

A Literacy Partners of Manitoba Publication

# Write ON Magazine

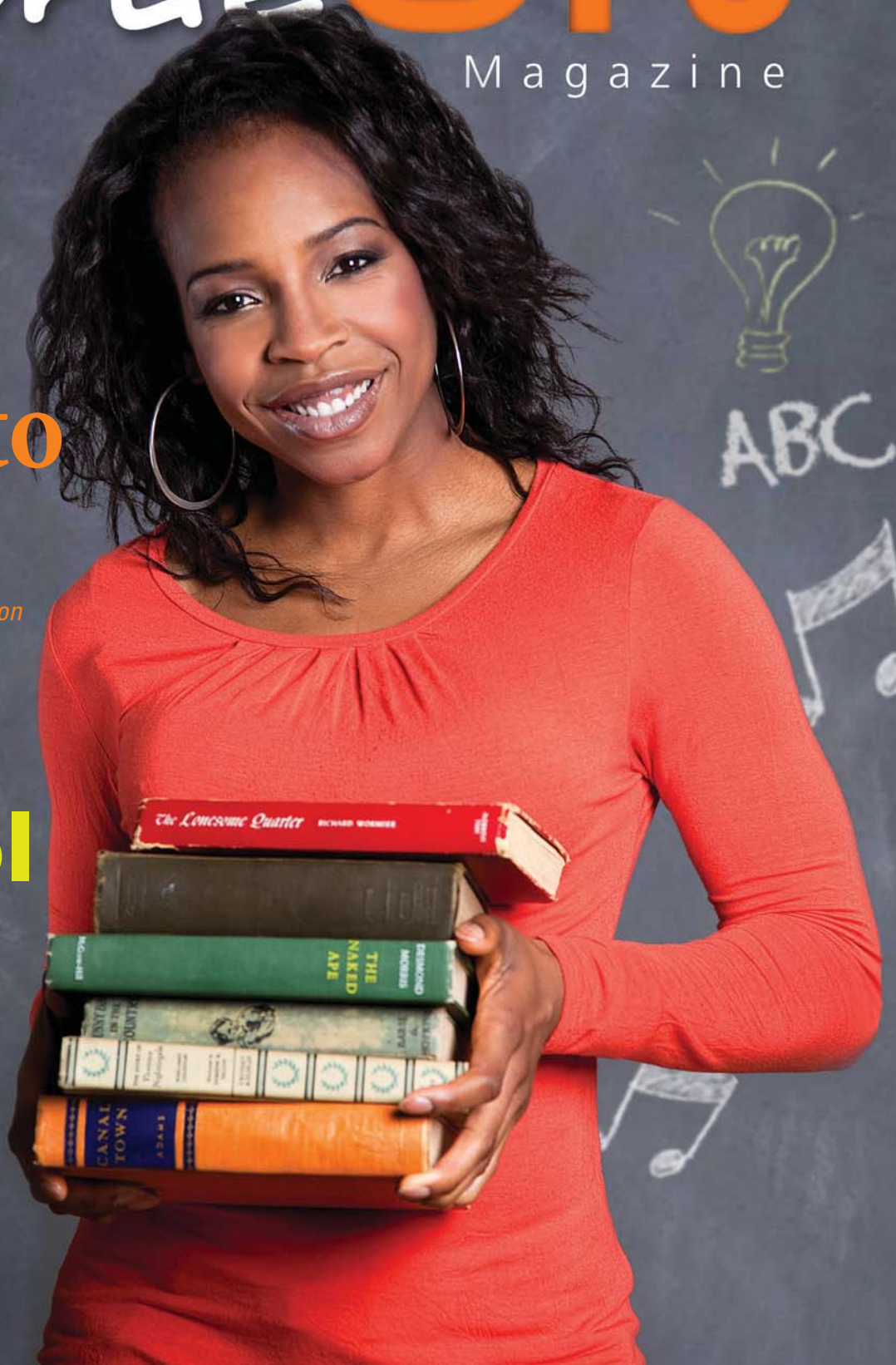
FALL 2011

## Making Time to Read

Canadian R&B phenomenon from Winnipeg and Reader-in-Residence Inspires Others to Follow Their Dreams

## School Ties

Manitoba's Adult Literacy Learners Share School Stories



## Welcome

to our Fall Issue of Write On! Write ON promotes and celebrates the outstanding work of adult literacy learners from across the province and provides them with an opportunity to see their stories published.



Writers in this issue are eligible for \$200 Literacy Partners of Manitoba Learner Scholarships that have been established by the board, for learners from each of the seven regions in the province. The scholarships will be presented at the Literacy Partners of Manitoba Annual General Meeting on November 15th, 2011.

Since the last issue of Write ON magazine, Literacy Partners of Manitoba has been busy promoting literacy and essential skills to Manitobans in their workplaces, communities and homes, through the delivery of a variety of workshops and programs. This includes the development of Go to LEARN, an online, interactive learning resource for adults wanting to upgrade their literacy and essential skills. This resource compliments and builds upon the LEARN Line, hosted by Literacy Partners of Manitoba, thanks to a grant from Adult Learning and Literacy – Province of Manitoba.

For more information on Go to LEARN see the back inside cover of this magazine or go to our web page [www.mb.literacy.ca](http://www.mb.literacy.ca).

Now, read on, and join with us as we honour and celebrate these new writers who are working towards a stronger future for themselves and contributing their new skills and talents to the communities they live and work in.

### Herman Hansen

*Chair, Literacy Partners of Manitoba*

*Senior Manager, Human Resources Employee Training, Training and Development, Boeing Canada*

Cover photo by Katy Winterflood Photography,  
hair by Roger Medina, makeup by Jocelyn Caballero  
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# LPM Reader-in-Residence to Follow their Dreams

**By Jennifer Heinrichs**

*Literacy Partners of Manitoba*

Literacy Partners of Manitoba has acquired a new fan, volunteer and spokesperson, one whose passion for learning and following dreams will inspire even the most fearful of folks. Flo Oramasionwu is an aspiring local R&B talent whose star seems to shine whether she's talking about her love of reading or her passion for helping others follow their dreams through learning.

This enthusiastic young woman has more on the go than most people do. From recording

and song-writing sessions, to her physiotherapy practice in a Winnipeg hospital, Flo never seems phased by the demands of her many activities. In fact, she seems energized by it! If asked to speak to a group of new learners or participate in LPMs Take 5 and READ Challenge in honour of International Literacy Day this fall, she's there, with boundless energy and the most positive, inspiring, words of encouragement.

Perhaps because of her upbringing with parents who emigrated from Nigeria to give their four children "a better life", Flo values and embraces learning at all ages. Indeed, Flo's parents emphasized

the value of education to a better life, so she went to university and entered the physiotherapy field. She knew it was the right thing to do, but didn't feel completely passionate about the choice.

The advantages and opportunities her parents worked hard to provide her also included learning piano, flute, cello, dance, and sing in her school choir, which likely fuelled Flo's real passion. Indeed, when she was young neighbours called her and her siblings

"The Singing Sisters".

**"I HAVE A PASSION FOR PEOPLE FOLLOWING DREAMS AND GOALS."**

Flo's true passion and dream was in her early on. Because of her indirect path to that

dream, Flo recognizes how important it is to pursue dreams at any age, and she wants to share that message with others.

Flo's passion for learning comes from her deep belief that "making time to read is the best way to broaden your mind, expand your imagination, motivate yourself and succeed." She claims to have digested books growing up, knowing that the more she learned the better off she'd be. She knew it would open doors and change her future. She also saw that education, or lack of it, was the way people had historically been held back from leading better lives, so she

# Inspires Others

“READING IS A POSITIVE WEAPON FOR SOCIAL CHANGE... EDUCATION CHANGES LIVES AND MAKES A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD.”

is committed to promoting it. “Reading is a positive weapon for social change” she says, adding “education changes lives and makes a positive difference in the world.”

Flo is LPMs ambassador for reading and an

“I WANT TO MOTIVATE PEOPLE SO THEY SEE THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE. EVERYBODY HAS GIFTS AND A PURPOSE. IT’S NEVER TOO LATE TO FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS; LEARNING IS A LIFE LONG JOURNEY.”

amazing role model for those starting out on new learning journeys. She believes it is never too late to pursue a dream and better yourself through education. “It is only the boundaries and restrictions you place on yourself that are holding you back from pursuing your dreams”, she says.

You can check out Flo’s music and see where she’s performing on her website [www.flosoul.com](http://www.flosoul.com). Flo will be visiting adult learning centres to share her message about the value of learning in the pursuit of dreams. She will be speaking and performing at the Literacy Partners of Manitoba AGM on November the 15th too. Literacy Partners of Manitoba’s Reader-in-Residence program will be available until spring 2012.

To arrange to have her visit as Literacy Partners of Manitoba’s Reader in Residence, call Literacy Partners of Manitoba’s office.

Flo is a Canadian R&B phenomenon from Winnipeg, Manitoba. She’s graced the stage at many a festival and concert with the likes of Boys II Men, 112, Burton Cummings, and Lauryn Hill.

Strong and intelligent, the chocolate-honey alto that comes so naturally to her sends her audiences soaring. Her melodies ring in your mind for days. Her musical style is firmly rooted in R&B, with generous infusions of soul, jazz, and a hint of pop. Flo creates timeless music and a revolution of great lyrics. Flo was born to shine.

With a debut album on store shelves and a second one close to production, unstoppable and passionate, Flo wants music for life. Her goal is the journey... and having fun along the way. This is Flo. She embodies a pure, natural desire to write and sing, and to inspire. She lives the words of one of her favorite people...

“And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.”

- Nelson Mandela ■



***Flo Oramasionwu is an aspiring local R&B talent whose star seems to shine whether she’s talking about her love of reading, her love of music, or her passion for helping others...***



edu·ca·tion

# Past and Present

“FROM THE DEATHS, BULLYING,  
AND TRAUMATIC CHILDHOOD,  
I GAVE UP SCHOOL AT GRADE 10,  
NEVER TO RETURN AGAIN.”

**By Kelly Kirby**

*Adult Education Centres (Winnipeg)*

**Did you know that one in four Canadian teens drop out of school due to stress, bullying and traumatic experiences?** I was one of those teens who did. Here is a story about my school experience and how I survived it.

My school experience as a child and youth was pretty horrible. I had people pick on and shove me into on-coming traffic all because my family was different. Both of my parents are deaf so they relied on me for some things and my teachers didn't like that, saying, "What, are they blind and dumb? Can't they do this on their own?" I got upset. My parents meant the world to me and I was very close to them. We had lots of deaths and suicides in the family and I was very close to my parents for that reason too.

My views of school started to change after horrible comments from my teacher.

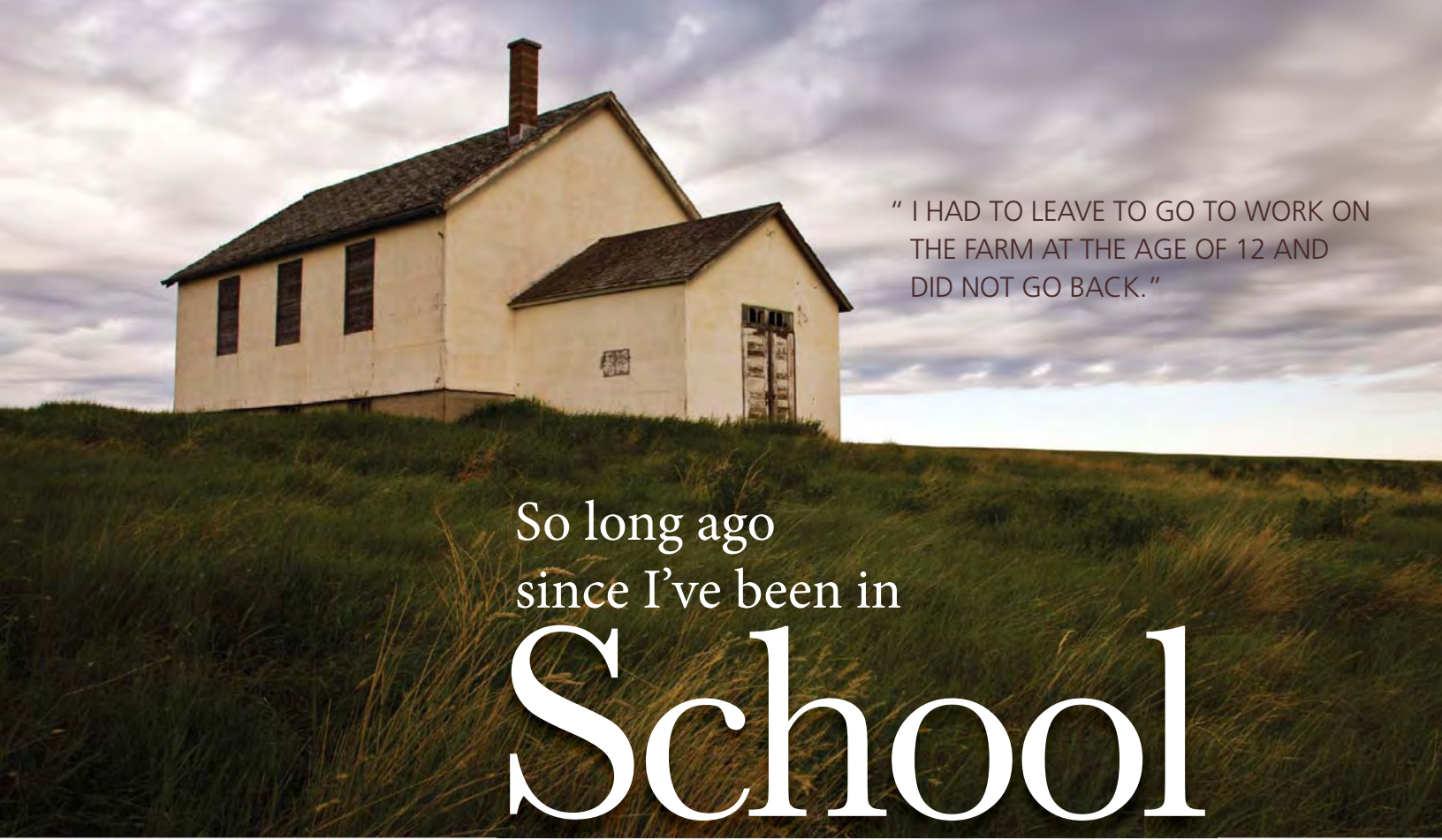
I can say one thing. I was a great student. I kept up with good grades and loved school with a passion, math, English, science and so forth. I had a traumatic childhood besides the deaths in the family that added to my stress. Eventually I slowly hid from the world and stopped going to school. From the deaths, bullying, and traumatic childhood, I gave up school at Grade 10, never to return again.

### **How is attending an adult education centre changing my life?**

That's a hard question to answer. First and foremost, I just started school in February 2011 and it's my first term. But school is such a blessing and a wonderful experience. The students and teachers are fantastic and here my experience went from bad to fabulous. You don't realize how much knowledge and education is such a blessing until you start working and realize you're stuck at a dead end job with no education.

That's when you realize education is such an important thing to have. Now I am enjoying math and English, subjects that I once loved before. My pride and self-worth are coming back, knowing I can do this for my family and myself. Coming back to school means a lot in life itself. I want to be a role model for my children as well be able to help them with their school work one day and not feel embarrassed that I can't. I feel I can approach anyone or anything with my head held high, defeating any type of challenges that come my way. So, yes, I can say proudly that attending adult education had changed my life in a few ways.

Those are some of my past and present school experiences. Now in school they have cracked down on bullying. If bullies are caught bullying they are severely punished and/or expelled from school. Just remember it's you that suffers, not the bully. ■



" I HAD TO LEAVE TO GO TO WORK ON THE FARM AT THE AGE OF 12 AND DID NOT GO BACK."

So long ago  
since I've been in  
**School**

**By Patrick Meyer**  
*Adult Education Centres (Winnipeg)*

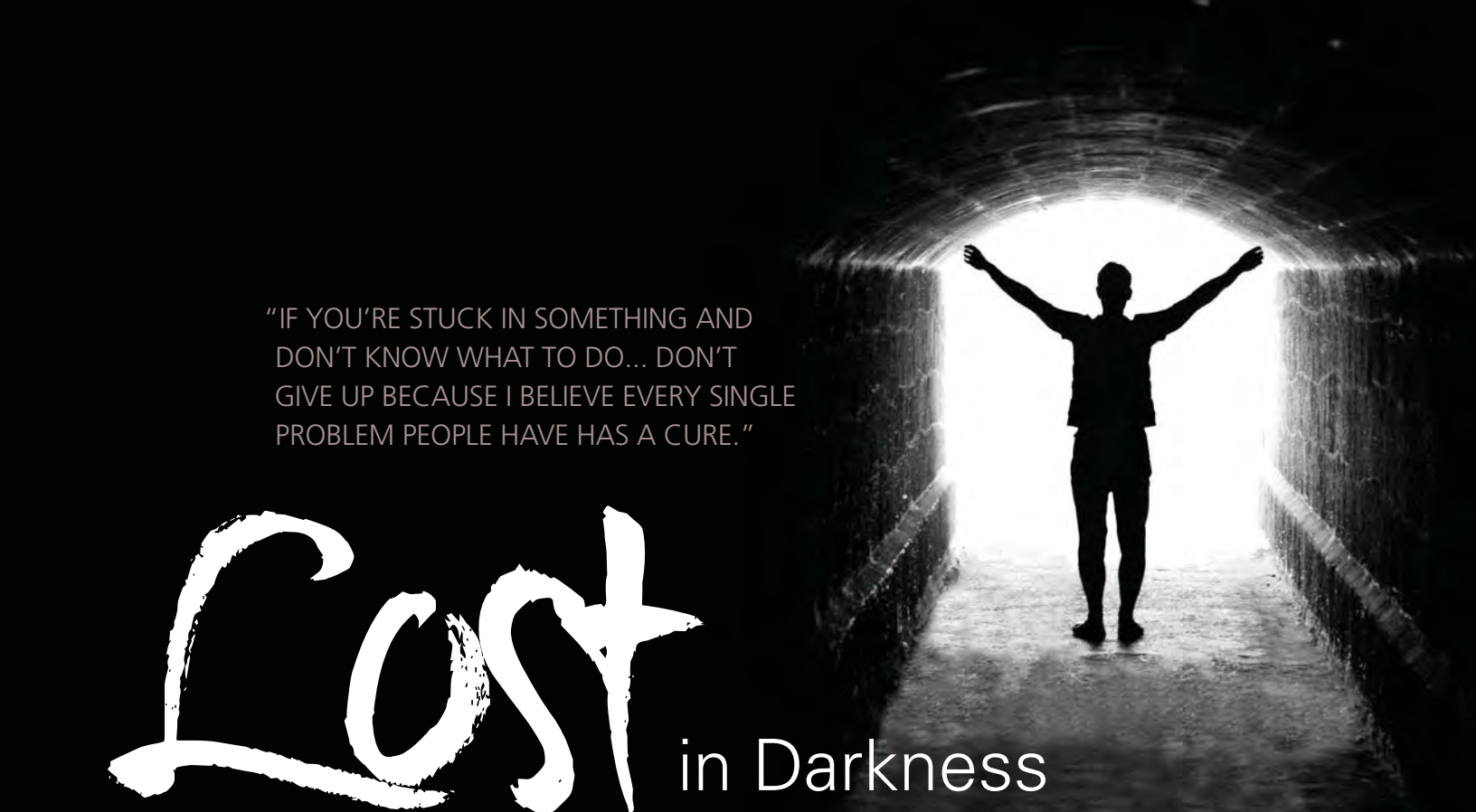
**T**his is my story and personal experience about school from age 7 to 59. It has been so long since I have been in school. I do not remember too much about school but what I do remember is that the school was small and there were only 2 rooms, about 6 to 12 people per room, and one teacher for the two rooms. Grades 1 to 6 were in one room and 7 to 13 in the other. I had to leave to go to work on the farm at the age of 12 and did not go back.

I went back home about 15 years ago and they had made a museum out of the two-room school house. That is what I remember about school. That is not too much.

I have been going to A.E.C. to get my grade 12. I have had to adjust my thinking from asking people to help me get information and looking at pictures to thinking for myself. That has been hard because I did it for so long. That is what I was used to and now I can hold my head high and feel better about myself because I find information by myself and I have the ability to help others now. I have the teacher to thank that I can hold my head high and be proud!

That's my story about school. If I could give advice I would tell everyone to stay in school for as long as they can and get their Grade 12 because they need it now more than ever. ■

"I WENT BACK HOME ABOUT 15 YEARS AGO AND THEY HAD MADE A MUSEUM OUT OF THE TWO-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE."



"IF YOU'RE STUCK IN SOMETHING AND DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO... DON'T GIVE UP BECAUSE I BELIEVE EVERY SINGLE PROBLEM PEOPLE HAVE HAS A CURE."

# Lost in Darkness

**By JRM**

*Adult Education Centres (Winnipeg)*

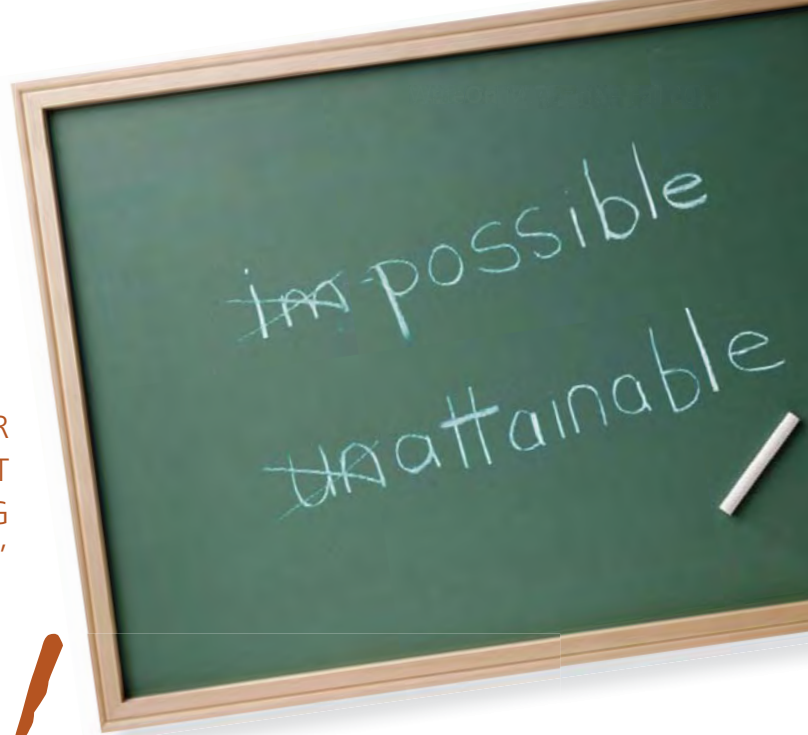
**I**t was like I was lost in the darkness and trying to find the way out. Now I can breathe better.

My adult learning centre is helping me to upgrade my Math and English so I can get into Red River College for Culinary Arts. I got my high school diploma but I didn't have enough credits to move on to college. I was so disappointed and mad when Red River College sent me a letter that they couldn't accept me because I had no Math 30S and English. It felt like I went to school for nothing. Good thing someone told me about Adult Education Centres. Now I'm learning new things better than I did in my old high school.

My old high school was alright. I learned a lot and made a lot of new

friends, but to me the stuff that they were teaching me wasn't enough. It was like learning Grade 1-6 stuff. That's why it was boring. The sad part about it was when my friends wanted to see what was inside my binder I kept saying no because I was so embarrassed about what I was learning in my class. Sounds funny, but it's true. Now I'm happy I'm learning more advanced stuff at Adult Education Centres.

Now I've found what I need to move on to college and to complete my goal to succeed in the future. If you're stuck in something and don't know what to do and feeling like you did all these things for nothing, don't give up because I believe every single problem people have has a cure. That's what I learned in my past years of experience in high school. ■



"NOW I FEEL STRONGER  
AND MORE CONFIDENT  
ABOUT REACHING  
MY GOAL..."

# Change for the Better

**By Shakib Amiri**  
*Adult Education Centres (Winnipeg)*

Sometimes people need to make a decision and change their way of living in order to reach their goals. Change can happen at any time but it is very important to make it in a good way and at the right time. Change happened when I started learning English in ESL classes at Red River College, and attended Adult Education Centres.

I attended an ESL school at Red River College three years ago. It was a perfect place for learning English as a second language for immigrants. Moreover, the teachers were very friendly and helpful. They tried to use different methods and techniques to help the students and explained things in different ways. Students from different countries with different languages and cultures

were studying together in a friendly environment. For me it was a lot of fun to be there in class. I learned a lot of vocabulary and moved from level 3 to level 5 by the end of the term, which pleased me. Overall, I think the ESL class was a good experience for me. I even recommended some friends try it.

Attending an adult learning centre is another good decision that I made. It has changed my life in a positive way. Now I feel stronger and more confident about reaching my goal, which is a college degree and becoming a professional in society. My knowledge also has been increased, and I have learned new things. I know more about subjects, politics, and what happens in our environment. My family and friends behaviour has changed

since I returned to school; now they respect me more than they did before.

In conclusion, change in a good way is very important in people's lives. A good decision can help others achieve their goals. My experience from ESL classes helped me to raise my benchmark, and meet the required English benchmark level for an adult learning centre. I believe it has brought me self-esteem, more knowledge, and respect. My experience can be a lesson for some people, especially for those immigrants who have lost their morale and self-confidence, by being away from school. I recommend that they be patient and not lose their hope. They can try and improve their English at ESL schools and then attend an adult education school to meet their goal. ■

MY EXPERIENCE CAN BE A LESSON FOR SOME PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE IMMIGRANTS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR MORALE AND SELF-CONFIDENCE



"THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SCHOOL AND LIFE IS, IN SCHOOL YOU'RE TAUGHT A LESSON AND THEN GIVEN A TEST. IN LIFE, YOU'RE GIVEN A TEST THAT TEACHES YOU A LESSON."

# This is My School Experience

**By Stephanie Chestnut**  
*Adult Education Centres (Winnipeg)*

The difference between school and life is, in school you're taught a lesson and then given a test. In life, you're given a test that teaches you a lesson. The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do, or my saying is: no pain, no fear, no surrender.

The reason I'm writing this is to talk about my past and present experience of school and how it changed my life. Some of it may be good, and some of it may be bad, depending on how you look at it, but this is my story. I don't want to be judged or anything; I just want to be heard. First I'll talk about my past experience, then I'll talk about what is happening now.

My past school experiences weren't good ones. Back then I used to get teased a lot because I matured a lot faster than anyone else, but I fought back. When I was in Grade

Eight at Victor Mager there was this teacher that treated me so badly. He always let the other students in the classroom get away with everything, and I was always wrong, so in the middle of Grade Eight I quit school because I had enough of their crap. They gave me a lot of hassle about it and tried to get me back in school but I didn't go back.

When we moved away from that school and lived by another school, apparently my school file wasn't moved to the school we lived by. Now St. George School was bugging me about why I wasn't at school. I told them I don't go to school anymore, and that I don't know why it says I'm supposed to be there. Then the school board got involved and wanted me and my mom to come in and have a meeting with them, so we did. When we talked to them we finally made a deal with them, that I would have

one-on-one support with teachers two days a week to get my Grade Nine. I wasn't too happy about it, but I did it. When I was finished my Grade Nine there I was to go to a different school for Grade Ten the next year, but they told me that I was too young to go to Glenlawn at this time. They wanted me to do Grade Nine again in the classroom with the other students. I said, 'No, I'm not doing that', so I stayed home.

In mid-November I got a call from Glenlawn, saying that there was a mistake on the computer. Someone made a mistake on my age and they were sorry about the mishap, and wanted me to come in for a meeting to come back to school, so I did. I went and met with the principal at Glenlawn to sign me up for the Re-entry Program, where it's a mix of Grade Nine and Ten work. Then the principal also told

**“NOW AFTER 11 YEARS I AM BACK IN SCHOOL, ATTENDING ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES. SINCE I’VE ATTENDED HERE IT’S CHANGED MY LIFE FOR THE BETTER”**

me after I was done the paperwork that the landlord of my place phoned them and asked why I wasn’t in school. That was the reason why they found out the computer was wrong about my age, because they checked when he phoned. When I saw the landlord that day I told him right off, saying he should stay out of people’s business. So did my mom when she found out after.

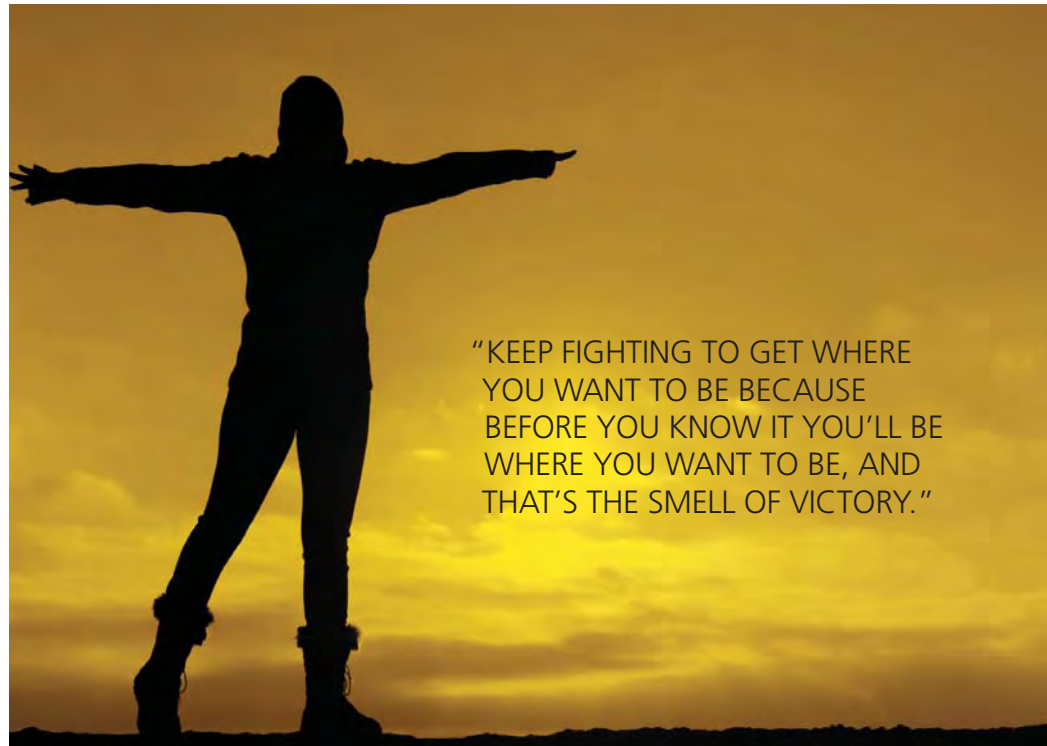
After I finished the Re-entry Program that year I could go into full Grade Ten, which was fine with me. It was going good, no problem, till I got pregnant. The EA teacher at the school kept talking to me over and over again about the same things. She wouldn’t take no for an answer from my mom and even got the social worker at the school involved, saying the same thing as the EA was saying.

When they were doing this all to me I was so stressed out, plus I missed many classes because of all the “talks”, so I couldn’t keep up. On top of all of this my grandmother, my dad’s mom, passed away. At this point my mother had enough. She signed me out of school because of too much stress for the baby and me. That was my experience back then in school.

Now after 11 years I am back in school, attending Adult Education Centres. Since I’ve attended here it’s changed my life for the better, because I’ve met a lot of nice people and teachers here. It is also very flexible here for a single parent and I’ve learned something new each day on parenting techniques. Also, I love it that I refresh my math skills and my writing skills too. They

also help you out if you need it, and make sure if you don’t understand things they walk you through it till you do, and so much more. I just love being here and can’t wait to graduate.

That’s my past and present experiences. For me, some of it was good, but some of it was really bad. People can think what they want to think, but I know exactly what happened. The lesson I want for people to learn from my experiences is to keep on doing something you believe is right. Don’t back down. Keep fighting to get where you want to be because before you know it you’ll be where you want to be, and that’s the smell of victory. ■



**“KEEP FIGHTING TO GET WHERE YOU WANT TO BE BECAUSE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT YOU’LL BE WHERE YOU WANT TO BE, AND THAT’S THE SMELL OF VICTORY.”**



**By Steven Guiboche**  
*Adult Learning Centres (Winnipeg)*

**W**ho says in high school you find your high school sweetheart? Well, I found mine in a library and fell in love at first sight. To tell you about my high school experience, I would have to tell you the story of how I met my wife and how quickly it evolved into something I would never have imagined possible. Now, I have gone full circle to realize how important school is by telling you how attending Adult Education Centres has changed my life for the better.

My high school experience was great because I was able to spend my days with the love of my life. Now that the time has gone by, it's been a good ride but it's time to grow up, get a life, and start a career.

**IT'S TIME TO GROW  
UP, GET A LIFE, AND  
START A CAREER.**

I attended Tec Voc High School for the first two years of high school. I took power mechanics, hung out with the wrong crowd, didn't care about my grades, and just wanted to party and have fun. I did enjoy playing on the baseball team and being active. Unfortunately, I got tired of Tec Voc. I got into too many fights and stopped attending classes. So, I decided to go to Daniel McIntyre Collegiate for the last year in hopes that a change of scenery would help me focus on my studies. I wasn't counting on falling in love.

I started the school year very well. I attended classes on time, did my homework, and stayed out of trouble. One day I arrived to class after the bell rang and my teacher

# H O O L

“I NEED TO THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE, THE WELL-BEING OF MY FAMILY FINANCIALLY, AND BEING A GOOD ROLE MODEL.”

said it was unacceptable to be late for his class and told me to leave. I decided to do some homework in the library for a bit. I sat down, pulled out my books, and when I looked up, there she was walking in the library. To my

SO, WITH THE SUPPORT OF MY LOVING WIFE, I HAVE DECIDED TO BETTER MYSELF AND ATTEND ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES.

surprise she sat down at my table across from me. That was the start of our relationship. She had me at ‘Hello blue eyes.’

Sad to say, I got into the same bad habits again, missing classes, coming in late, and not completing homework assignments. Even though we skipped classes together and

came in late for class, she was still able to get good grades and finish assignments. I didn’t care too much for school; all I wanted to do was spend time with her. Not thinking of the consequences then, I am definitely feeling the pain now.

A lot of time has passed since high school. I am a husband and a father now. I need to think about the future, the well-being of my family financially, and being a good role model. So, with the support of my loving wife, I have decided to better myself and attend Adult Education Centres.

This experience has opened my eyes to past mistakes. I should have finished high school when I was supposed to. Having a Grade 12 diploma opens so many career possibilities. I have learned some new study skills, like sitting at a desk and not in the front of a television. I’ve learned to set my priorities straight and



have a plan of action. I’ve learned that I enjoy management and that it may be a career I want to look into in the future.

I’ve also learned to be thankful I am on this roller coaster of life with my high school sweetheart. She made my high school experience unforgettable and encouraged me to attend Adult Education Centres, which has changed my life by leaps and bounds. I have learned new life skills like prioritizing, making a plan of action to finish whatever you start, and working hard now to reap the benefits later. It doesn’t hurt to have a personal cheering squad on your side also. ■



“MY LORD, KING ARTHUR SENT ME TO REQUEST YOU SLAY THE DRAGON,” TREMBLED THE MESSENGER.

# Camelot's Last Fear



**By Sean Wasylenko**  
*Portage Learning and Literacy Centre (Portage la Prairie)*

**M**any years ago there was a story that simply disappeared, but now it has been discovered. I know that story well, because I am “Merlin” the Greatest Wizard of all time.

It all started on the first moon in 625 A.D. A mighty dragon named Draco came to Camelot and started burning everything down. The peasants screamed with horror as the dragon was wrecking the castle walls. King Arthur and his worried council sent out the Knights of Camelot. The dragon sliced them with his razor sharp teeth and claws, leaving puddles of blood where they stood. Draco started burning the hay stacks and the huts outside the castle walls.

The frustrated council, along with King Arthur, went to the round table to deliberate on annihilating the dragon. They deliberated for hours and King Arthur stood up, slammed his fist on the table and said, “If we keep on doing this, there will be no kingdom.” One of the council

members said, “What should we do? We sent out the best knights we had and Draco sliced them up like roast beef. So what chances have we got?” King Arthur calmly walked around the table and said, “Hold your tongue my friends, I have trained the best knight on this land, and his name is The Black Knight.”

He sent out the messenger to get the Black Knight. In the middle of the dark, swampy forest the messenger saw the mighty Black Knight practicing his ground attacks. Then the Black Knight saw the messenger, and stopped practicing. He walked closer, then he said “You look, and smell like a messenger, who sent you?” “My lord, King Arthur sent me to request you slay the dragon,” trembled the messenger. “I have more important things to do, but tell King Arthur I will think about it. Now you are on my land and I will give you 10 seconds to get off or I will slice you and feed you to the wolves.”

THE FEARLESS KNIGHT YELLED OUT, “YOU DON'T SCARE ME; YOU ARE THE LAST OF YOUR KIND ON THIS LAND. I WILL SLAY YOU LIKE I SLAYED THE OTHERS!”

## HE TAUNTED THE DRAGON BY ANGRILY YELLING, "IF YOU WANT ME, YOU HAVE TO EAT ME WHOLE, YOU HORRID BEAST."

The messenger jumped on his horse and rode as fast as he could straight back to Camelot. He told the King and his council what the Black Knight said to him. King Arthur and the council were in complete shock and in denial that Camelot would survive the relentless attacks.

Meanwhile, the Black Knight was on his black Clydesdale surveying the destruction of Camelot from the highest hill top. He witnessed what King Arthur had decided to do. The Black Knight was thinking about King Arthur's dilemma. He saw that the king would sacrifice his life for his people. He said "Enough is enough, its time to do some damage!"

While the knight was riding to Camelot, the king was desperately trying to slay the dragon on his own. He got knocked out cold. Draco drew his body back on his hind legs. Then the trumpets blew and the Black Knight moved the king out of the way. Draco didn't see the switch, which shocked him. He was startled that he saw a Black Knight with a sword and a shield instead of the defenceless human. Draco's wings spread out as far as 8 catapults lined up. The fearless knight yelled out, "You don't scare me; you are the last of your kind on this land. I will slay you like I slayed the others!"

The wisest councilman bellowed to the courageous Knight, "The scales are unpierceable black magic metal like you! You know how to slay Draco". While he dodged Draco's giant sharp claws and his 10,000 pound monstrous jaw, he remembered how he almost died

by ingesting poison. He yelled out "I know it now!" He taunted the dragon by angrily yelling, "If you want me, you have to eat me whole, you horrid beast." He threw his shield onto the ground. Suddenly

Draco grabbed him tightly and tossed him into the air, opened his mouth wide, and the Knight vanished. All of the court and all of the peasants went silent and they wondered what to do next. But, King Arthur was staring at the dragon and whispering, "Come on son, you can do it!" Then, in the corner of his eye he saw a tip of a sword protruding from the top of the stomach to the bottom of Draco. All of a sudden rotting dead corpses fell out of Draco's stomach. Then the beast fell on his side, and the court and peasants wondered what happen to the dragon. The Black Knight climbed out of the mountain of corpses, and all of the people started cheering.

As he stumbled towards the king, a little kid screamed out with terror "Watch out Black Knight!" Draco had one last breath. The knight turned quickly, put his shield up, and the beast blew the biggest and hottest fire blast the knight had ever seen. The blast turned his shield and sword scorching red hot. Then he ran and yelled in anger, "I'm fire proof you imbecile." slicing his head off with one swing of the blade. The council cheered out "The dragon is dead! The dragon is dead!"

The king walked up to him and said "This sword was helpful for me for many years, and I am afraid that soon it will be my time to pass on, so take Excalibur as your own, and be the new King of Camelot." The Black Knight replied, "Yes, I'll be honoured to be the new King of Camelot and this day will be Camelot's Last Fear." ■





"LIKE AN EAGLE YOU SPREAD  
YOUR WINGS AND NOW YOU  
ARE DANCING WITH THE WIND."

# Dancing With the wind

**Poem by Archie Roulette**

*Portage Learning and Literacy Centre (Portage la Prairie)*

As I say goodbye to the one who kept me from harm through the good times and the  
bad.

Some years were harsh, some were sad, not only its hard to see you go. You were a sister,  
a mother, a father, but sometimes like an extra bro.

Now Four Standing you are dancing with the wind. May the Great Spirit keep  
smiling upon you, we miss you. In our hearts you'll always be.

Like an eagle you spread your wings and now you are dancing with the wind.

Our memories are all we have of you now. I will carry on in my walk of life and tell  
you how the sunset will be.

For you are dancing with the wind as you sleep among the stars. Let the milky way be  
your blanket.

Till we meet once again keep dancing with the wind Four Standing. ■



"I STARTED TO CHANGE, AND BEGAN TO SEE THE WISDOM OF THE SEED BEARER. I SAW THAT WHO I SURROUND MYSELF WITH, AND WHAT THEY DO, IS WHAT I WILL BE LIKE."

# Seeds of a

# DIFFERENT Origin



**By Bobby Nepinak**  
*Swan River Adult Education*

I was born November 21, 1990, in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I was left in the hospital by my mother. She had a lot of issues, and a lot of them reflected in me. It makes me wonder, do problems get planted in younger generations like weeds, or like a cycle that continues along and tortures us until we submit to it and become slaves? As far as I know, these problems have been in the family for many generations, and may stem from abuse our elders went through in residential schools. When we give in, it ultimately kills us, a slow and painful suicide. But our own death often isn't enough for it; through us it affects others, in the form of jealousy, resentment, and detachment, as a result of attempts to escape its grasp.

My childhood was a constant struggle, and eventually I too became a product of my misfortunes and environment. I tasted the bitter taste of self-loathing, self-pity, and self-destruction. I invited it in, and it came. Oh how easy it was to live in a drug induced stupor. How easy it was to live in a world where my problems were non-existent, and my aims were near-sighted and self-centered.

But somehow, seeds were planted in me, seeds of a different origin. They grew amongst the weeds, and were choked, but somehow

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survived. They accused me of my wrong-doings, and reminded me of a time when my life wasn't so empty. As much as I wanted to stay in the darkness, their counterfeit veil of comfort, I could not deny the truth. I eventually gave my life to the Lord, and put my faith in Him to guide me to an abundant life.

I started to change, and began to see the wisdom of the seed bearer. I saw that who I surround myself with, and what they do, is what I will be like. I decided to remove myself from such acquaintances, and to surround myself with people I respect and who are in a position I would like to be in. I got back into school and started working as much as I could because personally, I am more prone to mistakes when there is nothing to do. School provided me with a lot of things and more: respectful and supportive staff, a meal when I was without, a shoulder to cry on (figuratively), and most importantly, something to work towards. A hope, if you will.

I realize that everything I do affects those who are, and those who are to come, so I am inspired to strive more and more to a brighter future. And, maybe one day, I will plant seeds of a different origin, not weeds, in those around me. ■



# Fall

**Poem by Robin Lavallee**  
*Fieldstone Ventures Education  
and Training Centre Inc. (Ashern)*

**F**all is a pleasant changing season.  
It starts to get chilly.  
You can see the rime on the trees and you can see the frost on the car windows in the mornings.

Have you noticed the leaves change their colours from green to yellow, orange, cinnamon, burgundy, and purple?

You can see the branches fall from the strong north wind. It rains a lot. You can smell the leaves and wood burning.

You can see people cleaning and raking up their yards. People start to dress warmer and start using heat in their homes.

Most of the birds gather up, and fly south.

Some animals, like bears, garter snakes, and beavers, hibernate for the winter.

We have Thanksgiving in the fall; ghosts and goblins become visible on Halloween. ■

"I'M A LYRICAL GENIUS, AND  
I DON'T LIVE IN PHOENIX,  
I WANT TO SPIT OUT THE FLAME,  
LIKE USING MATH IN A GAME"

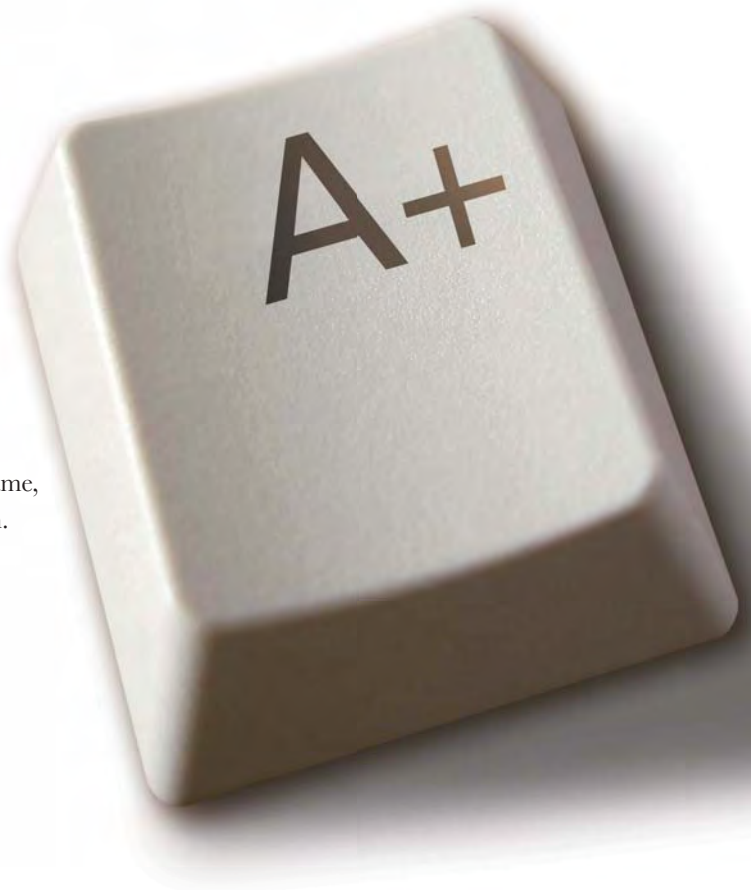
# It's the same Flow



Winnipeg Region

**Rap song by Daniel Nicolas Little**

Artist Name: Lyrical Genius  
Adult Education Centres (Winnipeg)



I'm a lyrical genius, and I don't live in phoenix,  
I want to spit out the flame, like using math in a game,  
Using math in a game, using math in a game, using math in a game,  
I'm starting to see math in a clearer vision, when I'm dividing division.  
In the past I didn't like to go to class, but that's in the past,  
And in the future, I want to be a manager,  
Who uses a computer to organize the business preparation,  
Business preparation, business preparation, business preparation.  
I try day by day, to try to get a passing A,  
But you have to work hard, if you want to prevail,  
I'm not telling you what to do,  
Listen to the teacher, and you'll get through.  
Back in my younger days I stole,  
Jackets, necklaces and candy,  
Around the perimeter of my neighbourhood, which costs a percentage,  
But those days are gone, now I want to work for a living,  
And end up with the equation,  
End up with the equation, end up with the equation, end up with the equation. ■

“WHEN I’D GO GROCERY SHOPPING I COULDN’T READ THE LABELS. WHEN I GOT LETTERS IN THE MAIL I COULDN’T READ THEM.”



From  
**Shame**  
to Confidence



South Eastman  
Region

**By Elma Hildebrand**  
*South Eastman English and Literacy Services*

One day my church elected me Sunday School teacher. I was extremely nervous, because my English wasn't very good. I could read a little but not well enough to read the story so that children would be interested.

When my own children came home from school and needed help with their homework in grades 1, 2, and 3 it was okay, but after that I was lost. I was ashamed of myself as a parent, that I couldn't help my own children.

My husband had lived in Canada for almost thirteen years, but I had never been to Canada until I married him. For me it was all new. My husband had some friends who could only speak English, and I couldn't communicate with them. I felt like just going to play with the kids.

When I'd go grocery shopping I couldn't read the labels. When I got letters in the mail I couldn't read them. Even when I wanted to get my driver's license so I could drive here legally, I didn't know enough English. Everything was just so hard to do because of the language barrier. I got very frustrated; I felt like just giving up, but people encouraged me to keep going.

I thought a lot about taking English literacy classes. I was born in Paraguay, and my education was in German and only up to grade seven. I knew if I wanted to live here, I needed to improve my English language. My husband encouraged me to go, so finally I made the phone call.

When I started adult literacy classes I could see how much it helped me; my English improved a lot. I started reading,

writing, speaking, and understanding people better, and could help my children more with their school work. Now I also enjoy reading more. People still encourage me to keep going to adult literacy classes.

I believe if people come to Canada and want to live here, it's important to take English classes to improve their English language skills, because that is the language of the country. Since I have been taking the classes I feel much better about myself. I can see that I am learning a lot. To be in public is much easier now. I believe very much in taking classes. For me it has helped me go from shame to confidence. ■

New Online Tool!



# Go to LEARN



**YOUR GO-TO-GUIDE**  
for Adult Learning  
in Manitoba

A new online tool to help adults find adult literacy and learning programs in Manitoba was launched by Literacy Partners of Manitoba this fall. **GO to LEARN** is an interactive online resource for adults wishing to upgrade their literacy and essential skills. This tool was developed because of the need to increase access to information about adult learning opportunities in Manitoba, which many find difficult to figure out, particularly low literacy learners.

**GO to LEARN** is written in simple, easy to understand language that asks the user questions and provides referrals based on their responses. Anyone can use it, including adult learners, service providers, and other professionals, and it has the potential to grow to include other adult education programs.

To use **GO to LEARN** or talk to Literacy Partners of Manitoba about its development and the programs it can guide adult learners to please see [www.mb.literacy.ca](http://www.mb.literacy.ca).



[www.mb.literacy.ca](http://www.mb.literacy.ca)



# Literacy Partners of Manitoba...

- ✎ Strives for a community where everyone has the literacy and essential skills to manage the challenges of daily life at home, in their workplaces, and in the community
- ✎ Helps adults access learning programs through the LEARN Line
- ✎ Offers bursaries to support learners and practitioners
- ✎ Provides Raise-a-Reader grants to Family Literacy Programs
- ✎ Offers workshops, training, and lectures in plain language
- ✎ Produces plain language publications such as 'Going to the Doctor', 'Being Safe at Work' and 'Going Back to School'.
- ✎ Publishes Write On Magazine featuring the writing of adult literacy learners and their instructors
- ✎ Publishes monthly E-News bulletins featuring resources and information on best practices in literacy and essential skills
- ✎ Empowers and engages adults in continuous learning through networks and strategic partnerships
- ✎ Provides a unified voice for literacy awareness and issues in Manitoba
- ✎ Is your literacy link

**Want help** with  
Reading, Writing,  
Math, or High  
School Credits?

Call the LEARN Line at 947-5757  
Toll free: 1-866-947-5757  
Email: [learnline@mb.literacy.ca](mailto:learnline@mb.literacy.ca)

**WriteON**  
Magazine

## Literacy Partners of Manitoba

401-321 McDermot Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R3A 0A3

Phone: 204-947-5757

Fax: 204-956-9315

Toll free: 1-866-947-5757

LEARN line: [learnline@mb.literacy.ca](mailto:learnline@mb.literacy.ca)

Information & Membership Services: [literacy@mb.literacy.ca](mailto:literacy@mb.literacy.ca)

[www.mb.literacy.ca](http://www.mb.literacy.ca)

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**Canada**