

BCTELA President's Newsletter

September 2014



Greetings and Salutations!

As we enjoy the lingering warm days of September our thoughts of the current (or upcoming?) school year are mixed, to say the least.

As this turbulent time drags on, please don't forget that your professional community is still here. The BCTELA executive and conference committee continue to plan our provincial October Conference and it will certainly be the tonic we need to dispel the negative stresses and rekindle the joys of our profession.

Our professional communities of practice are often places we can go—whether physically or virtually—to replenish and rediscover our energies when we feel drained. For me, BCTELA is a source of confidence that so many of the possibilities for amazing teaching in language arts are, in fact, realities in classrooms all over the province. Stay stronger, together.

President Portfolio Hand-Over

I have been filling the role of Acting President for the last ten months as our president underwent rehab for an injury and have been honoured to represent BCTELA. As of our September 20th executive meeting Susan McLean will once again assume the presidential portfolio. Welcome back Susan!

-Celia Brogan

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GETTING MORE INVOLVED WITH BCTELA?

THE BCTELA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IS OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS.

THE AGM WILL BE HELD FOLLOWING THE LAST FRIDAY SESSION AT THE OCTOBER PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ATTEND.

www.bctela.ca

twitter:
[@bctela](https://twitter.com/bctela)

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BCTELA Book Club Update

We have almost finished our second annual BCTELA professional book club. The last two years the executive has chosen a recent book authored by our upcoming conference keynote speaker as a book club title. The BCTELA book club is open to all BCTELA members. We usually set a 30 participant limit, first come, first served, with a deadline for applications. Participants get a copy of the text for free and commit to two or three hour-long on-line discussions. We have used Twitter as our discussion platform (aka a twitter chat), which has worked quite well. It's amazing how fast an hour can go!

This year's book choice is *So What's the Story? Teaching Narrative to Understand ourselves, Others, and the World* by James Fredrickson, Jeffrey Wilhelm, and Michael Smith. (In case you hadn't heard, Jeff Wilhelm will be our keynote at this year's provincial conference!) We have one last twitter chat to go and while it's too late to get the book through BCTELA, you are welcome to join in on the discussion if you've read it, or just 'listen in.' The chat will be from 9-10AM on Saturday, September 20th and will use the hashtag #bctelabook.

See you there, or keep your ears open for next year's selection.

CULTIVATING PASSIONATE LEARNERS

BCTELA's provincial conference October 23-25, 2014

Have you heard? We are excited to announce that the keynote for this year's BCTELA October provincial conference is none other than **Jeffrey Wilhelm!**

We are also very pleased to welcome back **Sharon Jeroski** as our featured speaker at the Thursday evening wine & cheese.

The sessions on Friday are a rich selection of inspiring practices shared by your colleagues. We are proud of the quality pedagogy our colleagues will be sharing!

The variety of topics from which you can choose on Friday include:

- Inquiry
 - aboriginal literature and ways of knowing
 - authentic digital writing
 - gender and media studies
 - collaboration
 - backwards design
 - games in the classroom
 - engaging students' passions
 - writing about our practice
 - strategies for inclusion
- and more!

We are continuing to offer our Saturday institutes this year although we have modified the day slightly and have shortened these sessions from a full-day to a half-day.

Both sessions will focus on writing: the first a mini-retreat for teachers as writers; the other focusing on publishing our students' writing.

watch www.bctela.ca for information on registration and more detailed session info

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Project for Quality Teaching Call for Title Suggestions

The BCTELA executive is partnering with the Environmental Educators' Provincial Specialist Assn (EEPSA) executive in a PQT project. The BCTF has a grant opportunity for Projects for Quality Teaching (PQT), available to any group of teachers through an [application process](#). The PQT leads participants through an inquiry process with facilitation provided by the BCTF. BCTELA and EEPSA are happy to have been approved for our project.

Over the coming year we are going to be inquiring into the potential of place-based literatures in our practice.

From our application:

"BCTELA and EEPSA are interested in supporting the development of knowledge about the literatures of teachers' local environments. BCTELA and EEPSA have long wished for a comprehensive and regionally diverse literary map of British Columbia. A start to a digital and interactive literary map—a resource for all ELA teachers—will be one of the by-products of our PQT project.

From our application, cont.:

"Pedagogies of place will be an anchoring ideology in this project. An intersection of critical pedagogies and place-based education, pedagogies of place offer an avenue for "cultural decolonization" and a path to "ecological 'rehabitation'" (Gruenewald, 2003). Both of these curricular and pedagogical goals are important to BCTELA, EEPSA, and, we believe, to the BCTF.

"We also believe that there are ideal opportunities within this project to promote a number of the First People's Principles of Learning. The promotion of these Principles would contribute to the goals of the pedagogies of place mentioned above.

"Our central inquiry question will be, "How can teachers use BC place-based literature in their practice to support students' connections to and understandings of their local environments, literacies and cultures?"

We plan to share the products of our inquiries at the October PSA conference in 2015. We hope to share bits and pieces of our discoveries of texts and practices over the coming year.

We are excited to explore the use of local and regional literature with our students. Have you developed a lesson sequence designed to highlight the place in which you teach? Do you have a favourite BC author whose writing is set in BC? We'd love to hear about your practice: let us know via the contact form at www.bctela.ca.

**"PEDAGOGIES OF PLACE WILL BE
AN ANCHORING IDEOLOGY"**



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English Practice Call for Articles

English Practice, is a peer-reviewed, open access, online publication published twice annually. We are passionate about sharing the powerful practices of BC English Language Arts educators, and creating a vibrant conversation about teaching and learning in the English Language Arts in BC and beyond.

Please see our **Submission Guidelines** for details about the different categories, criteria and guidelines:

Now accepting submissions for:

Starting a Circle: Exploring Aboriginal Education

This issue is devoted to exploring the vital importance as well as challenges of integrating Aboriginal perspectives, voices, texts, curricula and teaching and learning practices within English Language Arts. We invite educators and scholars from British Columbia and beyond to explore how the First Peoples Principles of Learning are taken up in classroom practices as well as significant issues arising from landmark events and curricular shifts in BC, which reflect larger questions related to the future of Aboriginal Education and ELA.

The full call for articles will be posted soon. Check www.bctela.ca for details.

Our latest issue, *Multiple Pathways: Diverse Texts*, will be available in October 2014. Stay tuned to www.bctela.ca and follow @BCTELA on twitter.

Submit writing to Pamela Richardson: pamela.richardson@ubc.ca

The BCTELA Executive

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