



FUTURE LIBRARIANS FOR INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

Who We Are

Future Librarians for Intellectual Freedom, or FLIF, is a student organization at the University of Alberta. As graduate students pursuing Master's degrees in Library and Information Studies, the group's mission is to encourage freedom of expression and social responsibility, while rejecting censorship, within the library and information studies field and beyond.

Created by:

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Update on Book Donations:

Since our last newsletter, FLIF has donated an additional 90 adult fiction and non-fiction books to the Edmonton People in Need Society, and 387 children's books to the Norwood Child and Family Resource Centre! FLIF has now donated 951 books since September 2025!

Upcoming Event:

Mark your calendars! On February 24th and 26th from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, FLIF will be hosting a Freedom to Read Week Book Sale in the Rutherford Library Atrium! These books are "pay what you can" and all of the funds will be donated to United for Literacy. Following that theme, Newsletter #4 features resources on literacy.

Local News

Alberta teachers say mandatory screening tests are unhelpful

By: Liam Newbigging

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This news article discusses the provincially mandated literacy screenings in Alberta and the responses of teachers to this change. It touches on the concerns by teachers of what this mandate will mean for their classrooms and asks what the province plans to do with the results of the surveys.

Central Alberta author wields magic of storytelling to teach literacy

By: Simon Ducatel

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This article discusses Jeff Stockton and the books that he has written for children aged kindergarten to grade 6. Stockton explains how he uses imaginative storytelling to engage young learners and help inspire a love of reading at a young age. He further examines his own process of learning and how he has used these experiences as a learner to shape the way he writes. This article also touches on Stockton's writing process and the subject matter of his next book.

Alberta introduces literacy and numeracy grant funding

By: Brittany Ekelund

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Alberta's new screening measures for literacy and numeracy in K-3 students have received attention from the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) in past few months. This article discusses the one-time funding grant offered by the provincial government to support the schools where screening has been implemented and the response by the ATA, who hopes to work alongside the education ministry on the distribution of these funds.

National News

Adult literacy in Canada: Challenges and opportunities

By: ABC Life Literacy Canada

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This resource introduces readers to the challenges posed by lower literacy rates in adults, such as economic, social, and health impacts. It also offers suggestions on how individuals can start supporting adult literacy in their own communities, with links to free resources and further readings.

How your local library can help you improve your literacy skills

By: ABC Life Literacy Canada

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Also from ABC Life Literacy Canada, this resource places the topic of literacy into the context of the library. While this resource is addressed to the patrons of libraries, rather than librarians, it contains several ideas for programming and links to additional resources that librarians can use to promote literacy in their own communities.

Promoting literacy in Canada: Reading initiatives and public libraries

By: National Reading Campaign

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This resource provides an overview of how a selection of Canadian public libraries are supporting literacy and the joy of reading in their communities. It touches on resources like Tumblebooks and initiatives like Canada Reads. The rest of the website offers more information about the benefits of readings, national reading campaigns, and even includes a reading survey.

Tackling declining literacy rates in Canada

By: Global News

[Watch Video](#)

This 5-minute news segment reveals how childhood literacy in Canada has been declining since 2018. Melanie Valcin, the president and CEO of United for Literacy discusses how she thinks we have arrived at this point, what elements contribute to lower literacy in children, and what the long-term effects of lower childhood literacy can have on individuals and our society as a whole. She also briefly talks about the work that United for Literacy is currently doing.

International News

What you need to know about literacy

By: UNESCO

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This resource by UNESCO provides a brief overview of global literacy, including how they define the term, why it is important, and how it is impacted by socio-economic factors. While their most recent data has identified that 86% of the world's population can read and write, there are still more than 739 million adults and 250 million children worldwide who lack basic literacy skills.

How Mississippi transformed its schools from worst to best

By: Sarah Mervosh

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While Mississippi has ranked 49th in the U.S. for literacy levels as recently as 2013, they are now a top 10 state in what is being touted as the “Mississippi miracle”. This article by Mervosh identifies the strategies employed by Mississippi educators and policy makers to target literacy despite ongoing socio-economic challenges such as child poverty and low state education spending.

Language is a ‘central element in being Māori’ – using structured literacy to teach te reo misses the point

By: Brian Tweed and Pania Te Maro

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New Zealand's recent introduction of structured literacy into their national curriculum was intended to raise literacy rates. However, Tweed and Te Maro argue that this approach is not suitable for the country's 310 schools that teach in te reo Māori rather than English, citing cultural, political, practical reasons.

America Is sliding toward illiteracy

By: Idrees Kahloon

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This article marks 2013 as the year when American student's standardized test scores began to decline to levels not seen in the previous 25 years. Although smartphones and COVID-19 have impacted education, Kahloon traces other causes of America's literacy decline, as well as proposing some solutions to rectify this seemingly national crisis.

Scholarly Spotlight

Hibbert, K. (2025). Language and literacy as joyful possibilities: Keynote address given at the annual Language and Literacy Researchers of Canada preconference, June 12, 2024, Montreal, Canada. *Language & Literacy* (Kingston, Ont.), 27(3), 6–18. <https://doi.org/10.20360/langandlit29781>

Read Here

“Dr. Kathryn Hibbert is a Distinguished University Professor of curriculum studies and multiliteracies in the Faculty of Education at Western University. Kathy has been a literacy educator for over 40 years ... Her research typically asks how our ability to 'read' texts and to use and understand multimedia/other technologies shape our ability to communicate, to learn and to act upon that learning.” (Biography from paper.) This paper is Dr. Hibbert’s keynote address to open the 2024 preconference of the Language and Literacy Researchers of Canada (LLRC) entitled *Language and Literacies as Joyful Possibilities*, for which language and literacy scholars presented on how joy factors into their teaching and research.



FLIF

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