

**CCTELA Conference
Winnipeg, Manitoba
November 27, 2008**

Donna Lahache and I were delighted to be invited to the CCTELA Conference held in Winnipeg, Manitoba on November 27, 2008. We presented our Reading Strategies to Engage the Struggling Reader workshop. We have presented this workshop before at QPAT and it was met with great enthusiasm. We were lucky again and we presented to a capacity crowd. We had been told to expect 30 participants, but the room swelled with close to 50 people. We had to find chairs and many were sitting on the floor. Needless to say we ran out of booklets and have promised to mail them off. The crowd was appreciative and many came up to us after the conference to thank us, ask questions, and ask for book recommendations.

As much as we enjoyed presenting, we were very fortunate to be able to attend two other sessions. The first session was *Media Madness: Talking About and Working with Advertising and Interactive Websites to Develop Critical Thinking* presented by Dr. Robin Bright from the University of Lethbridge's Faculty of Education. This session explored the use of advertising and websites to enhance students' ability to think critically, make meaningful connections among a variety of texts and communicate ideas effectively to others. She shared activities that teach Visual Literacy. She contends that images contain colour, line, perspective, technique, texture and design. Students are taught these by examining picture books that focus on each element. Then students are asked to examine magazine advertisements and look at how the advertising companies use these elements to sell their products. Dr. Bright has written a book entitled *Write Through the Grades: Teaching Writing in the Secondary Schools*. After this session, I was looking forward to reading her book.

Our second session was delivered by two young and enthusiastic student teachers, Curtis Walker and Matt Reimer, from the University of Winnipeg. Their session was entitled *Wordless Picture Books and the ELA Classroom*. When one of the first books they recommended was *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan, I knew I was going to enjoy their session as well as their recommendations. They had many suggestions on how to incorporate wordless picture books into your classroom and how to use these books to teach mood, theme, character and setting. Their many and creative lesson plans were appreciated by their audience.

All in all, it was a wonderful conference. We were lucky enough to offer our expertise to the teachers of Manitoba, but were even luckier to leave with new and innovative ideas to bring back home. I would like to thank ATEQ for their 150.00 grant which went towards defraying some of the costs.

Respectfully submitted by
Louise Bourque