

# LEARNING MATTERS

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Divisional Magazine of the HSD Superintendent's Office  
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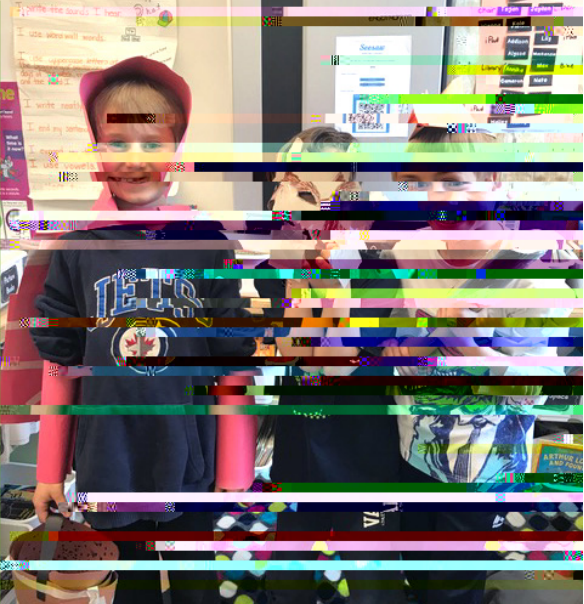


Professional Learning Magazine for Hanover School Division Educators

WE NEED







## IN OUR SCHOOLS

# COMMUNICATION THROUGH DIGITAL READER'S THEATRE at Niverville Elementary School

This spring, 2H embarked on a Digital Reader's Theater journey - completely by accident. During Guided Reading, some groups read books which included a play at the end. The students were excited to discover the plays and asked if they could perform them. Word quickly spread throughout the classroom, and suddenly everyone was asking for a book with a play at the end. After seeing the students' excitement, I knew I had to tap into their interest. Rather than a traditional reader's theater, we decided to leverage digital; film the performances in front of a green screen, adding props and costumes. We began working on the plays during class.

**"Practicing and performing took on a whole new set of communication challenges."**

Knowing I wanted to keep student voice and choice, I let the students decide if they wanted a speaking part or if they wanted to be a director. After settling on parts, practicing ensued. Initially, I thought to myself "I've got a great speaking and representing assessment on my

hands," little did I know how much further their communication would go.

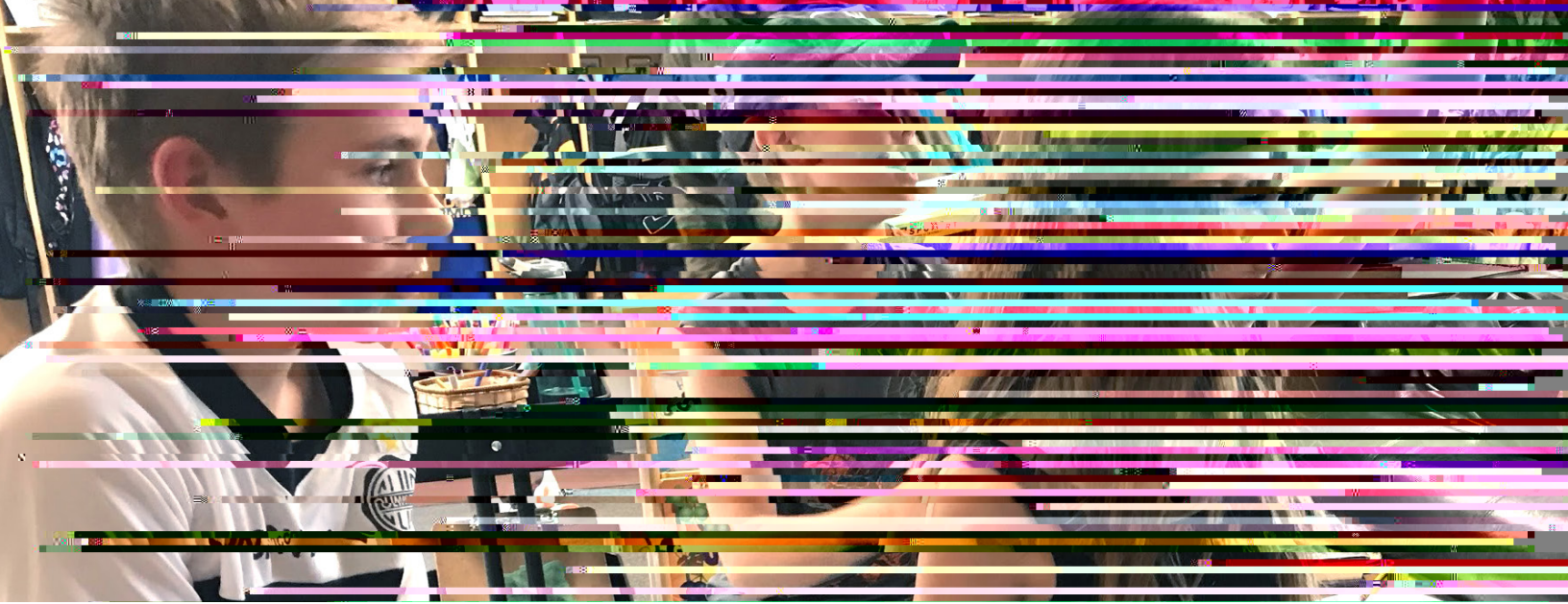
The students took ownership of the whole production. They created their own costumes and props, speaking with each other to decide what was needed. Creating the costumes and props was not always easy; however, it was in these moments the deeper conversations shone through. Communication was crucial as they ran into problems or needed an extra hand; students had to problem solve and work with peers to figure out how to build an oven and a cupboard. Because they were working in large groups, these discussions took on a very different dynamic than when working with a partner or in a small group as they often do. With so many students to turn too, they worked together more and relied on me less.

Practicing and performing took on a whole new set of communication challenges. How would the directors find their voices in a sea of opinions? They were in charge of calling "cut" and "action," queuing the actors when to enter and exit the scene, and getting their peers to follow the staging directions. The directors were also responsible for communicating with the audience; deciding how the scenes would be set and which green screen background would convey to the audience what was happening in the performance.

What originated as a mode of presentational communication, turned into a project full of amazing, collaborative, and interpersonal communications. Wonderful things happen when you let kids work and explore for a purpose; my students shared a common goal and, through communication, achieved their goal.

- Kate Hawgood, Gr. 2 Teacher  
Niverville Elementary School





# COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATION THAT SUPPORTS LEARNING

# INQUIRY at Blumenort School

As an educator, science is one of the most enjoyable and engaging subject areas for me to

# COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION

## at Landmark Elementary School

Over the past few weeks, my 3/4 class and LES Music Teacher, Kim Gordon, have been working hard on an exciting collaboration project!

The 3/4 class began exploring Canadian artist Emily Carr's art in April. We took note of the texture she added to her paintings, the colours that she used and the landscapes she created. We then got to choose the media of our choice to create our very own Carr inspired art piece! We were also beginning to compose our own haiku poems, taking inspiration from Carr's art in addition to the beauty of Landmark. But our project didn't stop there...

In a staff room conversation, Karlie mentioned that she was working on writing haiku with her class and connecting the poetry to art that they created. Her enthusiasm for this project was obviously palpable because I wanted a piece of this project too! I suggested that I could work on a composition element with her class in music.

We began by looking at a single haiku poem entitled "Beaches" by Kaitlyn Guenther. We

focused on sounds that came to mind when we read the poem and translated those to instrument sounds. We discussed how we wanted to incorporate the words of the poem; speaking, singing, repeating words, etc. We talked about an introduction and ending. Then, we put the class version together and performed it. It was beautiful!

The class haiku composition was only the beginning. Our next step was for the students to work in small groups to create soundscapes to compliment the students' individual haiku. This time, they began by working individually to establish the musical ideas that they wanted for their haiku. Then, they formed small groups to discuss their ideas and share them before moving onto the actual creative process of adding in the instruments. Each haiku poet was in charge of his/her own musical composition; s/he was the director and told the other group

members what their jobs were. The other group members could make suggestions, but the final decision about how a piece was performed was decided by the author/composer of that piece. Finally, students recorded video of their haiku compositions. The final product is creative, thoughtful and beautiful! We have created a bulletin board of all three components including a QR code so our audience can listen to our compositions while enjoying our art and poetry. It was exciting and inspiring to see the collaboration, creativity and communication that took place in each group as they worked towards the performance of their haiku composition!

- Kim Gordon, Music Teacher  
Landmark Elementary School



# STUDENT PODCAST PROJECT at NCI

Emerging in the last few years has been a trend of moving away from static radio stations to more user controlled audio art. This has come in the form of millions of different podcasts. Podcasts are digital audio programs that people can download via a website or a program like Spotify or Podcast Addict. What separates podcasts from more traditional audio programs like radio is the scope of topics and the freedom. On a podcast, there are no regulations on time, content or subject matter. You do not have to have a certain amount of Canadian content if you are based in Canada, or have commercials to appease sponsors.

Two years ago, I started a podcast out of my basement. I wanted to revive a radio program that our Slovenian community in Winnipeg used to have. I have always been fascinated with radio and working in audio technology, so I took the plunge. For a minimal investment of a microphone and connecting box, I was off and running. I do one show a month, and they vary in length from 20 to 45 minutes usually. After the first few episodes, my mind

immediately moved to how I could incorporate this technology into my professional life.

I approached my principal with a list of things I would need to start our Niverville Collegiate Institute Podcast. I framed the discussion with the intent to have the students practice their skills as communicators. I shoulder tapped some students who I thought might be interested. We had meetings, made plans, and picked a date to record. All the while, we discussed interview techniques, how to ask questions, how to use a microphone, how loud to talk so you can be heard but not yelling, and various other sound techniques.

Our first episode was rough. The students were nervous, they were not as prepared as they wanted to be, and I was not sure what it was going to look like. But we made it through, and started looking forward. I asked them to listen to podcasts and track what they liked about them, and we eventually adapted our format. We had a student create our theme, and we moved to more of a panel discussion instead of individual segments.

We still have a long way to go. The students are still nervous in front of a mic. They still struggle with not talking over top of each other during recording, and finding that balance of when to speak, and when to listen. We are looking into expanding the show to include more student created content such as short stories and essays. But the confidence is growing, and with that, a sense that these young people can and do have a voice in this world that is worth listening to.

- Mark Lebar, Teacher  
Niverville Collegiate Institute



# PROJECT 11 at Southwood School

Mental health is something that knows no boundaries. Everyone, no matter the age, gender, income level, etc., can be affected by a mental health issue. When we can help students be aware of resources and strategies for coping with challenges before they become too difficult to handle, we can set them up for success, not just in school, but also in life.

The True North Foundation runs a mental health initiative called PROJECT 11, which aims to help teachers reach all students, wherever they are in their mental health journey. The program was created in honour of former Winnipeg Jets and Manitoba Moose player #11, Rick Rypien. As of now, the program is for Grades 5-8, but I am one of ten teachers in Manitoba to try the program in Grade 4 this year. It is very exciting for me and my class.

As someone who struggled with mental health issues and overcame many obstacles, PROJECT 11 appealed to me both professionally and personally. I am very passionate about helping

others in their mental health journey, because while it is so hard to try to work through some issues by ourselves as adults, imagine what it is like for our students.

When I read what PROJECT 11 was about, I felt that this could reach so many children. It focuses on building relationships, having a greater sense of self-awareness, mindfulness, and being able to connect with others in a positive way. Lessons are engaging, active, and cross-curricular. There is so much opportunity to incorporate many different grounding and coping strategies such as yoga, guided mindful moments, music and rhythm, relaxation techniques, art energy, and the list goes on. The lessons specific to Grade 4 are about meaningful and relevant topics. Some of them include apologizing, self-awareness, conflict resolution, coping with stress, mindfulness, gratitude, flexible thinking, and many more.

I have many hopes for the program in my class. First of all, I hope that it reaches

students in a positive way and they remember these coping strategies later on in life to find something that relaxes them or makes them happy. It would be extremely beneficial for my students if they were able to continue the program in middle school to reinforce those lessons. I hope that it will create a sense of team in my class where we learn to communicate with each other in positive and encouraging ways. Lastly, I hope that talking about our feelings and how to manage those feelings will start to relieve the negative stigma associated with mental health and perhaps change the direction that a student may be headed in.

If you are interested in more information, visit [projecteleven.ca](http://projecteleven.ca) and watch the video about Rick Rypien and how this program began. It's definitely worth your time.

- Marianne Neufeld, Grade 4 Teacher  
Southwood School

# PRACTICAL SCIENCE - LEARNING FROM THE INSIDE OUT at NCI

Over the last couple of months, my Grade 8 science students have been hard at work on a very interesting project. Samsung Canada sponsors a contest called "Solve For Tomorrow", in which a science class is asked to apply STEM learning to a real problem in their local community. I saw a perfect opportunity to bring real, topical learning outside of the classroom while fostering engagement and interest in science and engineering. It was a great opportunity to show practical uses of science in our students everyday lives, and help develop a collaborative classroom as we worked together to create a video for the contest.

The issue we decided to address was water shortages. Last summer the town of Niverville put out a notice to all residents on the municipal water system asking people to refrain from watering their lawns or filling their pools. Shortly afterwards, another notice was released saying that the increased demand on the towns water supply was causing some problems, and the town was going to have to change the way they treated the water in order to keep up with demand.

We saw this as a very topical choice, as it clearly had science and engineering solutions, tied in directly to the Grade 8 curriculum (Cluster 4: Water Systems), and was a global scale problem as many areas are currently suffering or at risk of a water shortage.

We did a preliminary research project in class to discover what exactly the problem was

and what solutions were being considered. The town has lots of raw water, but when the pumps run too quickly it stirs up a lot of sediment in the aquifer which clogs the filters. By changing how we filter, we can increase the amount of water filtered at the cost of having a higher mineral content. The town then went to find a better source of raw water.

**"Students were engaged, collaborating, creating, thinking critically, and could not wait for the next class."**

We did a class-wide brainstorming session on what other possible solutions we could apply to this problem. The class came up with many excellent ideas such as:

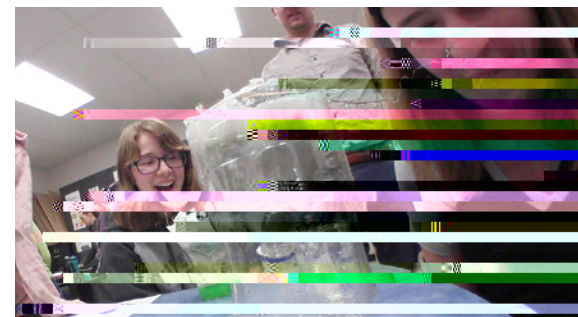
- tapping into Shoal Lake water (like the city of Winnipeg)
- using different types of filters
- using a series of filters that could get rid of sediment more easily
- using rain-barrels to help collect fresh water
- trying to use larger pumps to reduce the pressure in the aquifer
- finding new sources of water just for watering lawns

These ideas all sounded excellent, and so we decided to talk to the experts about why these solutions weren't being pursued. We got into contact with the town of Niverville's Operations Manager and set up a tour of the water treatment plant, and while there we had the opportunity to ask the people in charge of maintaining the town's water supply all kinds of questions.

Once we had addressed some of our ideas, we went back to the lab and started working on a new type of filter. We found out quite quickly that filtering water was not as easy as it looked! We then worked together as a group to write and edit a script and storyboard our video, and we are currently in the process of editing it and putting it all together.

This experience brought real life learning about curricular topics to a completely new level. Students were engaged, collaborating, creating, thinking critically, and could not wait for the next class. It was an awesome experience for everyone involved. Even if Samsung does not offer this contest next year, I will use the exact same process to teach water systems. Bringing the outside world into your classroom sparks creativity and engagement in a way you have never experienced before. Try it if you haven't already!

- Chris Burns, Teacher  
Niverville Collegiate Institute





# COMMUNICATING THROUGH MUSIC at the SRSS

This spring, the SRSS music program had the opportunity to perform and enjoy the Rocky Mountain Music Festival held in Banff, Alberta. The trip was April 10-16, 2018. Several groups attended the festival. These were the Senior Jazz Band, Senior Concert Band, Chamber Choir, and Vocal Jazz (Spectrum). These four groups loaded into two buses and drove through the night both ways. This allowed us more time in the breathtaking Rockies, without missing too many classes. During this trip, we had many beneficial and inspiring musical experiences, as well as bonding in our groups and as a program. At this popular and high-level festival, we were able to watch and learn from some prestigious clinicians, brilliant performers, and skilled groups of our own age. Some of the evening concerts we soaked in were the UBC University Singers, and the Count Basie Orchestra with Carmen Bradford. These concerts allowed us, as musicians, to appreciate the power of music through both singing and the playing of instruments. Emotion, feeling, and purpose can be communicated in many ways, even within the scope of music itself. Each of our school's groups performed in the festival and then had an hour slot with a master clinician. These times with the clinicians allowed us to learn specifically within our repertoire, have more personal conversation, and receive pointers intentionally.

I am a member of the SRSS chamber choir and I am also in Spectrum Vocal Jazz. Chamber

choir had the privilege of performing a showcase concert one evening. We performed in the beautiful Rolston Hall, with a view of the mountains to sing to. The atmosphere of that night was electric, and our choir sang our hearts out. For this concert, we had a long list of repertoire of phenomenal diversity in style, language, and message. With such diversity comes excitement for all, audience and performer, but also challenge. With varying styles, we have to put effort and thought into our expression and the way we look. We move, sing, and perform differently during songs of particular tempos and feel. Learning to communicate with different languages means studying the translation and understanding the meaning of the song. If the audience cannot understand the words, the weight falls on us to convey the feeling, story, and purpose of the song. During this concert, our songs were

communicate. through practice and discussion

well the audience. The diversity of the repertoire, the languages, the styles, and the music itself, all contribute to the communication.

communicate

in it as music and endeavor

# COMMUNICATING INTENTIONALLY FOR A PURPOSE AND AN AUDIENCE

## What does it mean to read like a writer? What does it mean to write for the reader?

These questions are the basis for four powerful books on Writer's Workshop by Katie Wood Ray, who takes an inquiry approach to the teaching and learning of writing and representing as a way of communicating. This approach links to one of the five dimensions of the global competency of communication that focuses on designing for particular audiences... "learners have skills to compose and produce communication for a particular audience, designing it appropriately to achieve maximum understanding, relevance, and meaning for that audience."

So how do we support growth on this journey of communicating effectively for a range of audiences while engaging the writer in authentic writing experiences with opportunities for voice and choice? Katie Wood Ray's inquiry framework

has five key stages:

1. **Identify** texts that are full of potential for the kinds of writing students will do
2. **Read** in reading and getting to know the texts they'll study
3. **Discuss** where students revisit the texts and ask, "What did we notice about how these texts are written? What decisions were made?"
4. **Write** using specific language that helps students envision using what they have learned from authors for their own writing
5. **Revise** as students work on writing for a purpose and an audience, having been inspired and mentored by other authors

Teachers in HSD who are using this inquiry approach to teaching writing have expressed increased student engagement, motivation, quantity and quality of writing.

Two divisional PLCs along with multiple school/grade based PLCs have already taken place this year on Inquiry in the Writer's Workshop and because more teachers are keen to try it out, I am hoping to hold another PLC this fall. Stay tuned!

- Rhonda Kubanek, Learning Coach

- *Already Ready: Nurturing Writers in Preschool and Kindergarten*
- *About the Authors: Writing Workshop with Our Youngest Writers (K-2 but also very appropriate for K-4)*
- *Study Driven: A Framework for Planning Units of Study in the Writing Workshop (Gr. 1-12 but more geared towards Gr. 4 and up)*
- *In Picture and In Words: Teaching the Qualities of Good Writing Through Illustration Study (K-4 but also appropriate for MY)*

## THE POWER OF YET! at Kleefeld School

This year during Strong Connections, our school project centered around, "The Power of Yet." Growth Mindset is a powerful phrase in the world of education, and in the world of mental health. Carol Dweck says, "...our studies show that teaching people to have a 'growth mindset,' which encourages a focus on effort rather than intelligence or talent, helps make them into high achievers in school and in life." If students use the word, "yet," when faced with a difficult task, they can change how they approach that task. Rather than looking at the task and feeling defeated before they begin, they can have an attitude of hope.

We started our project by talking about what a growth mindset is. We described the markers of what a growth mind-set looks like in real life, then brainstormed about some things that they couldn't do, but were looking forward to learning. The younger students came up with statements like, "I can't ride a 2-wheeler - yet," or, "I can't read a chapter book, yet." One Kindergarten student stated, "I can't invent metal and fly airplanes - yet." Ah, the dreams of the young! As the student participants got

older, we saw different sorts of challenges like, "I can't hit a 3 pointer - yet," or, "I can't do long division - yet."

It was very encouraging to see students engaged and really beginning to understand that the words they use have the power to change how they think and what they can achieve. In one particular instance, a Grade 3 student was thinking about something to write down. As we talked and did a bit of brainstorming, he came up with, "I can't read big words." I wondered if he would add the, "yet," on his own. His face was a little worried - he had gotten stuck on what he couldn't do and had forgotten what we were brainstorming for. So I leaned over and whispered, "Yet, you can't read big words...yet!" His face literally transformed with that word. He looked at me, with a smile blossoming on his face, and repeated, "Yet! I can't read big words, yet!" That was a powerful moment, and it wasn't the only one. Those two days of strong connections were filled with these little conversations about dreams and wishes and the power of words and mind-set.

Each student put their "yet" statement on a card. Some added their names to the front, while some put their names on the back. We stapled their card to the POWER OF YET bulletin board which we will keep up for the year. We still see students stopping by the bulletin board, and looking over the goals. Interestingly, in the Tell Them From Me Survey, one student commented on how encouraging they found that board.

In June we will take down their "Yet" cards and hand them back to each student, hopefully spurring on more conversations about goals realized or still to be attained.

- Wendy Martens, Counsellor  
Kleefeld School



# MAKING IMPACT WITH PUPPETS

Over the last few months I had the pleasure of connecting the Gr. 9 SRSS Drama Class with Karlie Krisko's Gr. 4 students at LES, Mallory Worsnop's Gr. 4 students at Blumenort, and Naomi Stobbe's Gr. 10 drama students at the SRSS.

Our journey started with a creative collaborative planning session with all the teachers. The intention for their classes was to use this "ARTSpiration" to have Gr. 9 and 10 drama students help the Gr. 4 classes to communicate ways to work on relationships. But so much more happened!

The students first met by making a short video that would introduce their class to the class

they would be working with. Check it out! (<http://goo.gl/7nAW6t>)

Their next encounter was a Google Hangout in which the teams of SRSS students met with their puppet teams from Landmark and Blumenort to get to know each other and plan.



# HSD FAREWELLS

The following long-term employees will be leaving at the end of this school year, or departed at an earlier time during the 2017/18 session. We recognize their dedicated work, and years of service to the students and staff of Hanover School Division.

## 30+ YEARS

Katie Cook	Teacher	Steinbach Regional
Susanne Funk	Guidance Counsellor	South Oaks
Alvin Ginter	Teacher	Niverville Elementary
Merle Hiebert	Teacher	Steinbach Regional
Cheryl Penner	Teacher	Steinbach Regional
Darlene Remple	Teacher	Elmdale
Doris Young	Teacher	Landmark Elementary

## 10+ YEARS

## 20+ YEARS

Rick Ardies	Assistant Superintendent	Division Office
Barry Biberdorf	Teacher	Green Valley
John Loewen	Teacher	Clearspring
Kiran Mahi	Educational Assistant	Southwood
Alvina Martens	Guidance Counsellor	Steinbach Regional
Rod Thiessen	Teacher	Elmdale
Allen Vogt	Custodian	Steinbach Regional
Carolyn Warkentin Peters	Resource Teacher	Southwood