

E-newsletter- January 2008

Dear Colleague,

Happy New Year! Look closely at Worthwhile Websites for grant opportunities and meta-sites for student and teacher resources. Please share this monthly e-newsletter with your peers and invite them to subscribe by e-mailing us at teacher_center@wsboces.org with their names and e-mail addresses.

Jane, Carol and Elyse

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A Light Touch

Love

A group of professional people posed this question to a group of 4 to 8 year-olds, "What does love mean?" The answers they got were broader and deeper than anyone might imagine. See what you think:

"When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore.

So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love."

Rebecca - age 8

"When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth."

Billy - age 4

"Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other."

Karl - age 5

"Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your French fries without making them give you any of theirs." Chrissy - age 6

"Love is when my mommy makes coffee for my daddy and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is OK." Danny - age 7

"Love is when you kiss all the time. Then when you get tired of kissing, you still want to be together and you talk more. My Mommy and Daddy are like that. They look gross when they kiss." Emily - age 8

"Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen." Bobby- age 7

"If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate," Nikka - age 6

"Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, and then he wears it everyday." Noelle - age 7

"My mommy loves me more than anybody. You don't see anyone else kissing me to sleep at night." Clare - age 6

"I know my older sister loves me because she gives me all her old clothes and has to go out and buy new ones." Lauren - age 4

"When you love somebody, your eyelashes go up and down and little stars come out of you." (what an image) Karen - age 7

"You really shouldn't say 'I love you' unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot. People forget." Jessica - age 8

And the final one -- Author and lecturer Leo Buscaglia once talked about a contest he was asked to judge. The purpose of the contest was to find the most caring child. The winner was a four year old child whose next door neighbor was an elderly gentleman who had recently lost his wife. Upon seeing the man cry, the little boy went into the old gentleman's yard, climbed onto his lap, and just sat there. When his Mother asked what he had said to the neighbor, the little boy said, "Nothing, I just helped him cry."

Trivia

In the 1400's a law was set forth in England that a man was allowed to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his thumb. Hence we have "the rule of thumb"

Many years ago in Scotland, a new game was invented. It was ruled "Gentlemen Only...Ladies Forbidden"...and thus the word GOLF entered into the English language.

Every day more money is printed for Monopoly than the U.S. Treasury.

Men can read smaller print than women can; women can hear better than men.

Coca-Cola was originally green.

The State with the highest percentage of people who walk to work: Alaska

The percentage of Africa that is wilderness: 28% (now get this...) The percentage of North America that is wilderness: 38%

The cost of raising a medium-size dog to the age of eleven: \$ 16,400

The average number of people airborne over the U.S. in any given hour: 61,000

The San Francisco Cable cars are the only mobile National Monuments.

Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history: Spades - King David
Hearts - Charlemagne Clubs - Alexander, the Great Diamonds - Julius Caesar

$111,111,111 \times 111,111,111 = 12,345,678,987,654,321$

If a statue of a person on a horse has both front legs in the air, the person died in battle. If the horse has one front leg in the air the person died as a result of wounds received in battle. If the horse has all four legs on the ground, the person died of natural causes.

Only two people signed the Declaration of Independence on July 4th, John Hancock and Charles Thomson. Most of the rest signed on August 2, but the last signature wasn't added until 5 years later.

Q. Most boat owners name their boats. What is the most popular boat name requested?

A. Obsession

Q. What do bulletproof vests, fire escapes, windshield wipers, and laser printers all have in common? A. All were invented by women.

Q. What is the only food that doesn't spoil? A. Honey

In Shakespeare's time, mattresses were secured on bed frames by ropes. When you pulled on the ropes the mattress tightened, making the bed firmer to sleep on. Hence the phrase..... "good night, sleep tight."

In English pubs, ale is ordered by pints and quarts... So in old England, when customers got unruly, the bartender would yell at them "Mind your pints and quarts, and settle down." It's where we get the phrase "mind your P's and Q's"

Many years ago in England, pub frequenters had a whistle baked into the rim, or handle, of their ceramic cups. When they needed a refill, they used the whistle to get some service. "Wet your whistle" is the phrase inspired by this practice.



Courses and Workshops

Looking for a convenient Master's Degree Program? Here is a New Program!

- **Master of Science in Literacy Education** (starts January, 2008) Dowling College

Benefits of enrolling through SETC include reduced tuition, convenient location, and a schedule tailored to your working calendar. For registration and information, call Suffolk's Edge Teacher Center at 254-0107 or check our website: www.seteachercenter.org/ Click on Professional Development.

NYS Teacher Center Online Academy

The Online Academy can be found at the Rockland Teacher Center website at <http://www.rockteach.org/>. Click on Online Courses, then Online Academy Catalog and follow the directions. Be sure to check with your district for course approval.

Events

Winter Recess, Feb. 16-23, 2008. There's a special event in Ithaca and you're the guest of honor! Ithaca celebrates New York's public school teachers and district employees with entertainment, family activities and discounts throughout the community. Last year, more than 1,300 educators and their families took part in the festivities, creating America's first citywide festival of state teachers!

This year's celebration will be even better. Lodging, dining, events, activities—we've put the whole city on sale, just for you. For more information visit IthacaLovesTeachers.com, or contact the Ithaca Convention and Visitors Bureau, (800) 284-8422. Thank you, teachers! Ithaca loves you!

Announcements

January 15, 2008.-Deadline for submission on comments. The State Education Department is seeking public comment on draft state standards for professional development. The standards were developed by the Professional Standards and Practices Board (PSPB) in 2007. You are invited to review and respond to these Standards, since they will apply to all educational professionals. The draft document and Web Response Form can be found on the NYSUT web site at www.nysut.org

January 15, 2008 - Deadline for Submissions. Call for Nominations for the Donald Murray Prize. The Special Interest Group on Creative Nonfiction (a subsidiary group of CCCC) solicits nominations for the [Donald Murray Prize](#). This prize will go to the author of the best essay/work of creative nonfiction on the subjects of teaching and/or writing published during 2007.

Deadline: January 31, 2008. Wheadon Scholarship Competition Announced. [Edwyna Wheadon Postgraduate Training Scholarships](#) provide funding for professional development experiences for English language arts teachers in public educational institutions. Submit your application by the deadline date above.

Deadline: February 1, 2008. Do You Know an Exemplary Leader? - Nominate One Today. The CEL Exemplary Leader Award is given to an NCTE member who is an outstanding English language arts educator and leader. Members of the Conference on English Leadership (CEL) may [nominate an exemplary leader](#) before the February 1 deadline.

February 1, 2008 - The [nomination](#) deadline for the Edwin A. Hoey Award. This award recognizes exceptional English language arts teachers of grades 5-8 who have demonstrated excellence in teaching English language arts and inspired a spirit of inquiry and a love of learning in their students.

March 1, 2008 - Submission deadline for 2008 Promising Researcher Award. The [2008 NCTE Promising Researcher Award Competition](#) is open to individuals who have completed dissertations, theses, or initial, independent studies post-dissertation between December 1, 2005, and January 31, 2008.

Sharing Success Research

Please click on the link to access research information. Elementary, MS and HS

- [Student Leadership](#)
- [Academic Intervention Services \(AIS\)](#)

Please [click here](#) to access research information.

- Literacy [Elementary]
- Math and Science [Elementary, MS, HS]
- Spotlight: Survey for Middle Schools [Addressing Discipline Issues](#)

You Asked -- We Answered. Sample requests for research that we received from NYS educators.

I am looking for elementary (K-3) Professional Development Math Academy programs that are available for use with training teachers in the basic fundamental elements of K-3 mathematic instruction, similar to the product "VoyagerU Reading Academy"? [Elementary](#)

Can I receive research on best practices in secondary guidance practices? [MS/H](#)

Worthwhile Websites

Grant websites

<http://www.schoolfundingcenter.info> **Get a Grant for Your School Today.** More than 110,000 school grants are awarded to both individual U.S. campuses and entire districts each year. We monitor more than 4000 websites, newsletters, and other grant sources to give you The School Funding Center grant database-----the one central location where educators can find every federal, state, & foundation grant available to their schools. Free trial before subscription (subscription price \$99)

Olympus http://www.toolfactory.com/olympus_contest/

Starbucks <http://www.starbucks.com/aboutus/grantinfo.asp>

Best Buy http://communications.bestbuy.com/communityrelations/teach_awards.asp

American Institute of Aeronautics <http://www.aiaa.org/content.cfm?pageid=216>

Jordan Foundation <http://www.nike.com/jumpman23/features/fundamentals/overview.html>

National Geographic http://www.nationalgeographic.com/foundation/grants_teacher.html

Toshiba America Grant www.toshiba.com/taf/index.html

Student resources

<http://www.motion.com/topten/index.html> Learning in Motion maintains a list of the ten WWW sites we have found interesting from an educational perspective. We update these sites on a monthly basis, and we look for input and suggestions from the people who know these resources the best—you! We hope you'll check this page often, and help make it a valuable resource for everybody in the educational community.

<http://www.microsoft.com/athome/intouch/10studentsites.aspx> Learning where to go and how to appropriately use information that is on the Internet can be challenging to both parents and students. This website offers a look at some of the most comprehensive—and reliable—educational Web sites a student can bookmark and use to research school projects and homework assignments.

Teacher resources

<http://www.topeducationdegrees.com/online-apps-innovative-teachers> This website offers ten top technological websites for innovative teachers to use with their students

<http://www.sitesforteachers.com/> Hundreds of Educational Websites rated by Popularity plus Lesson Plans, Worksheets, Activities, Clip art and more.

<http://teachers.teach-nology.com/> The Best on the web for teachers! Four hundred (400) sites with lesson plans, rubrics, curriculum information, teaching ideas, worksheets, tutorials, workbooks, student search and more.

NCTE Inbox

News

Teacher Qualifications Improve in the Past Decade. Academic qualifications of new teachers during 2002-2005 rose significantly from those in 1994-1997, according to [*Teacher Quality in a Changing Policy Landscape: Improvements in the Teacher Pool*](#) released last week. [*USA Today, December 11, 2007*](#)

More on Teaching and Teacher Quality. "Tiered Licensing Systems Being Used by States to Help Teacher Quality": [*Education Week, December 17, 2007*](#)

"DISD Bonus Plan Draws Few Teachers to Struggling Schools": [*Dallas Morning News, December 16, 2007*](#)

"Fewer English Jobs, More Language Jobs": [*Inside Higher Education, December 18, 2007*](#)

. . . **Different Sorts of Schools.** "A Lesson in Diversity": [*Los Angeles Times, December 13, 2007*](#)

"Parents Force Charter Takeover of L.A. High School": [*National Public Radio, December 17, 2007*](#)

"Private Takeover of L.A. Schools Gets Results": [*"All Things Considered," National Public Radio, December 17, 2007*](#) "A District Where No Two Schools Are Alike": [*"Morning Edition," National Public Radio, December 18, 2007*](#)

. . **On NCLB.** "Librarians Want in to No Child Left Behind Law": [*Medill Reports, December 4, 2007*](#)

Views

Parents, Guardians, and Teachers: Partners in Education. "[*The Family: America's Smallest School!*](#)" points out the mighty influence families have on the long-term literacy development of their children. Several NCTE guidelines suggest ways parents and guardians can help:

- ["Read Together: Parents and Educators Working Together for Literacy"](#)
- ["How to Help Your Child Become a Better Writer"](#)
- ["Tips for Parents from the National Council of Teachers of English: Helping Your Teenager to Write Better"](#)

Ideas

Supporting and Exploring Diversity. Looking ahead in 2008: The African American Read-In, Celebrate African American literacy and literature this year. Join over a million readers in the [Nineteenth National African American Read-In](#) on Sunday, February 3, and Monday, February 4. You'll find everything you need, including the Read-In Packet and booklists.

In the News

Eye on Curriculum

Report: Creationism has no place in public school science classrooms. Reiterating its view that the central concept of modern biology is evolution, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and its Institute of Medicine stated emphatically in a report released Thursday that evolution, and not creationism, must be taught in U.S. public-school science classes. "Evolution is supported by abundant evidence from many different fields of scientific investigation," the report states, adding: "Science and religion are different ways of understanding the world. Needlessly placing them in opposition reduces the potential of each to contribute to a better future." [Los Angeles Times/Reuters](#) (free registration) (1/4) , [The News & Observer \(Raleigh, N.C.\)/Associated Press](#) (1/4)

Better organizational skills may improve boys' academic performance. Tutor Ana Homayoun helps teens -- especially adolescent boys -- learn and maintain key organizational skills vital to their educational success. Boys may have more difficulty than girls in terms of organizing and multitasking as the demands on students to take responsibility for homework and studying grow in junior high and high school, education experts say. [International Herald Tribune](#) (1/1)

Authors tutor low-income children in expanding program. A non-profit tutoring program that began in San Francisco in 2002 and has since expanded across the country pairs professional writers and others with mostly low-income children who need to work on writing skills. "Kids say, 'I'm not a good writer.' I don't know who told them that, but I'd like to kick them in the kneecap," said noted author Dave Eggers, who co-founded the program. "There is no such thing. It's about work. With enough work, anyone can write something clear, well thought out, even eloquent." [Forbes](#) (1/7)

Comics may help motivate, inspire struggling students. Educators are increasingly looking toward comic books to encourage children's literacy and English-language skills. "Teachers are looking for ways to engage their children, and they're finding some of that in comic books," said Michael Bitz, who founded the Columbia University Teachers College Comic Book Project, "For kids who may be struggling and for kids who may be new to the English language, that visual sequence is a very powerful tool." [The New York Times \(subscription required\)](#) (12/26)

Professional Leadership

Opinion: To improve schools, give educators more control. Barry McGhan, a retired Michigan teacher, writes that despite NCLB's admirable intentions it is deeply flawed due to its emphasis on penalties without any opportunity for reward. "This all-stick-no-carrot approach perpetuates a top-down system where power is held by people who have no accountability for the work to be done," he writes. [Detroit Free Press](#) (1/3)

Mentors help first-time teachers navigate classroom challenges. Only 28% of new Ohio teachers leave the profession within five years versus 46% nationwide thanks in part to the state's strong mentor programs, officials there say. Ohio allocates \$800 for each first-year teacher to help offset the costs associated with mentoring them. [The Plain Dealer \(Cleveland\)](#) (1/2)

Custodians do far more than clean up. Like all good school custodians, Nathaniel Carpenter, 61, keeps trouble at bay, says his school's principal, Pam Greer. From comforting kindergartners crying for their mothers on the first day of school to helping calm down disruptive pupils, Carpenter, who retired this month after 42 years as a custodian in Nashville schools, has been a role model for students. [The Tennessean \(Nashville\)](#) (12/30)

Musical background inspires Arizona state education leader. When Tom Horne, Arizona's superintendent of public instruction, advocates for arts education, he's speaking from experience. "Music has an intrinsic value and an instrumental value in education," said Horne, who is an accomplished pianist and fan of classical music. "We have to see to it that kids are exposed to those great inheritances of the arts so they can carry them on to the next generation." [The Arizona Republic \(Phoenix\)/Cronkite News Service](#) (12/25)

Technology Solutions

Exergaming moves from gym class to fitness centers. Video games designed to provide a tough workout may soon become common at fitness centers, as entrepreneurs catch on to the technology already popular in many schools' physical education classes. "The competition of the game allows them to get lost in the moment," said fitness expert and consultant John Hayley. "All of the sudden, when the game is over, they find themselves dripping in sweat and can't believe how hard they worked." [Entrepreneur.com](#) (1/3)

Joyce Brothers: Parents must understand Internet risks. Understanding how Internet predators operate is vital in terms of keeping children safe, Dr. Joyce Brothers writes. Keeping Internet-connected computers out of kids' rooms and forbidding them to provide their names in public Web forums are just some of the steps Brothers' says parents can take to keep their children safe online. [Seattle Post-Intelligencer](#) (1/1)

Children are the future of virtual worlds. Encouraged by the success of Web sites like Club Penguin and Webkinz in reaching young people, children's entertainment companies, along with toy manufactures, are rapidly increasing their efforts to make and draw children into virtual worlds. Debra Aho Williamson, an [eMarketer](#) analyst, predicts the population of children who are members of a virtual world will increase from 8.2 million today to 20 million by 2011. [The New York Times](#) (12/31)

Colleges adjust to growing population of students with disabilities. As some 1.2 million U.S. students with special needs are pursuing post-secondary education, colleges are increasingly digitizing textbooks for use in screen-reading software and offering more counselors to support such students. [American City Business Journals](#) (12/21)

Policy Watch

Report: Internet-savvy young adults drawn to libraries. Computer-savvy adults ages 18 to 30 were the biggest library users in the U.S. this year, according to a Pew Internet & American Life Project survey. "These findings turn our thinking about libraries upside down," said Leigh Estabrook, a University of Illinois professor emeritus. "Internet use seems to create an information hunger and it is information savvy young people who are most likely to visit libraries," she said. [Yahoo!/Reuters](#) (12/30)

Congress, Bush approve federal education budget. Federal education spending will increase 2.9% in the 2008-09 school year to \$59.2 billion, after Congress approved a budget bill that President George W. Bush subsequently signed into law on Dec. 26. [Education Week \(premium article access compliments of Edweek.org\)](#) (12/27)

NCLB

Educators at failing schools bemoan lack of NCLB changes. Congress's inaction on NCLB means struggling schools probably will continue to face sanctions at least until 2009 -- a frustrating situation for those educators who had hoped revisions to the law would give schools more flexibility. [The Tennessean \(Nashville\)](#) (1/1)

In the Field

Study: Increased liver disease expected among obese young people. Obesity, not alcoholism, is now believed to be the leading cause of liver disease in Europe and North America, according to experts in the U.K. With obesity among young people on the rise, liver disease in this age group likewise is expected to increase. [BBC](#) (1/3)

Canadian program uses empathy to tackle bullying. A 4-month-old baby is helping Seattle fourth- and fifth-graders learn empathy and other so-called emotional literacy skills. The Roots of Empathy program, which originated in Canada and is now employed in several countries and launching in the U.S. this year in the Seattle area, invites local parents to bring their newborns into classrooms to help school children learn bonding and empathy. The program was shown to have reduced aggressive behaviors such as bullying in 88% of children tracked in a 2001 University of British Columbia study. [Seattle Post-Intelligencer](#) (12/29)

Student reporters uncover hidden school cameras. Reporters for a Massachusetts high school newspaper uncovered hidden cameras in school hallways, raising union questions and prompting a superintendent's apology for not alerting faculty or students. The cameras, hidden or disguised as smoke alarms outside locker rooms and bathrooms, were intended to deter student theft but had not yet been activated, said Superintendent Jeffrey M. Young. [The Boston Globe](#) (12/27)

U.S. teen raises money to open Cambodian school. After reading about the plight of impoverished Cambodian children, Rachel Rosenfeld, 17, raised \$52,000 to open a new school to serve 300 elementary students in a small village. "Going to school is very important to everyone's future," Rosenfeld told the new students. "Aim very high, and you'll be surprised what you can achieve." [MSNBC/Associated Press](#) (12/26)

Study: More parents restrict TV access. About 47% of parents set multiple TV rules for teens in 2004, including setting time and programming limits, compared to 40% in 1994, according to a new U.S. Census Bureau study. Some 71% of 6- to 11-year-olds had such limits in 2004 compared to 60% in the 1990s. [The Arizona Republic \(Phoenix\)](#) (12/26)

"Nothing can add more power to your life than concentrating all your energies on a limited set of targets."

~ Nido Zubein