



Career Education Newsletter

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The End of Another School Year! A Time for Reflection

It's here, the end of another school year! We can look back and reflect on all the things we have done throughout the year. With the summer holidays getting closer and the promise of those lazy, hazy days on the horizon, the last few weeks of school I'm sure will be full of high emotions from some students moving on as well as a flurry of activities. I hope that everyone has found something useful in the Discovery Newsletter this year and I would like your input on what you would like to see featured in next years issues. Please feel free to email me kbutler@wqsb.qc.ca with any input you may have. Thank you for everyone's continued support and have a fantastic summer.

Contextual Learning Part 2

Delivering the QEP in the classroom

The new reform is well underway and it seems to be overwhelming many teachers from what I hear. In the last issue of discovery there was an article entitled "Contextual Learning", which explained the definition and importance of such an approach to teaching. The article also mentioned 2 of the 3

components of the QEP including, the Cross Curricular Competencies (CCC's) and Broad Areas of Learning (BAL). This article will take a more in depth look at all 3 components of the QEP, and where GOAL/Contextual based learning fits into the new reform. For the purpose of this article both of the above terms (contextual learning and GOAL) mean the same thing.

The focus of the new reform here in Quebec is a curriculum that is focused on competency based teaching and learning. School should give all students the opportunity to acquire a broad range of fundamental skills associated with understanding the world, personal development, socialization, and of course academic success (QEP, 2004). All this learning should be carefully presented to students in a way that gives meaning and focus beyond the confines of the classroom through addressing three different components of the QEP including:

1. The 5 Broad Areas of Learning (BAL). These are connections that are made to a person's everyday life and are used to give relevance to learning, so here is where the GOAL/Contextual based learning fits into the QEP. Each theme that is created for the classroom e.g. a theme on Africa should focus on at least one of the BAL's. The BAL's include:

- Health and well being
- Personal and career planning
- Environmental awareness and consumer rights and responsibilities
- Media literacy
- Citizenship and community life

2. Cross Curricular Competencies (CCC). These are behaviours, skills, abilities and ways of thinking that allow us to function fully in society. The QEP contains nine (9) cross curricular competencies that are grouped in **four categories:**

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Intellectual: (1) Uses information, (2) Solves problems (3) Exercises critical judgment (4) Uses creativity.

Methodological: (5) Adopts effective work methods (6) Uses information and communication technology

Personal and Social: (7) Achieves his/her potential (8) Cooperate with others

Communication-related: (9) Communicates appropriately

The above competencies should be delivered by all staff through continual reinforcement in all aspects of teaching.

3. Subject Areas

Subject areas also have competencies which have to be addressed (yes more competencies). The subject areas include:

- English Language Arts
- Français langue seconde
- Mathematics, Science and Technology
- Social Sciences (Geography, History and Citizenship Education)
- Arts Education (Drama, Visual Arts, Dance and Music)
- Personal Development (Physical Education, Moral Education and Religious Education)

(Taken from QEP 2004)

Since the QEP requires students to know basic skills, e.g. to communicate effectively, to solve problems (the CCC's) and to understand and apply these principles and tools, there is a natural connection to contextual learning and more importantly to the Guidance Oriented Approach to Learning (GOAL). Using what you already know about contextual learning from the last article, lets take a look at your classroom. The following compares a traditional classroom to a contextual/GOAL based classroom.

Contextual/GOAL Based Teaching and Learning

How relevant is your classroom? Teacher preference and style have a lot to do with how a classroom and learning is structured (CORD, 2001). However, it is important to integrate some level of contextualized learning into all themes taught to improve student engagement and motivation (Gershaw, 1989).

Review the following and put an "X" on the continuum below each element, somewhere between traditional classroom and contextual classroom, that most represents your current classroom and teaching style:

Elements	Traditional Classroom	Contextual Classroom
Delivery of Instruction	Primarily rely on lectures	Active & hands on lessons that focus on Student discovery
Material Selection	Primarily text books workbooks	A variety of materials & resources are used this includes work/ Community based Businesses, media IT
Teacher Orientation	Didactic dissemination of Information	Interactive facilitation of learning
Lesson focus	Focus on academic Subject in isolation	Focus on the purpose & connection of the academic subject Beyond the class in With relation to careers
Student Organization	Primarily individual classroom seat work	Interactive group work opportunities for Learning outside the Classroom & school
Student Responsibility	Teacher controls & directs the classroom	Students have choices & opportunities for self direction (career based)
Student Assessment	written tests at the end of every Unit and/or For a grade	Assessment provides on going feedback for student improvement. it is focused on cycles Student work, observations and demonstration environment

Adapted from University of Massachusetts "Project-based Learning v's Traditional Instruction" 2000

TOP THREE WEB SITES

Here are some great sites to help you deliver the QEP through a project based learning approach to the subject you are teaching. All the sites that are given can be adapted accordingly to incorporate the Guidance Oriented Approach to Learning

1. **The Astrobiology Curriculum – An Integrated Inquiry-based Curriculum:** This resource has five activities that enable students to examine the nature of life, what it requires, it's limits, and where it might be found. This is suitable for grades 5-10 and can be found at <http://astrobio.terc.edu>
2. **Tomatosphere Project** – Have your students learn about survival in space and on Mars. In spring of 2005 grade 3-6 and 8-10 students will be given the opportunity to grow tomato plants from 3 different types of seeds – a control group, seeds that have been exposed to Mars, and those exposed to a simulated Mars greenhouse environment. To register for free and get all the resources go to <http://www.tomatosphere.org> website and click on **REGISTER NOW FOR 2005**
3. **Bizworld Project:** This web site provides schools with hands-on programs, for use in grades 3-8. It is designed to add relevancy to academics, while improving the understanding of entrepreneurship and money management. To learn more and download all the lesson plans and activity sheets you need go to: <http://www.bizworld.org>

If there is anyone that has access to project based resources for teachers or you know of a web site with tools, information and units of work and would like to share these ideas with other educators please contact me and let me know and I will pass on the information. All teachers sharing resource materials will be fully recognized in the Discovery:

Tel: (819) 684 1770
Email: kbutler@wqsb.qc.ca

What Strategies Can You Use to Implement the QEP Into Your Classroom

Take the themes and projects you are already working on and incorporate an:

Inquiry Based Approach www.youthlearn.org

This is where a student seeks answers to questions and learns to frame and ask questions on many levels in order to construct and understanding of what they are learning.

Project Based Approach

<http://pblmm.k12.ca.us/PBLGuide/WhyPBL.html>

This is where a small group of students or the whole class work around a common issue or theme and contribute to a common goal or series of goals – students work i.e. an end product

Problem – Solving Approach www.cotf.edu/ete/pbl.html

This is where problems connect to a context that the student can relate to in everyday life and is rooted in the subject matter of the curriculum e.g. how can we make others in our school more aware of the environment.

Concept – Based Approach www.collaborative.org/ccbe

This is a classification of devices used to make sense of our learning, it helps students bring together the many objects, ideas and events that surround us; they provide lenses through which we view and understand the world in which we live in e.g. To understand the concept of matter as experienced in the “Material World” verses “Earth and Space” verses “Living Things”.

Delivering the QEP using the Guidance Oriented Approach to Learning is all about each student actively participating in meaningful and relevant activities that are related to a student's life/career development. In many instances in teaching as you know, knowledge interrelates to a student's life/career development - this is not obvious to a child, but it often is to an adult. Context can add rigor to the curriculum and it will certainly improve student engagement and motivation in your classroom. To the left in “Top Three Websites” there are resources that you can use in your classroom to help you deliver a project or theme that addresses components of the QEP. Enjoy!

Kelly Butler

For Students:

Career Cruising for High School Students

<http://www.careercruising.com>

Career cruising is a comprehensive and interactive career guidance resource that provides the information you need to make the right choice for post secondary education and your career. It includes in-depth profiles of hundreds of different careers, detailed information on colleges and universities and something no other resource has which is: multimedia interviews with real people in every career.

So don't hesitate if you want to do more research about your dream career or even a career that you think you may be interested in, in the future. All you need to do is contact your guidance counselor, principal or the career consultant on kbutler@wqsb.qc.ca to get a password so that you can start surfing.

The Fast and the Furious! Even Vin Diesel Had to Start Somewhere!

Achieving your dream job

First of all, let's just get one thing straight. Nobody's born knowing what they want to do - the smug smiles on the faces of those people with great careers have usually taken time and work to get them. So if you've got your eye on a top job and you want to improve your chances of getting it then read on.

Do you remember what career dreams you had when you were a kid? Chances are, you had high aspirations to become an entrepreneur, an astronaut, a movie star, the head of a company, etc. But did those dreams ever include starting way down at the bottom as an assistant to learn the ropes or working as a bartender to pay for school and cover the rent? Probably not!

The truth is, most people start at the top when it comes to dreaming about the future, but have to begin at the bottom when it comes to making the dream a reality. In fact, many experiences of the now rich and famous include some not-so-fantastic glamorous jobs.

Before he was a multi-million-dollar movie star, Vin Diesel had the "well ard" job of being a bouncer for a nightclub in New York. Brad Pitt had the fab job of dressing up in a chicken costume and trying to convince customers to visit a fast food restaurant. Tom Cruise had his sights set on becoming a priest and Sheryl Crow used to sing ad jingles before making it big as a rock star.

Reality is that sometimes you have to do the unglamorous to help you get to where you need to be in the fast lane. Countless celebrities and successful businesspeople took jobs just to pay the bills while waiting for their big break. You have to be very patient and extremely persistent. While you might not need to go selling newspapers for \$2 an hour around your neighbourhood, you might just need to take on a part time job to help make money while you are finishing your post secondary education.

In some jobs these days, starting at the bottom may give you opportunities to work your way up the ladder in the industry, taking an entry-level job can get you just the right skills to gain enough experience to move on to bigger and better things. The trick is to treat each and every job like it is the most important position in the world and dedicate yourself to excellence in every job you take on. Enterprise Rent-A-Car, for example, says it looks to the company training grounds for the leaders of tomorrow. Nearly all of the company's senior executives started as trainees in a rental car branch, including the company's president and chief executive officer.

Famous success stories can also show that one of the most important lessons to learn is to never give up on your dreams. J.K. Rowling, author of the famous Harry Potter series, had the idea for a series of wizard books for years, but had to pay the bills and support her daughter. She worked for a long time as a secretary and teacher, but never gave up on her idea. She is now one of the world's most famous – and wealthiest – authors.

The bottom line is that it is not just your experiences, but how you use them and learn from them that makes all the difference. While it can be difficult to wait for your big opportunity to come along, sometimes it just takes a little hard work, patience and persistence to get where you need to go.

Aim Higher Students Comments My SPCA Work Experience

My Work Experience with the Aim Higher program was at the SPCA and it was a wonderful experience! I love animals and being at the SPCA really improved my interest in animals. For example, I learned how to feed and care for the animals properly. All the animals seemed to be different in a weird sort of way, and there was something special about each one of them. I wanted to adopt them all!

I also got to learn more about my friend that went with me. We learned the importance of cooperation and communication while we spent time with the animals and the workers at the SPCA. We were able to bring the dogs for nice long walks and bathed them. We cleaned the cat and small animal cages, and got to choose what animals we wanted to play with in the SPCA play room. My relationship with the animals grew to such an extent that I didn't want to leave the SPCA. My partner and I have many wonderful memories of our Work Experience!

I would not hesitate to participate in the Aim Higher program again next year! All I had to do was sign up, write a resume, and go through an interview with an employer. I now know what it is like to go through and prepare for a job and interview. The Work Experience made me realize what skills I have and what kind of job I should look for in the future. I am still not sure what job I will look into in the future, but I have a much clearer idea of what would be best for me and what education and skills I need to get there.

Now I can add to my resume that I have completed a Work Experience at the SPCA in Rouyn Noranda, and I have an extremely positive evaluation from my supervisor at the SPCA to add to my portfolio. The community animator has told me that this could be very helpful information to have when I apply for a paid job. I want to encourage the Aim Higher program to continue. I believe that good experience leads to good workers. I would definitely call Aim Higher a REAL experience!

Sarah Crépeau (Student Noranda High School)

Aim Higher Parent Comment

For the first time in my daughter's life she experienced working in an enterprise. I thought it was a wonderful experience for her. She learned so much, felt useful, and the feeling of contribution gave her a sense of value and a boost in her self-esteem. I hope to see the Aim Higher program continue next year for students because both parents and students appreciate it!

Sandra Crépeau

Information and Resources for High School & Elementary Teachers

Career Cruising

<http://www.careercruising.com>

Career cruising is a comprehensive and interactive career guidance resource for high school teachers. This resource provides students with the information they need to make the right choices for post secondary education and their career. It includes in-depth profiles of hundreds of different careers, detailed information on colleges and universities and something no other resource has which is: multimedia interviews with real people in every career and more including resources for career advisors and teachers.

If you would like more information and a password for this resource please contact the career consultant on kbutler@wqsb.qc.ca Career Cruising also offers training for teachers on how to use this resource effectively.

Paws in Jobland

Paws-in-Jobland is a career exploration tool for elementary school teachers. It ignites interest in career awareness and exploration, encourages reading skills and development and expands computer navigation skills for students in kindergarten through to fifth grade. I have registered all elementary schools for Paws-in-Jobland and principals have a copy of the booklet "Elementary School Lesson Plans". All teachers will be able to use the online version starting in September of 2004.

The GOAL Conference

The SCA-DPP and the GOAL English Schools network organized a one day symposium to support the objectives of GOAL. The symposium was a huge success and there were 10 participants that attended the conference throughout the WQSB including all the guidance counselors. There were some great opportunities to exchange ideas, learn new information and network with many other educators. This has now created a team of people to form a leadership core to implement GOAL in our schools here in Western Quebec. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the participants that attended from the WQSB I really appreciate all the support you have given me and I hope we can continue to work together in the future.

“The GOAL Post”

The GOAL Post is a Newsletter that is being written by the GOAL English School Networking committee for the Ministry of Education. The first issue will be out in the Fall of 2004 and will include learning and teaching resources based on the Guidance Oriented Approach to Learning. So look out for the up and coming issue of “The GOAL Post.”

WQSB GOAL Library and Resource Centre

The GOAL library and Resource Centre is based out of the Western Quebec Career Centre in Aylmer on Frank Robinson. This library is to assist and support principals and teachers with the Guidance Oriented Approach to Learning and the delivery of the QEP, by ensuring that students in grades 1-11 become aware of the people in their community and the work that they do with relation to their studies in school. Teachers and principals will have access to a range of teaching resource that are connected to careers. In the near future there will be a pamphlet of all the resources and tools that are available. For more information please contact kbutler@wqsb.qc.ca

Aylmer Elementary Visit to the Western Quebec Career Centre

On April 14, 2004 all 165 Aylmer Elementary grade 6 students had a very successful visit to the Western Quebec

Career Centre in Aylmer. Usually this Career Open Day is limited to high school students. Principal Maggie Turcotte and I, however, met in January to discuss the possibility of exposing Aylmer students to different educational opportunities.

Prior to our visit, I briefed each grade six classroom on the workshop options. These were: Homecare and Family and Social Assistance; Automotive Technician; Hotel Reception; Travel Sales; Professional Sales; Accounting Studies; Secretarial Studies; Computing Support; and Electronic A-V Equipment Repair.

Students selected their top three choices and were given passports listing the workshops they would be visiting. All attended their first choice, most their first and their second choice, and some attended all three of their favourites.

The visit exceeded everyone’s expectations, with one exception. One parent and her daughter thought that grade 6 was too young to expose children and inappropriate for an enriched student. Otherwise, students were extremely enthusiastic. On their feedback sheet they indicated they would like to revisit the Centre soon. Teachers also highly recommended this to be repeated.

Comments received from teachers emphasized the organization and value of the visit and requested a repeat next year. Students were grateful for the opportunity to be introduced to different fields of work.

Some specific findings:

Many students were surprised to learn of the academic requirements of courses e.g. French, Math and Computer courses were needed for the Automotive Mechanics course. They learned that most careers require cooperative skills training. Various careers were demystified and students’ eyes were opened to a sample of different types of well paid jobs in society – and different academic paths to take to reach those goals.

In light of the proposed amendments to the education paths at the secondary level (introduction of a work training component), this was a small taste of broader educational opportunities. The general feeling of the students was that

the application of their learning to the real world was made apparent.

Janet Intscher Vice Principal of Aylmer/St Marks Elementary School

Comments by students and teachers about the Career day at WQCC

Sahar El-Kadri Grade 6

I thought that the walk from Aylmer Elementary to our visit to the Career Centre was absolutely SUPERB. I thought that it inspired young elementary students to think ahead and think of what they want to do in their future careers. I think that the best career I have experienced today at the Career Centre was the "Travel Sales".

Melenie Demers Grade 6

I thought this was a very informative experience and it gave me, as a student, an idea about my future. It was a good idea to do this and I enjoyed it tremendously.

Cynthia Richard Grade 6

I thought going to the Career Centre was a great idea. It was very interesting and intriguing. Going there gave me more idea about what I want to do when I'm older. I wish we could have stayed longer.

Samantha MacConnell Grade 6

I find that it was a very educational visit and all the people were very nice and taught us a lot about the careers we were interested in. They also made it fun as well, which I think is a really good thing to do especially for us younger kids. All in all it was a great visit and I hope that one day they will do another one because it really interested me and opened my mind to the different careers out there.

Amanda Grade 6

My favourite career I visited was Travel Sales because we learned that you can't travel without proper documentation. The three people who taught us opened web cams and we

got to see weather in France and on another we got to see exactly what they were doing at that very moment in Times Square. They also let us get magazines for our projects in school. **I HAD SO MUCH FUN!**

Taylor Groeneward Grade 6

I thought that this visit helped me understand better the concept of work. It can be fun yet challenging. I thought the WQCC was very generous to teach us and give us stuff to learn. I think this was a great idea and they should do it again in the up and coming years. It was very fun and we learned some facts.

Joey Grade 6

I liked the career centre because I learned an education is very important in life. My favourite workshop was the professional salesman.

Ivan Omara Grade 6

Well I was shocked when I saw the auto repair shop, and what they told us about how an engine worked. I think that is a great career. But you have to get a good education to do that job to learn that. Also I have one important thing to say: "I hope we do this again and I am looking forward to doing this career in the future.

Thank you to all the Grade 6 students and staff at Aylmer Elementary for their comments, it is greatly appreciated. What an exceptional experience!

Lesson Plan: Tickle your Funny Bone

Topic Area: Diversity and careers related to Graphics

CONCEPT:

We all like different things. That does not make some of us right and others of us wrong. Liking different things allows us to have dozens and dozens of cereals lining the shelves of the supermarket. It is what drives many industries including the advertising and clothing industry. No one would argue that we should all be clones of each other, that is until we start to discuss culture, ethnicity, appearance etc. then we begin to stereotype those who are different than ourselves. We also become very judgmental of things and people who are different from us especially in careers. You have the cool jobs and the not so cool jobs, or so people seem to think.

METHOD: Class Activity

TIME NEEDED: 20 Minutes and discussion time.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- 1 newspaper page of comics for each participant, plus a few extras. The pages must be from different days.
- Scissors (1 pair for every 5-6 people)
- Masking tape
- A pencil and paper for each participant

ACTIVITY:

1. You will need to bring in a page of comics from the newspaper for each participant. You will need to collect these over a number of days since each participant needs a completely different set of comics.
2. Pass out the pages in the class and explain that you want each person to determine which comic on their page is the funniest one for that day and cut it out. If a student cannot find any comic on that page that is funny, have a few extra pages ready for them to look over.
3. After they have found the one that is funniest to them, have them post it on a piece of paper on the wall with masking tape. On the masking tape write a number or letter so that the students know one from another.
4. Once everyone has posted the comic strip on the wall that they think is funny, select a couple of pieces of paper (about 10 comics) with the comics on and have a student photocopy the paper for the class.
5. Give out the photocopies and have the students rank the comics from the funniest to the least funny. Compare results.

DISCUSSION IDEAS:

- How difficult was it to select a funny comic strip to place on the wall?
- How hard was it to rank the comics from really funny to not so funny?
- How did your choices compare to the rest of the class?
- Should everyone have to agree on the same comic? Why or why not?
- Does it make any difference what anyone else thinks if you don't agree?
- How do many opinions on the same topic help make out society a better place to live?
- What would happen if we all agreed on everything? Try and relate this to careers.
- If someone disagrees with you does that make you a bad person?
- How does your background and experiences help shape the way we think?
- Should we ignore our background when we are looking at various issues? Explain?
- Should we judge others as less than ourselves just because of the way they think? Explain?

Taken from More Activities that teach By Tom Jackson website: www.activelearning.org

Have a fantastic summer!