













BCSSTA
BRITISH COLUMBIA
SOCIAL STUDIES
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

DIMENSIONS

Fall 2012

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Letter From the Editor

by Amber Rainkie

In case you did not catch the memo in your inbox – school starts on September 4, 2012. For some, this means going back to the classroom that you've had for years, for others it means starting at a new school.

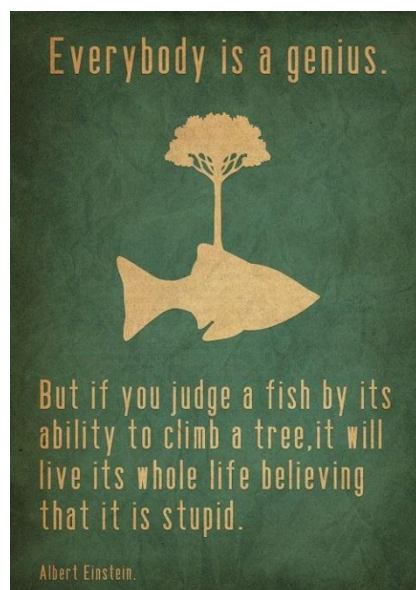
But regardless of whether you are at an old school or a new school, the kids you teach are becoming ever more "wired in" with technology.

I would encourage you to explore this issue for ways to explore old lessons with new tricks. It might mean viewing a youtube video, or even asking students to find pop culture references to the subject you are studying in the world around them. I can still remember the shock and awe that Rasputin was a real guy (queue the song) – and the mystery surrounding the whole Anastasia thing was too much to bear. So I looked it up – in an encyclopedia – and I read a few books about it. This was around 2000 – how the times have changed!

With the times changing, so do teaching practices, which can be easier with the right tools at your fingertips.

In this edition of Dimensions we have a plethora of resources for you to try out for the new year, and some things to look forward to (Like our Conference on October 19, 2012)

Take a look – I'm sure you won't be disappointed.



*Rights and Responsibilities –
Thinking and Acting Locally and Globally.*

Conference 2012 (October 19)

by Rachael Labossiere

In honour of the 30th anniversary of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom, the 2012 BCSSTA PSA Conference is focused on educating our students about their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

This year, our conference will feature three keynote speakers.

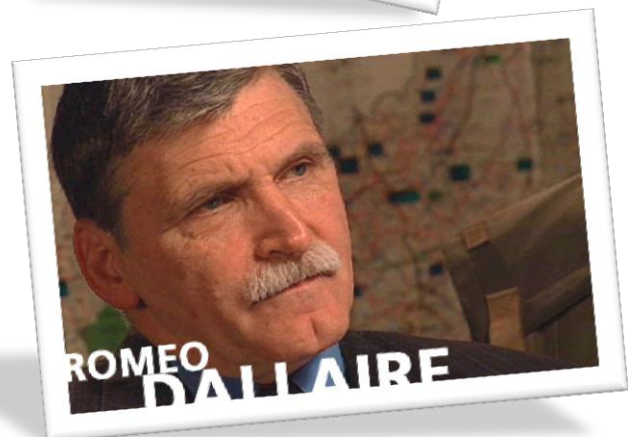
Our first keynote will be presented by Peter Seixas. Peter Seixas is a Professor and the Canada Research Chair for the Center for the Study of Historical Consciousness/Dept. of Curriculum Pedagogy at UBC. Peter has recently written a new book, *The Big Six: Historical Thinking Concepts in Your Classroom*. Peter does work on the ethical dimension of history and he is completing an amazing chapter on *The Book of Negroes* and ethical considerations in the study of history. It is tailored towards classroom teachers.



The second keynote will be delivered by Amy Burvall. Amy Burvall is well-known for her work on the History Teachers Channel on Youtube, in which music videos are created to help engage our students in learning about history. You can learn more about Amy by checking out her website at www.amyburvall.com.



Our third and featured keynote speaker is the honourable Romeo Dallaire. Dallaire is the author of *both Shake Hands with the Devil* and *They Fight Like Soldiers, They Die Like Children*. He formerly served as Force Commander of UNAMIR, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda and was an eyewitness to the genocide that occurred there in 1994. Dallaire's keynote presentation will be followed by a question and answer session, in addition to a book signing.



REGISTRATION

Anyone can register! Teachers, student teachers, PDP students, organizations and individuals interested in education are all welcome. You do not need to be a BCTF member to attend, nor do you need to be a PSA member (however, a 1 year membership to the BCSSTA is included in your conference fee). Please note that there is a limited number of spots available for student teachers/PDP students, so register early!

Visit <http://bit.ly/REaEKe> to register today!

PSA Conference 2012 Workshops

Resources for teaching historical thinking in the classroom

From Bards to Bits: Storifying History in the Digital Age

"Doing" History With History Mysteries

The Fundamentals of Genocide and the Armenian Case

Making drinking water safe in rural Uganda

Youth Against Violence: Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls

Authentic Assessment Strategies in Social Studies: Bridging Pedagogy, Literature, and Practice.

Enliven SS10, SS11, and CS11 with the Game-Based Civic Mirror Education Program

Topographic Mapping

Workers Rights and Human Rights: The Labour History Project

Introducing Asia Pacific Memo (UBC e-publication featuring accessible scholarly knowledge)

Incorporating First Nations Culture Into the Classroom

Our Place Called Canada - Where Music and Social Studies Meet

Thinking Critically About Global Water Issues

Girls' Education - Their Right; Our Responsibility

Teaching the Charter with the use of Web Tools and Social Media

Historical Thinking: Authentic Historical Inquiry and the Process of "Doing" History

Geography: More Than Just Maps and Statistics: Questing as a Means of Culturally, Historically, and Ecologically Representing Place

"Enemy Alien", the Internment of Jewish Refugees in Canada, 1940-1943

Thinking and Acting Provincially: The Legislative Assembly of British Columbia

Try Judging

Political Cartoonists View Canadians' Postwar Struggle for Human Rights

CCGE Geography Matters

(De/Re)Territorializing rights and responsibilities in a neoliberal world: A conceptual and discursive analysis of education/curricular policy in British Columbia

History Alive with Heritage Fairs

Homelessness: Considerations for Teachers

Professional Social Media for Teachers – Facebook and Linked-in

Putting the Pieces Together with Historical Documents—The Sinking of the Lusitania and the Attack on Pearl Harbour

Media, Revolution and Regimes

Everything You Do DOES Make a Difference! Student Leadership in Sustainability brings global issues up close and personal

The Law Project

Global Voices: Using NFB Films and Interactive Documentaries in the Classroom

Economics for Canadians

When Canada Said No: Anatomy of an Event

Engaging Your Students on Global and Environmental issues Creatively

Tomorrow Your Friend Will Die

Public Life: Nurturing Engaged Young Citizens

Student Vote: Engaging Students in their Democracy

Canadian WWII Hong Kong Veterans: In Battle, as Prisoners of War, and Today

Mediated Violence

Law Lessons and Legal Rights for Youth

Introducing Asia Pacific Memo (UBC e-publication featuring accessible scholarly knowledge)

The History Education Network: Research-Informed Practice, Practice-Informed Research

Incorporating First Nations Culture Into the Classroom; Three Simple Strategies Using an Okanagan Indigenous Perspective

What is a Capital?

Discover Creative Ways to Engage Your Students on Global and Environmental Issues Through CHF

Out in Schools: Ending Homophobia Through Youth Driven Messaging

Public Life: Nurturing Engaged Young Citizens

Student Vote: Engaging Students in their Democracy

PRESENTATION DESCRIPTIONS

For a detailed view at what each presentation is offering please visit <http://bit.ly/Lx7GUz>

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Make An Investment

The generosity of donors help to run programs and bring clean water to thousands of people. Donations are graciously accepted and nearly all the funds go directly to the projects in Uganda and Kenya.

Support A School

Individuals, community groups, businesses and churches can help start a Water School project for as little as \$10 000 dollars. For more information contact info@waterschools.com

Hosting A Fundraising Event

A great way to raise awareness about Water School is to host a fundraiser. Visit www.waterschool.com for some ideas to get you started.



For a pop-culture reference to the water crisis go to the websites listed under "CHECK IT OUT"!

Water School (part 2 of 8)

by Tony Woodruff

CONNECTION TO CURRICULUM

Social Studies

Kindergarten – identify individual human needs

Grade 1 – describe basic human needs

Grade 2 – describe how the physical environment influences human activities

Grade 3 to 12 – apply critical thinking skills

Grade 3 - compare ways in which needs and wants are met in communities

Grade 4 – formulate strategies to address problems or issues

Grade 5 - analyse the relationship between the economic development of communities and their available resources

Grade 6 – compare Canadian society with the society of another country

Grade 7 – defend a position on a contemporary or historical issue

Grade 8 to 9 – applications of social studies

Grade 10 and 11 – Skills and processes of social studies

Grade 11 – compare Canada's standard of living with those of developing countries

WORKING IN KISORO

We are up in the mountains, and the nights are pitch black, absolutely silent and quite cool. I slept well (for just the second time since leaving Canada). Early in the morning it is about 12°C, so my cold shower on Tuesday morning felt very cold. Karen brought us breakfast – I had an omelet, with frankfurter and bread with instant coffee, and then we headed to the Water School office here, about 1 km from the Noah's Ark. There we had a short meeting with the local staff, Herbert, the leader, and Annet, Moses and Elisha. We did introductions, and then discussed plans for the day. Tuesday was the day for meeting the key government officials who run Kisoro District, a densely populated (in a rural way), steeply hilly area of about 320,000 people. It is tucked into the far southwest corner of Uganda, and borders Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Government officials are important here. There is no real industry apart from intense agriculture, except a bit of local construction, and a small but growing tourist business, focused on mountain gorilla trekking.

As we heard, there are many serious health issues here, and the provision of health services and schools and infrastructure is very important. Many of the health issues are caused by the land formation. It is a rocky place, with not much topsoil. To be safe, people need to have pit latrines – holes in the ground with a cover (usually cement), with walls and a roof. It's like a "squatty" in a

provincial park in BC. Ideally these are 20 feet deep or more, so that there is no chance of them filling up and overflowing in the heavy rains. If this happens, then human waste flows across the ground, and there is high likelihood of contaminating drinking sources. If this happens then diseases, like dysentery, cholera, typhoid and other intestinal infections occur. These can kill people. So the basic problem is that digging safe pit latrines is hard and often it is not possible to do it properly, and drinking water is often contaminated and dangerous.

Water contamination is a real problem. The purpose of the Water School is to provide simple inexpensive techniques to make sure that the water people drink is safe, and that they stop getting sick or dying from water borne diseases. We teach people several things to make their lives safer:

- Use solar disinfection (SODIS) to kill all the germs in their local water which is put in plastic water bottles and placed in the sun for a day, making their water safe to drink
- Make and use proper, safe pit latrines
- Set up "tippy taps" which are simple hand washing stations, made from available local materials, so that they do not recontaminate their water bottles with dirty hands

- Dig garbage pits in their home compounds
- Make simple bath houses, so that they wash regularly, and the water doesn't flow around their houses
- Make simple drying racks for household utensils, so that these stay clean after washing
- Make sure that their compounds are clean from rubbish

All these things can be done from simple, available local materials, like sticks, string, plastic jerry cans, regular plastic water bottles, and stones.

Tuesday Jan 24th

The local Water School team had set up a series of appointments with the key people in charge of the District, and it was a testament to their standing in the community that every one of the people made time for us, even though it was clear they were swamped with work and people waiting to see them.

We started our day with a short meeting of introductions at the office. (In Africa, formal introductions are essential at the start of a meeting, and are generally more elaborately polite than is usual in the west.) I asked the team that they think about what is the end goal we want to achieve in Kisoro? What quantitative achievement would define our success? I asked that they think about it, and we would discuss it again at the end of the week.

Then we proceeded to the district administrative compound and met first with David Lubuuka, Chief Administrative Officer. He is basically head of the local civil service. Like all the officials we met, Mr Lubuuka is very professional, knowledgeable and gracious. I think most western people would be absolutely amazed (gobsmacked for the Brits) at how good these officials are. He had been in office for a few years and was well aware of our work. He was very grateful for the help we have given, our donors in Canada and elsewhere, and how it has improved health outcomes. He said that we need to continue to raise awareness, and offered to let us put a Water School sign up at the Administrative complex. He also asked that we let his health officials know if we came across a particular serious health issue in the field.

Next we met Mr Milton Bazanye, Chairman of the District Council, and the chief political guy in the district. Although he was newly elected, he knew our work quite well, and quizzed me about the potential of plastic leaching into bottles (see www.waterschool.com if you want more on this), and was quickly satisfied that this is not an issue (I think this was a test for me). He emphasized that they are still dealing with a serious typhoid problem, and said that because of a lack of funds, they have no ability to test water quality i.e. find out if a particular water source is contaminated. He asked if we could set up a testing lab in our office. This request came up several times with different officials – it is a desperate current need. It is a matter of raising funds, and I will find out how much this would cost, and the best way to do it. He also requested that we look at doing radio messages, because radio is the most powerful way to reach people in Kisoro. He thanked us and our funding donors and wished us well.

Mr Christopher Nkumbuje is the District Water Engineer. He reiterated that they have a serious typhoid problem, and that although in the main town of Kisoro they have piped water, which is theoretically chlorinated, some people in the town itself are getting typhoid. He is very frustrated that he can't test to find out the bad sources, and how they need to adjust chlorination levels. He also said that in the whole district there were only 4 places that can even confirm with the right test if someone with a fever has typhoid or some less serious problem. He was glad that we were working with the voluntary Village health teams (VHT's – more on these later), and also requested that we work with the Community Development Officers, who are very knowledgeable about problems in particular villages. Like everyone we met he thanked us for the work our team in Kisoro has done, and thanked our donors for their generous support.

After lunch, in a local restaurant (chicken or beef with your matoke and beans?), we went to see Augustine, the District Education Officer. This guy has been supporting us for 5 years and should be our PR man. Again very knowledgeable and professional, but over the moon about how we had made such a difference to the health of the children in the 26 primary schools we have trained, which covers almost 20,000 children. He explained that attendance in some

problem schools has got much better and they have seen test scores increase consequently. He asked that we look at extending our programs to secondary schools also. Our final meeting was with Mr David Uwere, the District Schools Inspector, who was equally enthusiastic, and is a great supporter of our work. Mr Uwere had the biggest nostrils I have ever seen, and I had to concentrate so that I didn't stare into them.

Our day concluded with some preparations for the following day's events, which featured a training session for 30 VHT volunteers in the complete water school program. I walked into the town, and found one place selling decent souvenirs, called "The Coffee Pot". I bought a couple of things, and was surprised to see a middle aged German lady coming out to take my money. Val had followed her doctor husband to Kisoro in 1976, and had been there ever since. When I asked what she found the best thing about life in Kisoro, she replied that she liked "the peace when I go home at night without all the hassles of the west." She was busy and we couldn't talk more, but I would love to have known what it was like to live through both Idi Amin and the Rwandan genocide (which seriously affected Kisoro).

Then dinner, a book and sleep, which by now is wonderfully long and deep.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit www.waterschool.com to read more about the world's water crisis and what you can do to help.

CHECK IT OUT: JAY-Z WATER FOR LIFE

For another look at the water crisis some countries face, check out Jay-Z: Water for Life

Video: (you can save these files to your computer)

<http://archive.org/details/Unworks-MTV-WFL>

Discussion Guide:

www.africa.upenn.edu/K-12/Poverty07-JayZ.doc

Heritage Fairs

Interview with Romy Cooper

by Heritage Fairs

The authour was a judge at the school fair at General Gordon Elementary where Romy Cooper is a teacher. After the fair, she was interviewed.

Heritage Fairs (HF): I was very impressed by the quality of your students' work and that from the other classes at General Gordon as well. Could you tell me about how you and your students develop your Heritage Fairs projects?

Romy Cooper (RC): I work with five other teachers at three elementary schools who are part of MACC (multi-aged cluster class). The six of us have been developing our approach to the Fairs over the years with TC2's *Teaching Historical Thinking* as our main resource.... I then shared our work with other teachers at my school. Research in inquiry learning stresses the importance of a focus question. Rather than just researching a topic we want students to ask a real question that they don't have the answer to yet. This leads them in directions that they haven't foreseen. It adds excitement and purpose.

HF: Tell me more about how you develop these.

RC: I teach students that there are three types of questions: ones that

ask for a factual answer, an opinion question, and a critical challenge. It's the critical challenge that forms the basis of a focus question.

I give them lots and lots of examples, starting with silly topics. The key is that the question needs criteria to answer it. In addition, I run seminars with them to teach historical thinking concepts. They do two projects in the year and for this Fair I asked them to frame their focus question within a concept of historical thinking such as cause and consequence, historical perspective or ethical judgement.

HF: What would be some examples of focus questions?

RC: On cause and consequence, one boy asked the question, "What technological change had the biggest impact on mail delivery?" It was a real question that he didn't know the answer to. He thought the answer would be email. But in the end he concluded that it was the train. For ethical questions, one student asked, "Should Canada continue to fund air cadets?" And another asked, "B.C. Place – was it worth it?"

Another student looked at the history of women's ski jumping and made a timeline organized around historical periods that he created. His focus question ... was framed around the concept of

change and continuity.

HF: How much time to you spend on heritage fairs projects?

RC: I give a few weeks for topic choice and focus question development. Three to four for research and then three to four to build the project, write their oral presentation, and practise presenting.

HF: Is there any advice that you would give to other teachers? Any pitfalls to avoid?

RC: I encourage students not to jump to conclusions. They need to gather lots of information from a variety of sources before they draw any conclusions about their focus question.

There is also the risk that they will ask some expert their research question and expropriate his or her answer. I emphasize that I want the student's answer.

HF: Thank you, Romy Cooper.

From the June edition of the BC Heritage Fair Newsletter.

To see more pictures from the provincial fair [click here](#).

CHECK IT OUT: YOUNG CITIZENS

Another way to present research is through media.

200 students (grade 4-11) with the top Heritage Fair projects are selected for Young Citizens.

Each participant is given a digital video camera to create a short film about their Heritage Fair project.

[Click here](#) to see the top 30 finalists!

Genealogy in the Classroom

Submitted by Merv Scott

A committee of retired teachers and other members of the Victoria Genealogical Society have created a free teachers resource called Genealogy in the Classroom. It is a website aimed at introducing students to family history research and related topics in a manner that engages all students, regardless of their family structure. The activities are intended for students from the later elementary grades through middle school and secondary school and can be adapted for use at different levels of ability. Each lesson is accompanied by teacher's notes which give additional information and suggestions for further activities.

The first group of lessons "1-2-3-Go!" shows students how to gather information about their family and how to organize this material using charts and a timeline. In "My Family! My Story!" they learn how to enrich their family history using family heirlooms, photos and stories. These activities correlate well with several of the Achievement Indicators in the elementary curriculum.

"How to Access the 1901 Census" and "One Hundred Years Ago" can be used for a variety of projects relating to immigration, settlement and occupations. The 1901 and 1911 censuses offer a wealth of information about the origins, occupations and lives of Canadians at the turn of the last century. Some examples are included in the Teacher's Corner for these activities.

The full website can be accessed at <http://www.victoriags.org/school/>. Click on the Video Tutorial to get a quick look at features of the website and how it could be used in your classroom.

Its free and with no registration hassles or passwords to remember it's easy to use too.

The activities are intended for students from the later elementary grades through middle school and secondary school and can be adapted for use at different levels of ability.

Further questions about Genealogy in the Classroom can be directed to Merv Scott, Project Director, Victoria Genealogical Society. Email : Projects@VictoriaGS.org

THE MONTREALER
FEBRUARY, 1965 - 25¢

PENALTY

THE BEGBIE CANADIAN HISTORY CONTEST
ONE PRIZE OF \$1000 FOR EVERY 250 ENTRANTS
APRIL 17, 2013
Test your understanding of Canada's history
Deadline for entries: March 8, 2013
www.begbiecontestssociety.org
Designed by Prashant Jain Sponsored by The Begbie Contest Society

Begbie says Goodbye

Submitted by Charles Hou

The twentieth Begbie Canadian History Contest, to be held on April 17, 2013, will be the last. In the future we hope to maintain and improve our web site to make it as useful as possible for teachers looking for unique primary source materials.

We will be handing out posters at the fall conference on October 19, but if you cannot attend we will mail a copy to your school on request. You can see this year's poster by visiting our website at www.begbiecontestssociety.org

ClassNotes

Volume 5, Number 3 May 2012

Johnjcmeyers.myers@utoronto.ca

Submitted by John Meyer

ClassNotes' purpose is to take important ideas and put them into action. All previous issues are available electronically should you wish them.

In this issue we offer ideas and resources to consider for [the 2012-2013 school year].

Working Smart

Start with yourself and your classes. We get bombarded enough with "stuff" from the province, the school district, and "professional development" ideas, conferences and summer institutes. Two of many fine examples, [Glacie](#) (end of May) and [Historical Thinking Project](#) (early July), are worth checking out.

Some of these may speak to your and your students' needs but some may not.

How do I decide which if any ideas to pursue?

As you think about the successes and challenges you and your colleagues and your students have had this year, base your "summer homework" on questions such as the following:

What were the "bright spots"?

It may be easier to build on your successes than the failures. Can I take the culminating task or the graphic organizer that was successful and that my students really liked doing and use it as a template for another unit or course?

What am I interested in?

If I am passionate about a topic or a teaching strategy I might invest more time and thought into expanding its use or application. I have a particular interest in the history of medicine. So I do the extra reading and work at plugging what I learn into such topics as the Black Death, the Spanish Influenza, the ravages of cholera, or the discovery of antibiotics such as penicillin.

For example, a google search led me to [Canada's History](#): a generic site for all sorts of great Canadian stuff. My interests noted above took me to [an article on the [Spanish Flu in the Early NHL](#)]. If you are a hockey fan, this site might interest you too. Check it out and you will not be disappointed.

What is your passion? Given the broad nature of expectations in the Ontario curriculum you can find

places to insert topics you care deeply about. And if care about them, that passion can spread to your students.

What do my students think?

Do we ask them for ideas or advice?

Did they like political/military history, art history, or social history?

Are their favourite lessons ones that connect to the present, or ones that have fascinating or just weird facts? Or do they like mysteries, or blogs, or Youtube videos, or connect to something locally or in the news or current pop culture?

When in doubt, do what good doctors, psychologists, or even financial advisers do: ask the client. Students prefer to work on things they like. They also like being asked. For example, as a result of working with a group of middle school students in New York State last summer I am now involved in a project dealing with the use of tech in our classrooms.

Are there colleagues I can work with?

Working with other professionals makes me a better teacher and eases my workload. Some of the content of ClassNotes (including this issue) has come from you, from my teacher candidates, and from high school and middle school students I get to work with. The list of projects and collaborations is long.

Those who are interested in what we do and would like to be involved, email me. At the end of this newsletter I shall describe a project in part spurred by the students I worked with last summer.

In summary, know what you want and you can save time "surfing" the net. Even I with the nature of my workload and experience cannot adequately review the more than 10,000 websites I have in my database related to history alone!



This advice also counts for students. Some keys for them and for you:

- ask good questions
- find others to work with you
- know how to distinguish quality.

Resources

This section will NOT be a list, even an annotated one. It will show ways the resource in question can actually be used in a classroom. For example some of the following sites link to Youtube videos and their equivalents. This form of media has come a long way since the [first one posted](#) on line in the 1990s .

One of my teacher candidates began a unit on the Holocaust with [this video](#).

Among the tips my teacher candidates suggest in using such videos in a class

- check them out in advance for appropriateness
- filter out ads
- short clips are often best at the beginning of a lesson to generate interest and questions for further inquiry
- if more than 5-10 minutes, pause and give students opportunities to chew on the ideas presented for better digestion and retention of information.

Editor Note: if you have a bad internet connection in your classroom, save the videos to a portable file using [savevid.com](#)

[History.com videos](#) are heavy on U.S. history but check the site. For example, there is a video in colour on the Pearl Harbor attack and some nice overviews of key events in world history. One of these is a coroner’s report on the death of Julius Caesar. Did he have time to say “*et tu, Brute?*” as portrayed in the Shakespearean play?

Then there are the websites with their compendia of resources, lesson plans to use or adapt to your needs; e.g.,

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| World History | Teaching History |
| Spartacus | Mr.Donn |
| EDsitement Clips | Mr.Donn Video |

We have all heard of Dr. TED and the TED Talks. We can go much further by checking out the [neat features here](#)

If you go into the social studies lesson section you will find an [animation that matches my passion for tech](#) and why I think we should be grateful to Malcom McLean. Here is the actual website.

And of course for Canadian content see <http://www.cbc.ca/archives>.

Sites of Significance

Whether it is the production of a “heritage minute” or a “top ten” list, history courses can pull ideas together in a culminating task in which students create and justify the inclusion of a top ten list of people, places, objects, ideas, or events in the period explored by the course they are about to complete. The following sites can serve to introduce your class to the task. You can use the entire content of the site or select excerpts to serve as exemplars for students to consider when they compile their own lists and determine criteria for historical significance..

- [100 years in 10 minutes](#)
- [The British Museum: History of the World](#)
- [World Heritage Site List](#)

Evidence

Looking for primary documents? [Go here](#)

Better yet have students do a webquest and teach them to find and critique the evidence from the sources just as they can from the secondary sources noted in previous websites.

History’s “First Draft”

It has been said that the newspaper represents the first draft of history, but is it the final word? Perhaps your school has a subscription to online archival collections of newspapers like the *Toronto Star* or *New York Times*. The *Globe and Mail* can be searched back to its origins in 1844 by [going here](#) (for free!) Students can pick a day, a year, or by event or person. Click on the newspaper title on the upper left and learn how to use its search features.

Current and Future Work

I think the menu of sites and ideas described in this issue offers much for content. But how best to use the tools?

Tools or Toys: How To Promote Wisdom in a Wired World. is a project with a group of teacher candidates exploring the use of online work for powerful learning such as Powerpoint, Time Toast, Blogs, Wikis, Moodles, Wikipedia, Facebook, Podcasts, Ipads, Interactive Whiteboards, Prezi, Twitter, Poll Everywhere, and Blackberry Playbook. Email me if you are interested.

Invite the World into your Classroom

Submitted by Deirdre Moore

It's 6am. The phone jars you awake, though being on call 24/7 makes it not unexpected. It's the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General (SRSG) requesting your presence at an urgent meeting. A church has been burned and the subsequent complication of blame and unrest threatens to undermine the entire peacekeeping mission underway in Liberia.

You are the Director of Communications of this mission, in charge of all media and public relations, locally, nationally and internationally. With the military, legal and civil affairs directors, your job is to come up with a comprehensive plan which will diffuse the situation. What will you recommend to the SRSG?

A thinking activity to start your United Nations studies? And, it is also one actual morning in the life of George Somerwill, a former UN official who will be bringing the UN to life for secondary school students around British Columbia beginning this September.



In 2010, he was able to assist in diffusing the Liberian tension without further incident. This work was of the kind George came to expect over the years of his career with the United Nations: eluding US cruise missiles fired at close range in Iraq, negotiating a UN radio station in Sudan with an uncooperative government, or running camps for the demobilization of soldiers in Angola.

George Somerwill has recently returned to Vancouver with his Peruvian wife Rosio, from a series of postings with the UN in Angola, Iraq, Pakistan, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Sudan and Liberia. Previously, he worked with the BBC Africa Service and CBC as a journalist, in addition to spending time with CIDA and CARE Canada in Ottawa and Africa.

Along with his current work as international consultant, and executive member of the national and Vancouver boards of the United Nations Association in Canada, George plans to meet with as many senior students as possible. With his engaging style and fascinating anecdotes, George relates details about the United Nations and the work that goes on behind the scenes. He offers two 75-minute classroom presentations, *UN Basics* and *UN Peacekeeping*, in addition to case studies, *Tomorrow Your Friend Will Die* and *Iraq: Oil-For-Food or Regime Change?*

The *UN For All* educational program is 21st Century-compatible; it incorporates digital technology and social media. Students can participate in surveys, twitter dialogue and as website guest writers to motivate their continued interest in global issues.

Why does George Somerwill want to work with students and teachers? In his own words, "*The United Nations is important, and Canada is important to the United Nations. If I can help young people to understand this, then that is what I want to do*".

UN For All is a program specifically for BC Social Studies teachers based on BC curriculum outcomes. Book a session in 2012-13 for one, two or three Socials 11, Civics 11 or History 12 classes at a time. Program fees are reduced for bookings of 3 sessions on one day, or with the booking of both *Basics/Peacekeeping* presentations for one group. Visit George Somerwill's website at unforall.com for more information or email him directly at unforall2012@gmail.com.





B.C. social studies teachers are invited to attend the 92nd Annual National Council for the Social Studies Conference – the world's largest and most comprehensive social studies professional development conference. The annual meeting will be in Seattle—part of the Cascadia region which reaches beyond the political boundaries of states and nations bringing together the rich culture of the indigenous people and those whose families came for new opportunities from the Pacific Rim and beyond.

The conference includes more than 400 sessions, workshops, poster presentations, clinics, tours, panels, featured speakers such as Dr. Alan Sears (UNB), and social events addressing the conference theme: *Opening Windows to the World*.

This year's theme honors the natural beauty of the environment and the rich culture of the region's people. As social studies educators, opening windows to the world is the fundamental work we do: providing young people with the skills and knowledge they need to become effective citizens in a global and interdependent world. Content on Canada and presentations by Canadians are offered throughout the program.

Literacy across the curriculum is important in schools worldwide so this year's conference will also include a special "Conversation with an Author" strand of sessions. Joy Kogawa, author of the award-winning novel *Obasan*, is one of the many notable writers from the Pacific Northwest to appear.

Participate in the 92nd NCSS Annual Conference to gain new ideas, resources, and skills as the conference promises to engage you in rich and varied learning opportunities. Join more than 4,000 of your peers from across the U.S., Canada and around the world to share the most current knowledge, ideas, research, and expertise in social studies education. Note: Pre-conference clinics are offered on Thursday, November 15.

Visit the NCSS website at www.socialstudies.org/conference to learn more about the conference register online and apply for a First-Timer Scholarship, if needed.

Please feel free to contact Tina Storer (tina.storer@wwu.edu), Co-Chair of the Conference Planning Committee, or Brenda Ball (bball@croftonhouse.ca) with any questions.

Last Laugh

Let's eat grandpa.
Let's eat, grandpa.

**correct punctuation can
save a person`s life.**