

Hello Teachers - I always welcome resource tips and lesson ideas from teachers. Cooperation and collaboration are important for innovative classrooms—and I owe thanks to Cynthia Shoemaker (AZ), Ruth Writer (MI), and Les Buell (NY) for sharing some of the ideas below so that I could pass them along to you in this month's resource update!

- **[A SITE TO SEE! THE LEARNING CENTRE \(Library and Archives Canada\)](http://www.collectionscanada.ca/education/index-e.html)** at <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/education/index-e.html> - Teachers and students will find websites, educational tools, and digitized primary sources (printed documents, diaries, maps, illustrations, paintings, manuscripts, and printed and recorded music) from LAC holdings. These resources stimulate students' imaginations and develop their critical thinking skills, as well as help teachers make Canadian history, literature, and music come to life.

Be sure to have a look at "For Teachers." You'll find comprehensive teaching units and strategies, lesson plans, ideas and activities for the classroom, quizzes, games and guides on using primary sources, as well as workshops for professional development. Many of the tools found in the *Learning Centre* have been produced as a result of suggestions and comments from Canadian educators.

"For Students" includes links to great websites, designed just for kids, as well as suggestions for great reading. Students' learning skills can be improved using the *Learning Centre's* "Toolkit." Guides in the Toolkit cover a wide variety of topics and research skills such as how to use primary and secondary sources and develop Internet research skills.

"The EvidenceWeb" offers teachers and students a valuable selection of original documents (photographs, letters, diary entries, art works, political cartoons, newspaper articles, and printed and recorded music) from the LAC collection. These materials are organized by theme to enrich student projects and supplement textbooks. Original documents bring Canadian history and culture directly to students, allowing them to examine evidence from the past and decide for themselves what really happened.

- **[USING EDITORIAL / POLITICAL CARTOONS IN THE CLASSROOM?](http://www.cagle.com/main.asp)** Visit <http://www.cagle.com/main.asp>. This site offers an index of American, Canadian, and other international cartoonists and allows use of their cartoons for *free*. What's more, the site offers a Teacher's Guide ([click here](#) for sample) that offers lesson plans for using editorial cartoons as a teaching tool in Social Sciences, Art, Journalism and English at all levels. The site also features five new cartoons each week, often with comments by the cartoonists who drew the cartoons. "Teachers are welcome to print these cartoons out for use in their classrooms—you don't have to ask for permission." That is a direct quote!
- **[CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY PROJECT \(CELP\)](http://www.celp.ca)** - <http://www.celp.ca> offers a series of free curriculum materials to assist with the teaching of environmental studies and relevant subjects to introductory classes at the university, college, and senior high-school levels in Canada. Examine and download teaching modules concerning environmental issues which can be used "as is" or modified by instructors to suit their own needs. The modular content varies from:
 - presentation materials, such as power-point lectures on specific topics
 - to experiential activities, including calculations and field-trip exercises
 - to readings in support of the discussion of controversial and strategic topics

Email comments and queries to celp@dal.ca. (Thanks to Cynthia Shoemaker (AZ) for drawing my attention to this new website.)

- **A HOOK TO HISTORY** – Many of you teach history in a North American context. Teaching about the War of 1812, for example, invites students to consider the historical relationship between Canada and the United States. Perhaps hook student interest by looking at events in history such as: almost exactly 190 years ago, in September 1814, British and Canadian soldiers began a push against American forces along the shores of Lake Champlain. This culminated in a pitched Naval and land battle in Plattsburgh, New York on September 11, 1814. In part because of some clever maneuvering by the outgunned American Navy under Commodore Thomas MacDonough, this invasion was turned back and was the last attempt by British forces to divide and conquer America. You can research the battle with maps and other documents by going to <http://www.historiclakes.org/Plattsburg/Plattsburg.html>. Many of these maps would be useful in a classroom discussion of the battle.

If you want to catch interest by using a more “scientific” approach, mention how Dr. William Beaumont, served as a surgeon’s mate in the United States Navy during the Battle of Plattsburgh. His career would eventually take him to Fort Mackinac in Michigan Territory where he treated a **Canadian voyageur** for a gunshot wound of the stomach. The wound healed but an opening into the voyageur’s stomach remained. Beaumont studied the action of digestive juices in the stomach by attaching food to a string and inserting it directly into the voyageur’s stomach. Now if that story doesn’t get the attention of middle school students, especially, nothing ever will! <http://www.umssystem.edu/upress/spring1996/horsman.htm> offers more details. (Thanks to Les Buell (NY) for these great lesson motivators.)

- **RUTH WRITER’S REVIEW OF ADULT FICTION** –
Aimee Laberge. *Where the River Narrows*. Toronto: Harper Perennial / Canada, 2003. [ISBN 0-00-648567-7]

This premier novel by Aimee Laberge weaves the story of New France and Quebec’s history into the Tremblay family fabric. Readers become familiar with four generations of strong Quebec women beginning with Marie Ange who married Antonio Tremblay in 1898. The reader’s interest is captured immediately since Antonio, one of the last *coureur de bois*, has two families—one in Chicoutimi and the other in the backcountry.



Marie and Antonio’s two daughters, Marie Joseph and Marie Reine, are the second generation readers learn to enjoy. It is through this generation of women that Laberge gives a glimpse of the Great War and the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918. Chicoutimi, north of Quebec City, had one of the highest death rates in the nation. The Saguenay region saw almost half of its residents ill. After being sent to a convent in 1919, Marie Reine returns and marries. She and her husband have seven children when he unexpectedly dies leaving the young family in poverty. It is the life of a widow which gives us a window on life in Quebec during the mid-1900s. Such issues as the draft during World War II and the importance of Rocket Richard are highlighted in the narrative.

Marie Reine’s daughter, Lilianne’s life provides a backdrop for the story of the political crisis in Quebec in the 1970’s as well as the Quiet Revolution. Lilianne’s daughter, Luci becomes the narrator of the novel when she initiates a quest for family history while working as a historical researcher for university students and professors at the British Library.

One learns of Jacques Cartier’s reactions to Canada in 1535, Donnaconna’s trip to France as the “King” of this newly found land, and the importance of beaver hats. The European fad of beaver hats resulted in the removal of 25 million beaver pelts from Canada at a profit as high as 7500%. A great deal of attention is also given to Helene Champlain’s life as the young wife of the father of New France, as well as Marie de l’Incarnation who wrote over 12,000 letters while educating the women of New France. Of particular interest are the *filles du roi*, the Daughters of the King. Some eight hundred young girls arrived from 1663 until 1673 with the sole purpose of marrying the men of New

France and producing new residents. This hard life seemed to work since these women generally lived twice as long in New France as residents of France during that time period.

Aimee Laberge writes beautiful, rich passages about Quebec's varied history. Readers will become part of the past with such descriptions as: "Without the to and fro of boats from France, the colony at Quebec is silent except for the crackle of the burning wood, the hacking of an axe biting into a log, the dogs' howls, the bells from the sisters calling for catechism. Quebec is hibernating, trying to survive until the spring." Thus is the life of early New France. Read and enjoy Laberge's first novel while listening to the crackle of a cozy fireplace. It is guaranteed to please.

Should you no longer wish to receive this email, simply reply with a "Please remove my name from the Canada Listserv". These resource notices are now available on the [K-12 STUDY CANADA](#) website under K-12 News.

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