

ManACE Journal

Manitoba Association for Computing Educators

*“Promoting the use of Instructional Technology
at all levels of Education”*

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Volume 27 Issue 2
Spring 2007 – 2008

ManACE Honours Manitoba Educators

At last year’s Annual General Meeting in June, two Manitobans received awards recognizing their service to ManACE.

The Award for **Educator of the Year**, in recognition of exemplary use of Technology in Education, was presented to **John Evans**, then teaching principal of St. François Xavier School. John is highly regarded as a leader in technology integration, not only in his Division but throughout the province. He is well-known for his expertise and experience with Web 2.0 tools. In addition, he provides opportunities for others to learn through his workshops and online publications. He continues to broaden his own perspectives through involvement in conferences, online

discussions and university courses. John is now employed as a consultant with Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, where he continues to share his vision for the role of technology in teaching and learning.

The **Honourary Life Membership in ManACE** was presented to **Norm Lee**, Coordinator of the Manitoba Network for Science and Technology (MindSet), in recognition of a lifetime of contributions to the use of Technology in Education. Norm is a retired teacher who continues to support the work of ManACE through collaboration on programs such as the Microsoft training sessions for teachers, the MindSet/ManACE Summer Institutes and the Digitized Conference, to name only a

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BYTE 2008 – 21st Century Learning

On February 29th K-12 educators from around Manitoba gathered for the *Fourth Annual BYTE Conference*. The conference is hosted annually by the CECM member school divisions from the southwest region, in partnership with MECY and MERLIN.

We have witnessed the growth of BYTE conference participation to almost 400 educators participating this year. We especially would like to thank the more than 40 presenters, whose willingness to share their experiences and expertise makes the conference a success every

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ManACE Officer and Directors 2007 – 2008

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President's Message

A voice of reason from the past.

I had the privilege of attending a course taught by Dr. Denis Hlynka at the University of Manitoba, and one of the topics he introduced to the class was the work of Marshall McLuhan. Manitoba can claim McLuhan as one of our own as he completed his Bachelor of Arts in 1932 at the University of Manitoba. He taught in numerous universities including Wisconsin, St. Louis, Windsor, and Toronto. In 1963, the University of Toronto appointed McLuhan to create a new Centre for Culture and Technology, to study the psychic and social consequences of technologies and media. McLuhan was inducted as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1964.

It is fascinating how Marshall McLuhan taught much about technology and media decades prior to the advent of the Internet. He seemed to predict where society was heading with technology, and advocated sound judgement and critical thinking skills in our fast paced, media-rich environment. One of his great contributions is his creation of the Laws of Media. Even though he developed these laws decades ago, they ring true today and provide educators with a useful guide to consider when using technology.

These laws of media essentially say that all media and new forms of technology follow four universal laws. These laws occur concurrently, without exception, and include all technologies throughout human history. All media and technology perform four actions: improve, reverse, retrieve, and obsolesce. Here are these four actions in specific detail:

Improve: All new media improve, enhance, make possible, or accelerate.

Reverse: When pushed to its limits, the new form will reverse what were its original characteristics.

Retrieve: An earlier action or service is brought back into play by the new form. An older, previously obsolesced ground is brought back and

becomes an essential part of the new form.

Obsolesce: The new media will push aside or make obsolete a current or older medium.

Here is an example. A laptop computer follows these four rules perfectly. Firstly, it improves portability of computing, allowing use in a way previously unattainable by desktop computers. A laptop also reverses its original purpose. It is intended to make work easier, but it ends up making work more difficult by “leashing” us to our work outside of conventional office hours. A laptop also retrieves an old technology: radio signals. By radio signals, I am referring to wireless internet (WiFi) which is the use of high frequency radio signals to transmit and receive data. Finally, a laptop obsolesces desktop towers and wired Internet connection. These four laws of media can be applied to any new medium, whether the medium is a SMART board, blog, wiki, or even FaceBook.

Why are these laws important to educators? Firstly, it is important to note that no new technology escapes all or any of the four laws. This means that there is no “perfect” form of technology. All new technologies bring both positives and negatives. This is important for both proponents of technological innovation in education, as well as educators who are apprehensive or reluctant about using new technologies.

Proponents of new technologies may “jump on the bandwagon” and quickly use new technologies, innovative gadgets, or dazzling new online tools, without fully realizing the downsides that come with these technologies. McLuhan’s laws suggest the importance of reflection and analysis when using new technologies. Be aware of the improvements new technologies bring, but also be aware of what they take away. And, be very aware of technology’s reversal effect: Any and all new technology will eventually reverse its original characteristics, essentially doing the opposite of what it was intended to do.

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President's Message

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These new technologies always follow universal laws and principles which can guide us in using them effectively. We are in control. We can choose when and how we use these technologies to meet our needs.

This control gives us the power to use new technologies to improve our learning

The four laws of media are also important to resisters of change, who may be apprehensive about using new technologies. For teachers who are waiting for the perfect software, computer, or gadget that will not have any downsides, McLuhan's laws tell us that perfect technology never has, and never will, exist. All technologies are flawed in some way. We have to recognize the flaws, but appreciate the improvements and benefits they also bring.

It is fascinating to me how McLuhan's teachings from the 1960's and 1970's are so relevant in today's modern age of instant access to information and digital media. For me, McLuhan's teachings provide a message of hope: New technologies have always affected human kind in both positive and negative ways. These new technologies always follow universal laws and principles which can guide us in using them effectively. We are in control. We can choose when and how we use these technologies to meet our needs. This control gives us the power to use new technologies to improve our learning,

strengthen our relationships, and positively affect our environment.

And, of course, we have the power to turn off the technology when we don't need it. Now I'm going to turn off my laptop and read a good book. Books... it's funny how reading text on my computer screen all day makes me want to shut it off and read a good book. Isn't that one of McLuhan's laws? Interesting..

If you want to find out more about Marshall McLuhan, I highly recommend the movie "McLuhan's Wake" available from the National Film Board:

<http://www.nfb.ca/collection/films/fiche/?id=51036>

Also, I found the following websites very fascinating reads about Marshall McLuhan's teachings:

His official website:

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

The Horton High School Website's section about Marshall McLuhan:

<http://www.horton.ednet.ns.ca/staff/scottbennett/media/>

Media-studies.ca:

<http://www.media-studies.ca/articles/mcluhan.htm>

Roland Buduhan – ManACE President

ManACE Honours Manitoba Educators

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few. He has been instrumental in encouraging Manitoba educators to participate in the Microsoft Innovative Teachers program. We can find no better partner in ensuring that Manitoba's students are technology-savvy. The ManACE Board and membership

salutes these exemplary Manitoba educators and thanks them for their excellent work. Congratulations to them both.

BYTE 2008 – 21st Century Learning

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year. The mix of 40 minute presentations and hands-on sessions at the **Build Your Teaching Experience (BYTE)** conference support the implementation and application of **Literacy with Information & Communication Technology(LwICT)**.

Many presenters and participants commented on, how in his opening keynote, Brian Metcalf set the stage for the day by outlining the “changes”, “challenges”, and “predICTions” that educators are presented with through the application of LwICT. Brian wrapped up his keynote with “*Never forget...ICT also stands for Innovative Caring Teachers.*” (a summary of Brian’s

presentation is published below in this journal).

I have been pleased to be the chairperson of BYTE for the past 3 years. However, the credit goes to all the members of the organizing committee who give volumes of their time to make the event happen each year. Also, special thanks to the Rolling River School Division, and staff of Minnedosa Collegiate and Tanners Crossing School, for making their facilities available to us!

See you all at BYTE in February of 2009 – our 5th year!

Howard Griffith
BYTE Conference Chairperson

2020 Vision: Changes, Challenges & PredICTions

Keynote: BYTE Conference 2008



Brian Metcalfe

The following article highlights aspects from a keynote speech delivered to approximately 400 educators at this year’s BYTE (Build Your Teaching Experience) Conference held in Minnedosa on February 29, 2008.

2020 Vision:

The title of the keynote was “2020 Vision: Changes, Challenges and PredICTions”. The number 2020, not only represents perfect vision, it also will be the year of grade 12 graduation for children now in Kindergarten. The last word in the title purposely incorporated the three letter acronym “ICT” to help remind the audience that ICT or the Information and Communication Technology continuum is the key to better prepare students and teachers for the dramatic changes that will occur

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2020 Vision: Changes, Challenges & PredICTions Keynote: BYTE Conference 2008

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in the world and education by the year 2020. To begin to appreciate these changes, and to help you focus in a new direction, I encourage you to view the videos “When I grow up”¹ and the trilogy of Fischbowl Presentations² found in the bibliography at the end of this article.

The three sections of this keynote will be Changes, Challenges and PredICTions. In order to examine, the “Changes” portion, one must approach this educational journey with an open mind. After all, it is a well-known fact that “Minds are like parachutes ... they work best when they are open”.

The Changes:

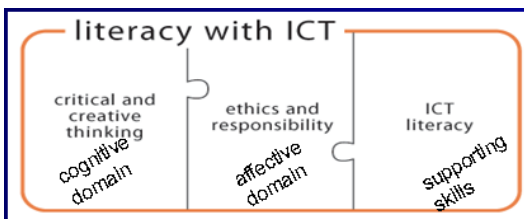
“For the first time in history, our job as educators is to prepare our students for a future that we cannot clearly describe.”³ However, we do know that communication, collaboration, problem solving, and learning how to learn will be critical to any student’s success. Each of these components is an integral part of “Literacy with ICT”.

How might one define “Literacy with ICT”? To gain a better perspective and to acquire valuable

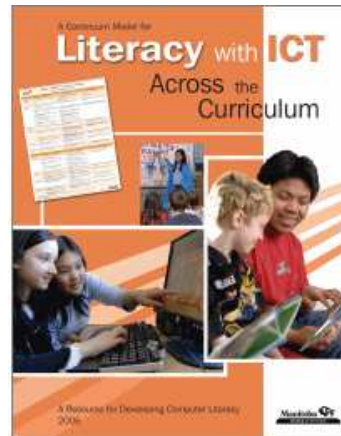
resources to implement this provincial-wide endeavour, one should visit the “Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum” web site.⁴ Here, it is

stated that “Literacy with ICT means choosing and using ICT, responsibly and ethically, to support critical and creative thinking about information and about communication as citizens of the global community. Literacy with ICT consists of critical and creative thinking, ethics and responsibility, and ICT literacy.”⁴

Educators today are faced with increased pressure from the adoption of new curricula together with new responsibilities and expectations. With the introduction of Literacy with ICT, all teachers are now expected to be “teachers of technology”.



Currently, school divisions are in the second year of a three year phase-in



process. However, if you, as a K-8 educator, are unfamiliar with aspects of Literacy with ICT, I urge you to investigate the related web resources in

the bibliography because during next year K-8 educators must utilize the Literacy with ICT Developmental Continuum and report to parents on Literacy with ICT.

Begin by acquiring a copy of this “Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum” booklet which is available for download in PDF format.⁵ In addition, I recommend that you go on-line, investigate, and print out the “Literacy with ICT Developmental Continuum” and its “Student-Friendly” version.⁶ These extensive resources will introduce you to the nine “Big Ideas” of Literacy with ICT and help you explain the continuum to both students and parents.

In particular, the “Literacy with ICT Learning Resources”⁷ web page should be investigated if you are unsure where to begin. This collection of Literacy with ICT lesson plans for grades K-8, in each of the four core subjects of ELA, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, can be very informative. Upon reviewing this resource, teachers soon realize that with a little “tweaking” they can modify many existing lessons/activities to engage their students in some aspect of Literacy with ICT. Undoubtedly, students engaged in

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2020 Vision: Changes, Challenges & Predictions

Keynote: BYTE Conference 2008

Literacy with ICT are on a life-long journey which not only will bring about changes in K-8 teaching but will, in time, impact on Grades 9-12 education as well.

The Challenges:

Educators today are faced with increased pressure from the adoption of new curricula together with new responsibilities and expectations. With the introduction of Literacy with ICT, all teachers are now expected to be "teachers of technology". Undoubtedly, such change is going to have an impact on educators. In fact, some teachers will identify quite clearly with the individual in the video entitled "Funny Teacher Rant".⁸ However, I believe that if we maintain our humor, it will help us to persevere.

To survive, educators need: to utilize technology effectively; to find each other and mentors; to join groups and collaborate; to share resources; to have access to information; to be able to conference; and to reflect on the use of such information. How can educators do all this in an efficient way?

Teachers need to learn and expose their students to an application that is, "dividend-rich." They need to network and share resources with other teachers in their school, their division, or around the world through blogging and the use of social bookmarking.

I believe a "dividend-rich" application is one that can be effectively used by early, middle, and senior students, in a multitude of subject areas, to meet many of the Literacy with ICT descriptors. In addition, certain applications are "dividend-rich" because

they provide so much more payback and interest for the initial investment of time expended to learn how to use them effectively with students.

For me, digital storytelling is a "dividend-rich" application. Simply put, the process involves assembling digital images into a timeline, adding narration, background music, and special effects to create a movie which tells a story. Using Apple's iMovie or Microsoft Photo Story 3 freeware, students can apply the "Big Ideas" of Literacy with ICT to create digital stories which "use today's technology to tell yesterday's stories for tomorrow's generations".⁹

Those interested in exploring digital storytelling are encouraged to examine the related series of references that are included in the bibliography.¹⁰ I have identified three different digital stories that were created by Grade 4-6 students in the Winnipeg School Division¹¹. The first one entitled "Oma's Journey" is more than an impersonal documentary on the immigration process to Canada. Rather, the story comes alive as the Grade 6 student tells a story through her grandmother's eyes. The "Gerbil Fur Traders" and "Science Fair - The Movie" trilogy demonstrate how every child in a Grade 4-6 multi-age classroom became involved in some aspect of creating the digital storytelling movie. Not only, were all students involved, the classroom pets, be they gerbils or white rats, also starred in the productions.

In addition to utilizing a "dividend-rich" application, it is imperative that teachers today learn to take advantage of the networking that is available through technology. One such area is

Teachers need to learn and expose their students to an application that is, "dividend-rich." They need to network and share resources with other teachers in their school, their division, or around the world

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blogs. These, online diaries can be doors to the rest of the world. I am not suggesting that you necessarily design your own blog. Rather, begin by examining other educational blog sites to gain ideas and resources which you can capitalize upon. It is said that your "friends are your filters". To help get you started, the bibliography lists both Manitoba educational bloggers¹², as well as, respected educational blog sites worldwide.¹³

Using an aggregator, such as "Bloglines"¹⁴, reduces the time and effort needed to regularly check websites for updates. While you sleep, new information from the blog sites, to which you subscribe, is automatically transferred to your information space or "personal newspaper".

The question is often asked, "How do I find time to go and visit all these educational blog sites?" Most teachers today don't have a research team working for them ... but they could, by taking advantage of some new web applications. In the older World Wide Web (Web 1.0) process, one had to visit websites and blogs to gain new ideas. Today, with the Web 2.0 format, information is automatically sent to those people who subscribe through RSS feeds. Using an aggregator, such as "Bloglines"¹⁴, reduces the time and effort needed to regularly check websites for updates. While you sleep, new information from the blog sites, to which you subscribe, is automatically transferred to your information space or "personal newspaper". To understand this process better, readers are encouraged to go on-line and view the free Common Craft series of videos.¹⁴ These "plain English (and French)" short videos provide an excellent overview and explain concepts like RSS and Blogs extremely well.

Social bookmarking, another Web 2.0 process, is a very important learning tool for students and teachers. Rather than saving "bookmarks" to your local computer where only you have access,

one can save your "favorites" to the web where they can be shared by like-minded individuals. Imagine the leverage that can be generated through social bookmarking by several Grade 5 educators looking for relevant web sites to help their students learn about the Aboriginal culture. Once again, readers are encouraged to view the "Social Bookmarking in Plain English" Common Craft video¹⁵ to gain an excellent overview of this powerful process.

The PredICTIONS:

With the dramatic changes that technology has brought to the world and the classroom, learners in the 21st century are going to ask the following five questions?³

- What does it mean to be a global citizen?
- How do I communicate effectively?
- How can I be safe?
- How do I know the information is true?; and most importantly
- How do I learn best?

Tom Friedman, author of "The World is Flat"¹⁶, states that when growing up, his parents used to say ... "Eat all your supper. There are people in China and India, who are hungry". Now he tells his girls ... "Do all your homework. There are people in China and India who are hungry for your jobs!" True, students of the future will be competing even more in a global environment and need to better understand the vast implications of such a shift.

Teachers must deal with Internet safety issues and the willingness of many of today's youth to reveal too much about their private lives on Facebook, MySpace, and other social networking sites. Such discussions are a natural fit into the Literacy with ICT Affective Domain "Big

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Ideas” of “Ethics and Responsibility” and “Social Implications”.

Without a doubt, students will need to learn how to find information and determine its usefulness and its accuracy, and utilize it effectively. Students must be taught how to compare and validate information they find on the Internet. Is the author an authority? When was the website created/updated and when was the data collected? Can the information be verified in a reputable print source? Does the website have biases which try to persuade rather than inform? These are questions that all students must face as they work through the Literacy with ICT “Gather and Make Sense” descriptors.

I believe we need to promote the “**tech**” in “**teacher**”. By that, I mean, teachers need to be more willing to risk-take **with** their students as they foster communication, collaboration, and problem solving in a global learning community. We need to learn in “small bites” as we learn to embrace Literacy with ICT. Teachers, need to say the “three little words” more often when dealing with students. You cannot be an expert in all aspects of technology. Learn to say, “I don’t know.” By claiming ignorance and asking your students for help, you empower them and take the stress off yourself.

It has been stated that “a **PICTure** is worth a thousand words.” I predict that teachers and students will be utilizing/downloading an increased number of pictures and the “just in time”, educational videos.¹⁷ These short videos are excellent resources that educators can use to enhance their

traditional classroom teaching. Furthermore, students can review these videos on their own to gain perspectives and improve their own learning.

I predict that teachers and students, looking for images to enhance learning projects, will begin utilizing the “Creative Commons.ca” web site.¹⁸ This resource provides access to a vast quantity of real pictures. For example, a class of students is studying “animal adaptations” and is using the Literacy with ICT process. Students are working through the “Produce to Show Understanding” “Big Idea”, as they create electronic products to show evidence of their learning. Why would you want your students to include cartoon-like graphics of a beluga whale, monarch butterfly, or polar bear? Rather, use the Creative Commons.ca website to download real life pictures in a variety of image sizes and, more importantly, learn about the licensing process of utilizing these pictures as part of the “Ethics and Responsibility” “Big Idea”.

As Literacy with ICT infusion into the classroom takes place and students are included in more team projects where they determine how they can best “Produce to Show Understanding”, “Communicate”, and “Reflect”, opportunities will present themselves to help all students gain a better understanding of how they learn best. Undoubtedly, the key lies with the last “ICT” referenced below.

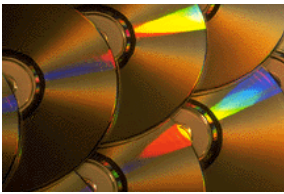
As I look back over this article, I realize that the three little characters “ICT” have appeared over and over. True, ICT or Information and Communication Technology, is going to change both the

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...opportunities will present themselves to help all students gain a better understanding of how they learn best.

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way you and your students learn and how technology is infused in your classroom. However, the success of this endeavour also depends on a, perhaps more important, variation of the ICT acronym. Never forget ... ICT also stands for “Innovative Caring Teachers”.

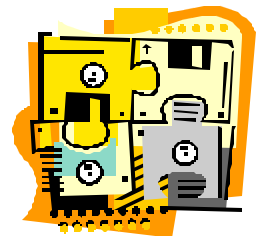
Bibliography:

1. “When I Grow Up” video
http://www.teachertube.com/view_video.php?viewkey=b98842d2a1ef7b741c56
2. Fischbowl Presentations: “What If?”, “Did You Know”, and “2020 Vision”
<http://www.lps.k12.co.us/schools/arapahoe/fisch/fischbowlpresentations.htm>
3. How does an information and technology curriculum stay relevant ... in the 21st Century?
<http://newliteracy.wikispaces.com/>
4. LwICT Across the Curriculum web site
<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/>
5. Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum Booklet (in PDF format)
<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/resources/handbook/index.html>
6. LwICT Developmental Continuum
http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/show_me/continuum.html
7. LwICT Learning Experiences
http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/tech/lict/let_me_try/le.html
8. “Funny Teacher Rant” video
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ged6hKZOTqw>
9. Helen Barrett’s Blog - <http://homepage.mac.com/eportfolios/blogwavestudio/index.html>
10. Digital Storytelling Resources:
 - Winnipeg School Division Digital Storytelling Resources - <http://www.wsd1.org/digitalstorytelling/>
 - Digital Storytelling in Scott County Schools <http://www.dtc.scott.k12.ky.us/technology/digitalstorytelling/ds.html>
 - Microsoft Photo Story 3 freeware (for Windows XP & Vista) <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/photostory/default.mspx>
11. Innovative Digital Stories (using Photo Story 3) by Grade 4 - 6 Students
 - Oma’s Journey - <http://www.wsd1.org/digitalstorytelling/2006/student06/default.htm#oma>
 - Gerbil Fur Traders - <http://www.wsd1.org/digitalstorytelling/2006/student06/default.htm#gerbils>
 - Science Fair Trilogy - Grade 4-6 Multi-age Class - <http://www.wsd1.org/IsaacBrock/sciencefair/default.htm>
12. Blog Resources from Manitoba Educators:
 - Literacy with ICT Blog - <http://www.literacywithict.ca/>
 - IMYM Tutorials: LwICT (Early-Middle Years - John Evans) - <http://nlcommunities.com/communities/joevans/>
 - Remote Access (Middle Years - Clarence Fisher - Snow Lake, MB) <http://remoteaccess.typepad.com/>
 - Make It Interesting (Middle Years - Chris Harbeck) - <http://makeitinteresting.blogspot.com/>
 - A Difference (Senior Years - Darren Kuropatwa) - <http://adifference.blogspot.com/>
13. World-Wide Educational Blog Resources:

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- K12 Online Conference - <http://k12onlineconference.org/>
 - 2 ¢ Worth – Teaching and Learning in the new information landscape - <http://davidwarlick.com/2cents/>
 - EduBlog Awards (2004 - 2007) - <http://edublogawards.com/>
 - Blogs on Educational Blogging - <http://supportblogging.com/Links+to+School+Bloggers>
 - Moving at the Speed of Connectivity - <http://www.speedofcreativity.org/>
 - Cool Cat Teacher Blog - <http://coolcatteacher.blogspot.com/>
 - Kathy Cassidy's (Grade 1) Blog - http://classblogmeister.com/blog.php?blogger_id=1337
14. RSS Feeds and Aggregators
- Bloglines - <http://www.bloglines.com>
 - RSS in Plain English - Common Craft Video - http://www.commoncraft.com/rss_plain_english
 - RSS en bon français - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=240u_FoHc8
 - Blogs in Plain English - http://www.teachertube.com/view_video.php?viewkey=e2f1c033865fba89f624
 - Blogging and RSS - The “What’s It?” and “How To” of Powerful New Web Tools for Educators <http://www.infotoday.com/MMSchools/jan04/richardson.shtml>
 - Coming of Age: An introduction to The NEW WWW - <http://fullmeasure.co.uk/comingofage.htm>
 - Shedding Light on Web 2.0 - Kathy Schrock - <http://kathyschrock.net/web20/>
 - RSS: A Quick Start Guide for Educators - Will Richardson <http://www.weblogg-ed.com/wp-content/uploads/2006/05/RSSFAQ4.pdf>
 - Web 2.0 Ideas for Educators - A Guide to RSS and More - Quentin D'Souza <http://www.teachinghacks.com/audio/100ideasWeb2educators.pdf>
15. Social Bookmarking at Del.icio.us - <http://del.icio.us/>
- Social Bookmarking in Plain English - Common Craft Video - <http://www.commoncraft.com/bookmarking-plain-english>
 - 7 things ...about Social Bookmarking - <http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI7001.pdf>
16. Tom Friedman on Education in the Flat World
- <http://www.aasa.org/publications/saarticledetail.cfm?ItemNumber=9736>
 - Why the World is Flat & 10 levelers - <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/13.05/friedman.html>
17. Educational Online Videos
- YouTube - <http://www.youtube.com/>
 - TeacherTube – Teach the World - <http://www.teachertube.com/>
 - Teachers TV – Thousands of Education Programs on TV and Online - <http://www.teachers.tv/>
 - Common Craft – Explanations in Plain English - <http://www.commoncraft.com/>
 - Ted Talks: Ideas Worth Spreading - <http://www.ted.com/>
18. Use Creative Commons Canada - <http://www.creativecommons.ca/>



TTWWADI (That's The Way We've Always Done IT)



"The learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to cope in a world that no longer exists." - Eric Hoffer

Keyboarding continues to be a hot-button issue in Manitoba schools. Many teachers are asking where keyboarding "fits" with *Literacy with ICT Across the Curriculum* and that is a timely question. However, to answer this question, we must look back, way back, into 'ancient history', at the typewriter, the QWERTY method, and the original purpose of "keyboarding".

Typewriters and keyboards have existed for over 125 years, in many configurations. Originally, keyboards were meant for two-finger typing with letters arranged alphabetically. In fact, the QWERTY method of touch-typing was designed to "load balance" letters that occur frequently on a keyboard, to both the left and the right hand. A second purpose, however, was to design the arrangement of keys on the typewriter itself to prevent typists from physically jamming the striking arms. The QWERTY keyboard prevented keys from jamming, by separating letters that are frequently combined in the English language. There have been many other keyboard configurations invented, such as the Dvorak Simplified Keyboard, that allow for similar typing speeds while reducing the amount of hand movement. Yet none of these alternative keyboards found popularity for a variety of reasons, including

TTWWADI (*that's the way we've always done it*). Unfortunately, the QWERTY method, which does allow expert typists to type very quickly, also forces more hand and wrist movement than do some of the other keyboard designs. This has contributed to the prevalence of Repetitive Stress Injuries (RSI) such as Carpal Tunnel Syndrome.

Historically, keyboards and typewriters were used to transcribe what was written first by hand. The writer composed with pen and paper and then the text was transcribed for "publication" on a typewriter by a person other than the writer of the text. For transcribers, the ability to type at a high rate of speed with few errors was essential. But is that how and why we use computer keyboards today? Now, we compose directly on the computer. The need for keyboarding speed is not nearly as important as it once was, since we are not merely copying what was already handwritten. We need to think about what we are typing as we type it. In that sense, the first draft and published version are actually the SAME version. We compose, revise, edit and publish using a single copy of the work. There is no need for transcription. This also significantly reduces the need for speed. We don't "type" for extended periods of time anymore. We craft the composition at the same time as we use the keyboard. There are "short bursts" of keyboarding activity interspersed with pauses, because we need to think as we write. This is a wonderful development which moves the focus from the "input" to the "output". Rather than concentrating on "proper" finger placement, speed, and accuracy, we instead need to focus on the actual content of what we are writing. The focus on the output of content is also far more important than the speed and

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TTWWADI (That's The Way We've Always Done IT)

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method of input, in terms of contributing to the development of student literacy and learning.

In recent years, keyboarding in schools began formally at approximately grade 4. We know that before this age, children's fine motor skills are not developed enough to allow them to touch-type following the QWERTY method. However, children today use keyboards long before they enter grade 4. This is a departure from just a few years ago. Children today often spend more time in front of a computer than they do in front of the television. They write far more for recreation than children would have even ten years ago, through the proliferation of instant messaging, email, social networking, blogging, and mobile text messaging. Children have definitely changed in this regard. The future of typing and the QWERTY method, is certainly in doubt as the world migrates from desktop to handheld technology. For the first time ever, Japan has experienced a decline in the sales of desktop and laptop computers (<http://www.cbc.ca/technology/story/2007/11/05/tech-japan.html>). The reason for this, of course, is the increase in the use of hand-held "information and communication devices" (ICT). People want to be connected wherever THEY are, not where the computer is located. Touch-typing efficiency changes completely in this world. "Thumb-typing" and other input methods become essential! The trade-off for speed is ubiquitous access to information and the ability to communicate wherever the user happens to be.

Compounding the issue is that teachers, yourself and myself included, were taught that there was one way of typing (touch-typing) using a QWERTY keyboard, and that it was an essential skill. It is often difficult to let go of that notion, even in the face of overwhelming evidence that it is no longer as essential. Many educators still believe that computers are primarily transcribing devices and their students still do most of their actual compositions using pen and paper. But students can be empowered to write in a different way, when they harness the editing and revising capabilities of a computer. After all, that is the purpose of word processing software. Students may not necessarily use the "proper" keyboarding technique as defined by "Mavis Beacon" or "All the Right Type" but it is their efficient use of technology to plan, gather, produce, communicate, and reflect that is vital to the successful development of their literacy. Isn't that far more important than the ability to type 60 words per minute?

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Of course, *Literacy with ICT* is all about students developing critical and creative thinking skills in a responsible and ethical manner. ICT literacy skills, such as keyboarding, are a part of the puzzle but cannot be the focus any longer. The types of "buttons" we push are changing rapidly, and to spend a great deal

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TTWWADI (That's The Way We've Always Done IT)

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...children still should be exposed to the QWERTY method, the time allotted to this task should be minimal in comparison to the myriad ways the technology can enhance their learning.

of time focused on “button-pushing” at the expense of the development of critical and creative thinking is what needs to change. While children still should be exposed to the QWERTY method, the time allotted to this task should be minimal in comparison to the myriad ways the technology can enhance their learning. Reflect on how the world has changed in the last ten years and

then consider where the world will be ten years from now. TTWWADI should never be a reason for continuing a practice. Instead, provide students with opportunities to develop the critical and creative thinking skills that they will need to survive in the world they are inheriting.

by John Finch and Cheryl Prokopanko, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth

The Manitoba Edubloggercon

By: Andy McKiel



To those of you who joined us at this year's ManACE preSAG event, thank you for being part of such a memorable evening. With sixty people from around the province, and a few from Saskatchewan, we had representation from over twenty Manitoba school divisions. We also had another thirty visitors joining us from around the world throughout the evening.

The *MB Edubloggercon* was not a traditional preSAG event for ManACE. We followed an 'unconference' format, where we had no keynote speakers and no formal presentations, although several of our celebrated guests had agreed in advance that they could pull off an impromptu six-minute presentation. As it turned out, much to everyone's delight, many of our five 'unpresenters' paid little attention to the clock and each of them delivered exceptional examples of the impact their technology teaching is having on student learning in their classrooms. All of our presenters are distinguished educational bloggers from around the province (well, okay, one lives in Moose Jaw, but he's from Manitoba...) and they each proved why thousands of people around the world subscribe to their thoughts, ideas and beliefs through their blogs.

To those of you who were not able to attend the *Manitoba Edubloggercon*, you're in luck. All of the informal

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The Manitoba Edubloggercon

presentations were captured with video and streamed live to the Internet for our online audience using *ustream.tv*. This is a free website that allows registered users to create their own channel(s) and broadcast shows and episodes on their channels. While many people watched the live broadcast of the *MB Edubloggercon* channel, many more people have viewed these episodes throughout the weeks and months following the event. You can access any of the presentations that you missed by visiting the following website: <http://ustream.tv/channel/mb-edubloggercon>.

Each of these presentations have been archived as episodes on the MB Edubloggercon uStream channel:

Chris Harbeck's

I am... An Edublogger!

Clarence Fisher's

Get Out Of The Way!

Dean Shareski's

The Power of The Network

John Evans'

Web 2.0 On A Sugar Packet

Darren Kuropatwa's

Conversation With A Parent

There were many, many highlights from the evening, from Dean inviting Jeff Utecht (Shanghai) and Brian Crosby (Reno) into the room through video Skype, to Chris' tribute to William Shatner with the 'Edublogger' declaration!

While you enjoy all of the MB Edubloggercon presentations whenever and wherever you want, think about how you could use *uStream.tv* as a tool to promote personal and professional learning!

Recorded Videos

Video Title	Length	Created	Views	Rated
Darren Kuropatwa	34:14	179 days ago	150	1 rated
Dean Shareski	25:34	179 days ago	102	Not rated yet.
John Evans	19:42	179 days ago	71	Not rated yet.
Clarence Fisher	15:56	179 days ago	81	Not rated yet.
Chris Harbeck	4:49	179 days ago	78	1 rated
Introduction	5:36	179 days ago	68	Not rated yet.

[View all recorded videos »](#)



Manitoba Association for Computing Educators
 "Promoting the use of Instructional Technology
 at all levels of Education"

**Visit us on the Web:
www.manace.ca**

ManACE is a Special Area Group of the Manitoba Teachers' Society. ManACE is also a member of the International Society for Technology in Education.

ManACE will promote the use of instructional technology by:

- encouraging potential users;
- providing leadership in professional development for exchanging ideas, techniques, materials, procedures, and methods for implementation;
- encouraging educational research relating to its use in education and reporting those findings;
- encouraging use of telecommunication;
- assisting in the development of specific curricula relating to instructional technology;
- and assisting with the integration of instructional technology into all curricula.

ManACE AGM & Technology Information Night

DATE: Wednesday, June 4th.

TIME: 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

LOCATION: St. John's Ravenscourt School, 400 South Drive, Winnipeg

Supper provided (\$5.00, payable upon arrival)

FORMAT: Two ICT presentations:

1. *How To Hack Your School's Network - Catching Up On Facebook During Math Class*

You may not realize how easy it is to defeat or work around your schools network security. We will show you some tips and tricks your students (or staff) may be using to get around blocked websites, run unauthorized applications, obtain user passwords, and perform basic functions which can render a computer, server or your network unusable. We'll cover such things as Portable Applications, USB keys, launching prohibited applications, Key loggers, BitTorrent at school, Active program hiders, file permission exploits and how to get around that pesky content filter.

Presented by:
 Michael Hart & Brent McCrea, Consultants,
 Microsoft Technologies

2. *Moodle*

A guide and demonstration for teachers in using this free, open-source software designed to help educators create effective online learning communities.

Presented by Phil Taylor, from St. John's Ravenscourt School

The ICT sessions will be followed by...

3. Presentations of awards
4. Ratification of proposed amendments to the constitution
5. Election of new board members
6. Welcome to new Officers, including President for 2008/2009, Andy McKiel

*Please visit the ManACE web site to view a draft version of the ManACE constitution. All proposed changes are indicated in red font.

RSVP Shawn Kleebaum to confirm attendance - email: skleebaum@tmsd.mb.ca