Data as storyteller

- Is your data helping create a meaningful story about your library?
- Does the data support the anecdotal stories you tell or hear about your library?
- Can the data be used to illustrate the successes of your library?
- Is the story your data tells going to make sense or impact your stakeholders? ■



Understand Passwords to Protect Your Data

By Carlo Fusco



.....



LOGIN

Forgot [Password?](#)

You may have read headlines about crypto-malware shutting down schools and hospitals, about bank accounts being broken into using a SIM-swap or about emails warning that you have been part of a data breach.

In today's highly connected world, we rely on a mix of security and privacy protocols to protect ourselves. The problem is we don't truly understand them and sometimes we make even the strongest protections porous due to our choices. In this article, we are going to look at digital citizenship, specifically as it applies to passwords. This is not an article designed to instill fear. Instead, it is hoped to be an introduction to practices that will help you stay secure while using digital services.

As a high school teacher-librarian, I provide my students with lessons in digital citizenship. When the topic turns to safety and security, I ask them this one question: "How many of you recycle passwords?" The answer from these digital natives might surprise you. Almost all of them have two to three passwords they recycle. They often use terms such as "throw-away," "school password," and "secure password." That leads

us to exploring how vulnerable their passwords are. We use a few sites to discover if they are vulnerable.

We begin by watching the YouTube video (youtu.be/Pbn9XiTfHc8) where Adam Abramovitz's former partner logged into his account and wrote an email posing as him, turning down a \$50,000-a-year scholarship so that he wouldn't leave. Then we discuss the importance of securing online accounts.

The first site I direct them to is, "Have I Been Pwned" (haveibeenpwned.com). This site is the brainchild of Troy Hunt, a Microsoft regional director in Australia. In his own words, "I created HIBP as a free resource for anyone to quickly assess if they may have been put at risk due to an online account of theirs having been compromised or "pwned" in a data breach. I wanted to keep it dead simple to use and entirely free so that it could be of maximum benefit to the community." Currently there are about 9.5 billion compromised accounts in his free database.

I ask people to enter their email address into the search box

and determine if their personal data have been breached. When I enter my personal email address into the search, I find that I have been part of six data breaches. The leaked data include: email addresses, password hints, passwords, usernames, employers, geographic locations, job titles, names, phone numbers, social media profiles, dates of birth, genders, names, physical addresses, payment histories and website activity. Some of these are from sites I would have thought were secure, such as Adobe and Dropbox. As you can see, the data collected while interacting with websites can be quite extensive. The two that concern me the most are usernames and passwords. That information can end up in a hacker's database of username/password combinations to target high value sites, such as your bank account. If you have recycled a password, this could be quite devastating to your online security.

I ask students to determine how unique their passwords are using the same site (haveibeenpwned.com/Passwords). Using the password section of Have I Been Pwned, I have them enter their password to determine how many times it has been used. As a reference, here are the top 10 passwords from 2019:

1. 123456
2. 123456789
3. qwerty
4. password
5. 1234567
6. 12345678
7. 12345
8. Iloveyou
9. 111111
10. 123123

When I checked one of my passwords, I found out that it was used 167,967 times in the 9.5 billion breached accounts. This high number means the password is likely included in a hacker database of passwords to try when breaking into an account. The way to prevent this is to have a strong, unique password for all your accounts.

To test the concept of strength, I ask people to consider the concept of password haystacks. For example, if someone wanted to use a brute force attack to break into your account, they would try every possible alpha numeric combination. For example, try 1 = 0, try 2 = 1, try 10,000 = 9999, which means there are only 10,000 combinations for a four-digit pin code. If you want to add complexity, you could add letters and symbols. To illustrate this, I use the GRC Password Haystack page to calculate the length of time to brute force a password (grc.com/haystack.htm). The example I show, the password "123456" can be broken in 18.5 minutes in an online attack.

However, by adding letters, capitalization, and symbols, the password "a123*456A" would take 2.03 hundred thousand centuries to brute force break. To be really secure, the password should be random and not follow patterns. For

example, the password, "\$bVsrNf5u\$%k" would take 1.74 hundred billion centuries, and even spy agencies with their super computers would take 1.74 centuries to crack the password.

Now that you have decided to use strong and unique passwords, the new problem is they are hard to remember. There has been a recent influx of password managers available on computers and mobile devices. Over the past 10 years, I have been using LastPass due to its security and commitment to privacy. Recently the company has been purchased and I don't have the same confidence in the new owners. That is why I have switched to BitWarden (bitwarden.com). The software is multiplatform (computer and mobile), free, secure, and committed to privacy. Since the software is Open Source, it has had researchers check the code and they have even had their software audited for privacy and security. It was easy to move to BitWarden from LastPass using their online tutorials.

Some of you might be asking why would you trust a password manager? If someone broke your master password, they would have all your passwords. My answer is simple, make the master password long and difficult to guess. For example, maybe you remember a favourite uncle's telephone number, 555-456-7890 and your moms initials are BG. Add the principles of haystacks to it and you can generate a very difficult to break password that is easy for you to remember. For example, "!!BG555**456**7890bg&&" would take 10.40 million trillion trillion centuries to break using an online attack. Using the password manager, a very strong memorable password can be used to secure your passwords. Then you could use random, unrememberable passwords to secure all your online accounts. As an added bonus, most password managers will auto fill the login screen for you, so you never have to type in these challenging passwords.

Now that you have committed to strong, unique, random passwords that are stored in a secure password manager, how do you protect yourself from new breaches? If you are a Google Chrome user, add the Chrome Password Checkup Extension (chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/password-checkup-extension/pncabnpceffmalkkjpajodfhijclecjno). This extension will compare your login information to breach databases and let you know if your personal information has leaked.

If you are a Firefox user, the Have I Been Pwned database is built in. Sign up under the options menu, select Privacy Protections > Firefox Monitor and sign up to have Firefox send you an email whenever your information shows up in a data breach. You can also sign up directly on the Have I Been Pwned website.

I hope all of you take the time to check if your login information has leaked. If it has, take the time to create a password that is long, random and unique. You also should consider a password manager to help you remember them. ■

Open Data for Your Library

Data are extraordinary tools that can help deepen meaning to social, geographical, and political topics.

Integrating open data into collaborative assignments in a variety of subjects can help support curriculum. Incorporating data doesn't have to be relegated to the math and science departments. Data can help students understand their place in the world, and can be used in engaging student agency and inquiry. Using open data sources allows library professionals and teachers to involve students in a data-literacy program that focuses on critical thinking and discovery. This article is just a starting point for introducing, understanding, and using open data sources.

What is Open Data?

Open data are usually characterized by data sets, information, and/or statistics that are freely available for anyone to use. Data collected for research purposes can be made open by agreements or Creative Commons copyright licenses, but some data are protected by intellectual property rights. Many organizations and some governments have moved to create open data banks. This information is always scrubbed of any personal and/or identifying information and is often presented in a way that can be easily manipulated. In some cases, "open data" can refer to repositories that provide open access to data sets and corresponding research papers.

How Can You Use Open Data?

The wonderful thing about open data sets is that the information can be used in a variety of ways. Open data portals often come with a general search function that provides access to sets that can be displayed in an assortment of formats. These files can contain information in numerical, textual, or a combination format. Taking a dive into some of the portals will allow library professionals to understand what kind of data are available and give them the opportunity to make curriculum connections. An excellent place to start would be to check if your city (or a major city nearby) has an open data policy and searchable data sets. These sets are perfect for understanding or discovering something about your city.

Where Can You Find Open Data?

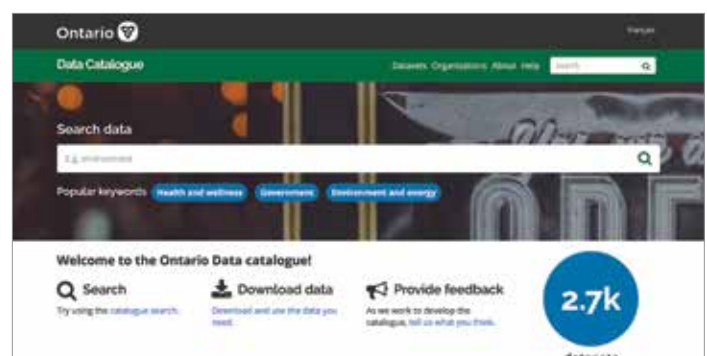
Toronto Public Libraries Open Data: opendata.tpl.ca



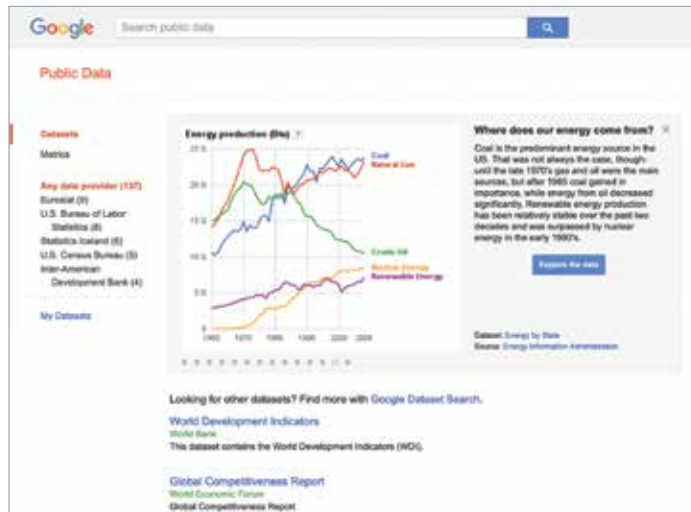
City of Toronto: open.toronto.ca (most major cities will have an open data policy and portal)



Province of Ontario: data.ontario.ca



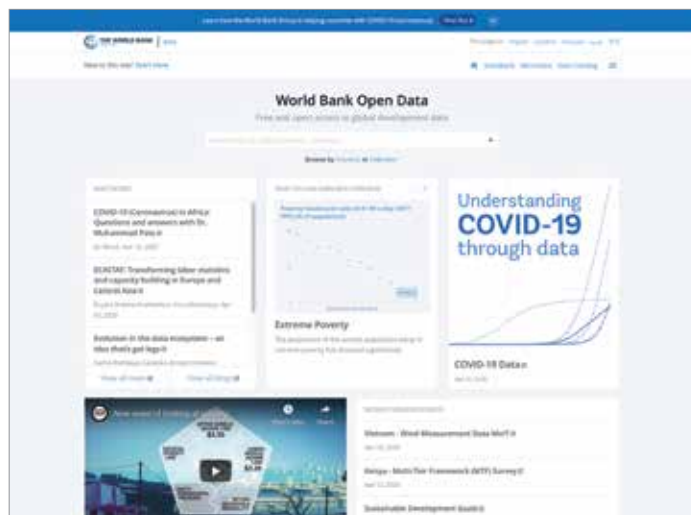
Google Public Data: google.com/publicdata/directory



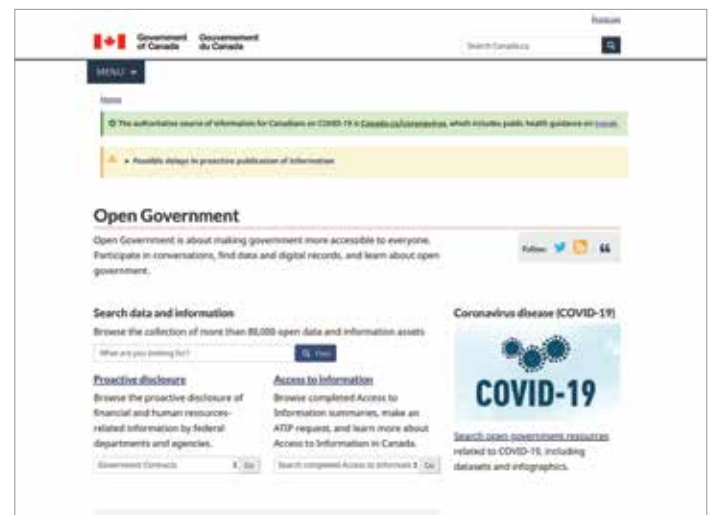
House of Commons Canada: ourcommons.ca/en/open-data



World Bank: data.worldbank.org



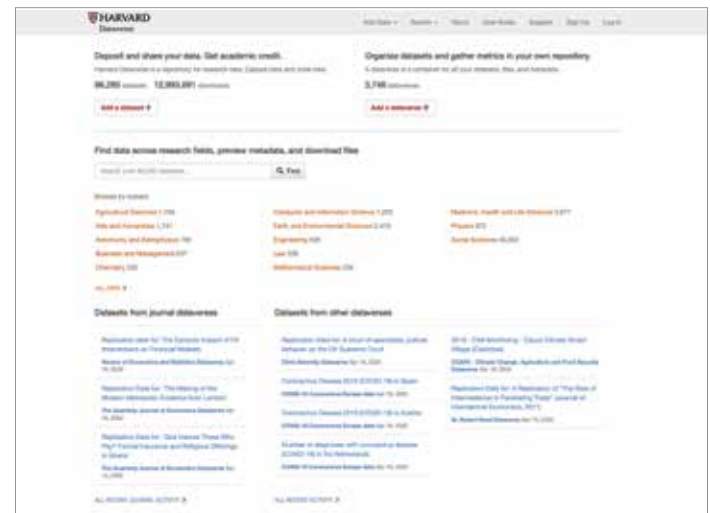
Government of Canada: open.canada.ca



World Health Organization (WHO): who.int/data/gho



Harvard Dataverse: dataverse.harvard.edu (many major universities have an open data policy)



Caroline Freibauer

Buenos Aires Librarian Gathers Data on Canadian School Libraries

Walquiria Salinas is so passionate about school libraries that she used her vacation to learn more about them.

Salinas, the director of The Teacher's Library, which supports 620 school libraries in Buenos Aires, Argentina, travelled to Canada in January. She was on a mission to investigate library information systems (LIS) in the hopes that she would find something to replace the antiquated one running at her centre.

She spent nearly two weeks in Ontario, hosted at the home of Alanna King, recent winner of the Canadian School Libraries' Angela Thacker Memorial Award for making contributions to the profession. During that time, Salinas attended the Ontario Library Association Super Conference, participated in the Treasure Mountain Canada Research Symposium and Think Tank, toured both public and school libraries with Anita Brooks Kirkland, chair of CLS, and was featured in an article for the Upper Grand District School Board.

As for finding an LIS, Salinas said any possible solutions she encountered in Canada would not be embraced by the Ministry of Education in the City of Buenos Aires where "corruption reigns."

She says "it would be like trying to explain Darwin's theory to a religious person. We would never reach an agreement."



But she did bring home many memories of her visit to Canada, a country she has long wanted to explore to test her theory that libraries in cold-weather countries play an important role in communities where people spend a good part of the year indoors.

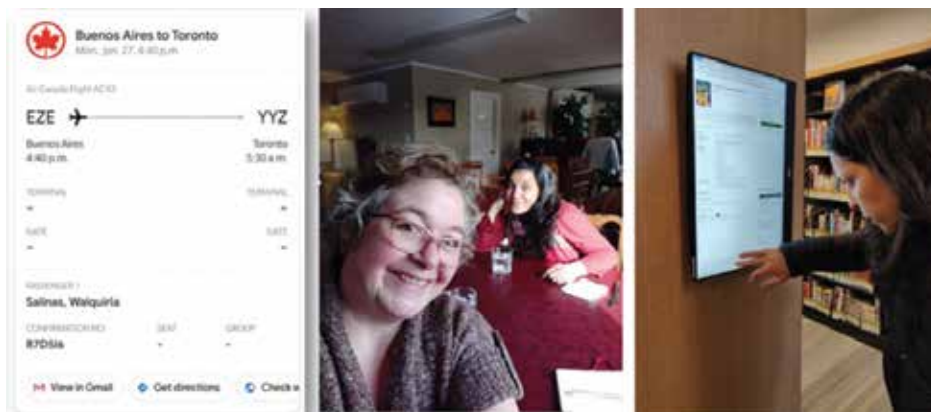
"What I remember most is the camaraderie of the people, how polite they are and how careful they are with norms and customs," Salinas writes in an email after her trip. "What I saw in Canada is an educated society that thinks primarily of the common good."

Salinas studied to be a librarian and ended up working in the central library, which supports all educational libraries in Buenos Aires. About four years ago, she became the director,

a challenging job with a staff of only 12 – some library science specialists and some teachers – to support school libraries for a population of three million people.

Part of her job includes looking after a specialized collection of education curriculum resources dating back to the 1880s. This collection of more than 10,000 items was donated by the estate of Dr. Antonio Cafiero, a former governor of Buenos Aires. She has worked hard to preserve these books and other materials, searching for grants to have as much of it digitized as possible. She hopes that educators can learn from these resources to prevent the "mistakes of history."

Meanwhile, people in Buenos Aires



Walquiria Salinas stayed with Alanna King during her visit to Canada to explore school and public libraries. (Image courtesy of Alanna King and Canadian School Libraries Journal.)



have spontaneously donated related material – student notebooks and assignments – which Salinas hopes to curate as another collection. Asked if this collection holds a special place in her heart, Salinas is careful with her response.

“Everything in the library is passion. I love these books, but it is my work, too.”

Salinas met King in Buenos Aires at a UNESCO-sponsored conference, at which each gave a presentation on ways to improve technical fluency through school libraries. Kindred spirits, they became fast friends and it was only natural that Salinas would make the trip to Canada. Loading the visit with planned conferences, meetings and sight-seeing, King ensured that not a moment was wasted. Salinas met many professionals in Canada

through various networks and hopes to continue the connection. “Alanna King became more than just a colleague. I can say that she and her beautiful family are great friends.”

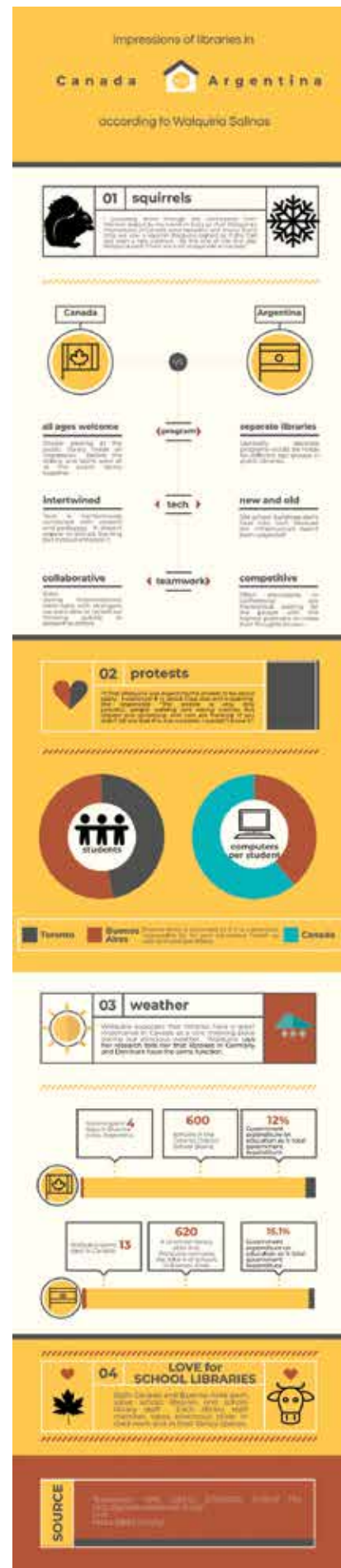
Plans for the future include collaborating with King on podcasts to amplify the work happening in school libraries and perhaps arranging a work placement in Canada.

In the end, Salinas discovered that school libraries in Canada may have a little bigger budget and more technology than would be found in Argentina “but, in essence, teachers are passionate, just like here. Students have their problems, just like here. And the educational community has its strengths and weaknesses, just like here.

“But, with the good and the bad, everyone wants to get ahead. In Argentina and Canada, teachers, librarians, principals and all who work in a school, never forget that the important thing is the students.

“They are our north.” ■

For a more detailed account of Walquiria Salinas’ trip to Canada, see Alanna King’s article “Walquiria’s Impressions: Buenos Aires Comes to Canada” published in the *Canadian School Libraries Journal*: journal.canadianschoollibraries.ca/walquirias-impressions-buenos-aires-comes-to-canada.



AWARD PRESENTATIONS

CAROLINE FREIBAUER

After taking a moment to collect himself – “we cry a lot at our school,” Tim Pedersen, principal of Castle Oaks Public School in Brampton, thanked a crowded room of mostly Ontario School Library Association members for his Administrator of the Year award by telling a series of stories.

Known for bringing a picture book to every assembly and public meeting, Pederson began by sharing an anecdote from Patricia Polacco’s *Thank You Mr. Falker*. In this picture book, the family gathers around the book and the grandmother pours honey on it.

The grandfather asks his granddaughter how it tastes.

“Sweet,” she replies.

“And so is knowledge,” the grandparents tell her in Pedersen’s retelling of the story. “But it is like the bee who made that honey. You must chase it through the pages of the book.”

Pedersen said he loves the image of the family together, encouraging reading. In his family, his earliest memories include his mother reading aloud to him and his brother. His father, who was only 16 when he left school, was a lifelong learner, always reading.

In elementary school, Pedersen relied on school libraries to feed his huge appetite for books. In high school, the school library was a refuge, a place that seemed created by staff to help him feel good as he grappled with his mother’s death and his sexuality. Later, when he became a teacher, the school library was a place of profound collaboration where he was able to work with several “amazing” teacher-librarians.

“Now, as an administrator, I continue to see how the school library learning commons has evolved over the years, from that place where there were all those books to sign out, to such a place of inquiry, innovation, a place where all students can see themselves reflected in the materials in front of them,” Pedersen said during the OSLA annual meeting in January at the OLA Super Conference.

Before reading aloud from Sarah Bosak’s picture book *Dream*, Pedersen left all the teacher-librarians with a piece of advice.



Lisa Noble (left) presents the OLA Media and Communications Award to Stephen Hurley of VoiceEd Radio along with award sponsor James Saunders of Saunders Book Company and fellow nominator Beth Lyons.

“Keep training your administrators,” he said. “Let them know what you need and why it is good for schools, good for kids and good for the community. That’s crucial. We need that advocacy from you.”

Also, at the annual meeting, Heather Stoness received the Teacher of the Year award and Stephen Hurley of VoiceEd Radio was honoured with the OLA Media and Communications award. Tim Boudreau received the OLITA Technology Advancing Libraries Award at a separate meeting.

Stoness, a part-time teacher-librarian and Grade 7 math teacher at Emily Carr Elementary School in the Halton District School Board, said the award isn’t just about the work she did as a part-time library coach or her teaching in the library learning commons at her school of 850 students.

“It is humbling and uplifting but at the same time it is an award, not just about me, but an award about the people I work with and what they allow me to do because without them I wouldn’t be able to take the risks,” she told Hurley in a VoiceEd interview at Super Conference. “They allow me to try new things out – whether I succeed or fail in the LLC



Teacher Laura Badovinac (left) presents the OSLA Administrator of the Year Award to her principal Tim Pedersen, of Castle Oaks Public School in the Peel District School Board, with award sponsor James Saunders of Saunders Book Company and fellow nominator Jenn Brown, teacher librarian at Castle Oaks.



Kelly Gray, of the Halton District School Board, presents the OSLA Teacher Librarian of the Year Award to Heather Stoness with award sponsor James Saunders of Saunders Book Company and fellow nominator Lillian Boast, also from HDSB.

– they continue the things that I teach in my space back in the classroom so that I can innovate and change and do new things for the next year.”

At Emily Carr, Stoness has worked to create a culture where the classroom extends into the LLC. “Some of the biggest changes over time have not been about the core curriculum but about those global competencies and how we are building kids to become life-long learners as well as successful members of the workforce,” Stoness said.

For teacher-librarians “the end game is really looking at that collaboration and co-teaching piece,” she said. “And the value of having two educators in the same room in one class and how that really raises the bar for the education that we can provide our kids.”

Having his own radio station has been a lifelong dream for Hurley, the man behind VoiceEd Radio, ever since an elementary school teacher gave him a cassette recorder and a record player and told him to create. But like the traveller in Robert Frost’s poem, “A Road Not Taken” – a poem he found in the first book he signed out of his elementary school library

that became a favourite – he wanted to take two roads at the same time. In the end, he didn’t pursue a career in radio but instead went to university to study first philosophy and then theology, before embarking on a 30-year career in education.

It was another book, *The Age of Discovery* by Ian Goldin and Chris Kutarna, which spurred him to act on his dream. From this book, Hurley was seized by the notion that in a Renaissance, the artist can become the audience and the audience can become the artist through the use of technology. By the end of that day, he owned a radio stream.

“Three years ago tonight we went on the air for the first time,” he said at the OSLA annual meeting. “Now it is a place of convergence, bringing voices together.”

Hurley shared the honour with everyone in the room, saying VoiceEd Radio is our space and this is our award.

“If we are going to change the way we do education we are going to have to change the way we talk about education,” he said. “Thank you on behalf of the entire VoiceEd radio community, past, present and future.” ■

12th Annual Telling Tales[®] Festival

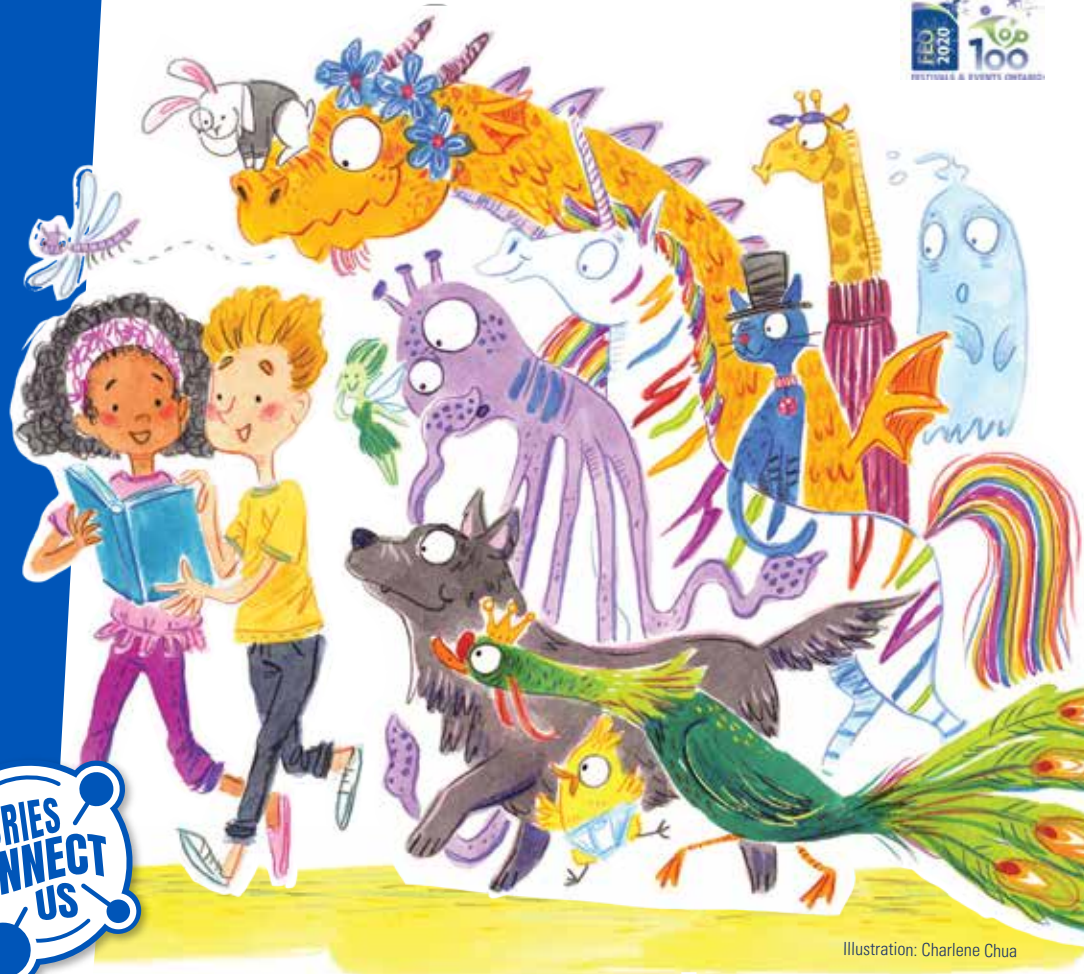


Illustration: Charlene Chua



Telling Tales MAIN EVENT



Sunday, September 20th, 10am-4pm
Westfield Heritage Village,
Rockton
 Parking at Rockton Fair Grounds

FESTIVAL HEADLINERS

Aaron Bell and the White Pine Dancers,
 Jonathan Auxier, Kenneth Oppel, Kevin
 Sylvester, Monique Gray Smith, Ruth Ohi
 & Ted Staunton

Nature Tales

Presented by

Dan Lawrie
 International
 Sculpture
 Collection



Sunday, October 4th,
10am-4pm
Royal Botanical Gardens, Burlington
 Sign up for this event on Eventbrite

Celebrating Graphic Novels

We're taking it online
 for 2020

Stay tuned for details
 on our website

Over 50 of Canada's Leading Children's Authors, Illustrators, Storytellers and Musicians
 Meet Literary Characters, Explore, Activities, Contests and More • **FREE ADMISSION**
Meet your favourite authors at our Forest of Reading Stage

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