

LEARNING MATTERS

The Bi-monthly Newsletter of Lethbridge School District No. 51's Lead Teachers



LITERACY

Literacy Lead Teacher Bev Smith

I am often asked, "Is it OK to have students read out loud in class?" My answer would be absolutely, but, and it is a big but, not in the way we traditionally think of it with one student reading, then the next, then the next. This form of oral reading is referred to as round robin or the new and improved, more fun term, "popcorn" reading. Round robin reading is detrimental to student reading development because it is only "just right" reading for a very few. Students may be anxious at having to read in-front of their peers and therefore do not focus on what has been read while they wait for their turn. Students become bored and tune out when it takes time for others to figure out the words on the page. Damage can be done to the self-esteem of those trying to figure out the words and having their peers jump in to correct them.

So, it is not that oral reading in class is a negative thing, it is how it is done. The practice of shared reading is an excellent alternative to round robin reading. In shared reading the group reads the text together. They can read chorally, in small groups, or as an echo, but the teacher is there as a model with the group. Readers' theatre is another highly effective format for oral reading. It is very beneficial for developing fluency in reading due to its repetitive nature. For more information on shared reading check out the Comprehensive Literacy Instruction: A Resource for Teacher, K-8 on the District Portal, or the reading guides for Literacy Place or Moving Up available in each elementary school

Goodbye Round Robin Reading, Hello Shared Reading

The practice of shared reading is an excellent alternative to round robin reading

LINKS:

Saskatchewan Reads
Key Links Shared Reading
Fifth Grade Shared Reading



NUMERACY

Numeracy Lead Teacher Jenn Giles

Flexibility & Fluency – Building Students’ Number Sense

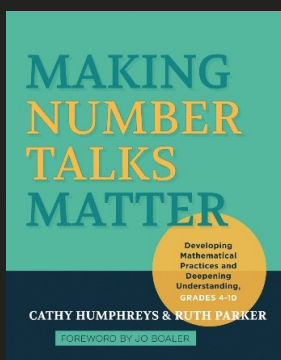
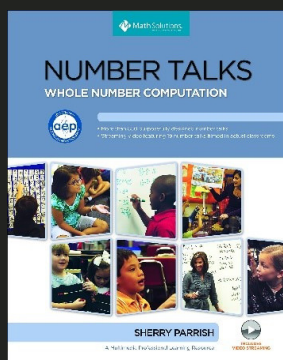
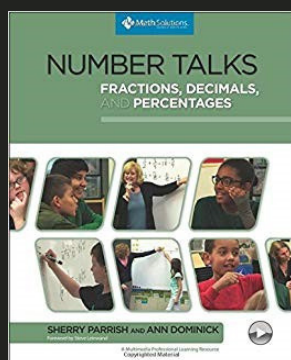
A Number Talk is a 5-15 minute daily routine in which students participate in meaningful practice in computation.

Fluency in mathematics is knowing how a number can be composed and decomposed, and then using that information to be flexible and efficient in solving problems (Parish, 2014). There are three parts to developing fluency – accuracy, efficiency and flexibility, with fluency being the by-product of flexibility.

Using timed tests as an instructional strategy to develop accuracy and efficiency can be damaging for students. Jo Boaler’s article Fluency without Fear highlights research evidence on the best ways to learn math facts. "The best way to develop fluency with numbers is to develop number sense and to work with numbers in different ways, not to blindly memorize without number sense." (Boaler, 2014)

One of the ways outlined in her article is through Number Talks.

A Number Talk is a 5-15 minute daily routine in which students participate in meaningful practice in computation. During a number talk, students develop fluency skills through the use number relationships and the structures of numbers. They are not intended to replace current curriculum, but are short talks that can go alongside what you are already working on in with your class. Students learn to share their strategies with peers as well as clarify and express their mathematical thinking. Computational fluency begins to occur when students are making connections and looking for relationships. Students will begin to develop their own mathematical language when they are asked to explain and clarify their thinking as well as provide reasoning. Students must go beyond the basic recall of numbers facts and procedures and develop the conceptual understanding (Math Perspectives, 2007).



LINKS:

Why Number Talks?
Double Digit Multiplication
Double Digit Addition
Double Digit Subtraction



EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Educational Technology Lead Teacher Michael Krokosh

www.DiscoveryEducation.ca/Canada

Lethbridge School District No. 51 has an organizational account with Discovery Education. This digital resource is an amazing ‘Techbook’ that allows Teachers to customize the type of programming that they have access to, depending on their grade level and unit of study. Below is a quick guide showing how to get started. Please contact me to discuss this, or anything else Educational Technology related:
michael.krokosh@lethsd.ab.ca



“Browse by Topic” for resources categorized by subject area.
“Browse by Standards” for resources that are aligned with the Alberta Program of Study..

ENGLISH

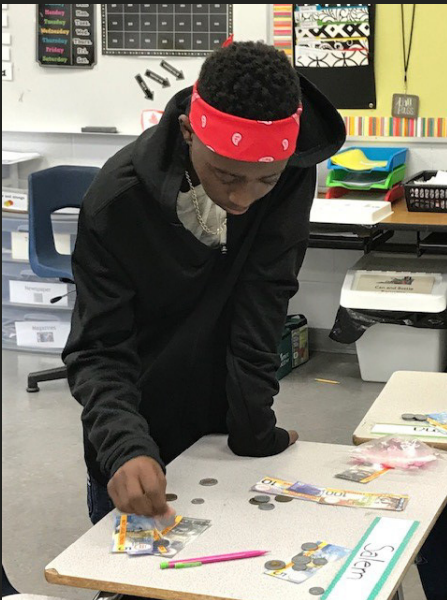
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SECOND LANGUAGE



ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

ESL Lead Teacher Heather Willms

This fall we welcomed over 120 new English Language Learners to our district classrooms. These students have come to us in a variety of ways. Many are refugees, working with Immigrant Services in their settlement, while others are privately sponsored, children of Temporary Foreign Works, or have moved to be with their families in Canada.



While students come to us from across the globe, we do see trends in where many of our students originate. Currently we are seeing many refugee families from Eretria, Ethiopia, Syria and Sudan. Almost one quarter of immigrants living in Lethbridge come from the Philippines, so it is not surprising to see children from the Philippines arriving to join family already in Lethbridge.

Over the past two months, it has been a privilege to see how these students have been welcomed and cared for by the amazing staff and students of our district. While Canada has much to offer these students, we are fortunate to be able to learn from them as well. The rich cultures and traditions they bring to our classrooms provide Canadian students with the opportunity to broaden their global perspective and extend kindness to students who are seeking a new home and community.

Refugee families from Eretria, Ethiopia, Syria and Sudan are making their way to Lethbridge.



LINKS:
Learn Alberta
Supporting ELL