

**Learning Disabilities Association
of
Kingston**



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Website: www.ldakingston.com
E-mail: ldak@ldakingston.com

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Winter 2009 Newsletter

Annual Roast Beef Dinner

*The Learning Disabilities Association is sponsoring it's
Annual Roast Beef Fundraiser Dinner
Served to you, with dessert on Saturday February 7th, 5:30 pm at
Christ Church Parish Centre,
990 Sydenham Rd.*



Cost: Adults: \$15.00 Children 6 - 12 yrs. \$7.50 Under 6 free Family ticket - \$35.00

For tickets call the Learning Disabilities Association at 613-545-0373 or Donna at 613-549-7468.

Turning Blue Bluegrass Concert Series

LDAK will be holding a mini *Bluegrass Concert Series* at the *Christ Church Cataraqui*, 990 Sydenham Rd. for the months of February, March and April.

Musicians include:

February 25, 2009 - *The Lost and Found*
March 25, 2009 - *The Tennessee Gentlemen*
April 22, 2009 - *Wildwood Valley Boys*

Early Bird Ticket Special for 3 concerts — \$50.00 (before February 16, 2009)
Advance Ticket — \$20.00 At the door — \$23.00

For ticket information contact LDAK 613-545-0373.



PLEASE POST UNTIL MARCH 25, 2009

GROUPS AND MEETINGS

LDAK PRESENTATION

Topic:

“Kitchen Table Math”

Speaker:

Dr. Lynda Colgan

Dr. Colgan is celebrating her 31st year as an educator. A winner of a number of professional awards, including OSSTF’s Excellence in Education Award for outstanding classroom teaching and the first Marshall McLuhan Award for visionary use of technology with students. Lynda is actively involved in research, writing and community service. Watch for Dr. Colgan’s math section in the Kingston Whig Standard.

This workshop will focus on building positive attitudes to *mathematics* at the *elementary school level*. See how *children’s books*, “*stuff*” from the junk drawer like *buttons* and *beads*, and a few *fun tricks* with fingers and “*bones*” can help to build confidence and competence in everyday arithmetic skills along with some “*Aha!s*” and big *smiles*.

This session will take place on:

***Thursday, January 15th, 2009 from 7 - 9 p.m.
at Queen’s University Faculty of Education,
Duncan McArthur Hall, (corner of Sir John A.
Macdonald Blvd. And Union St.) Room A342***

Cost: \$5.00 per person or \$8.00 per couple

Pre-registration is recommended.

**Please call the office at 613-545-0373 to
pre-register.**

Quintilian Private School of Kingston

QPSK is a positive learning environment for children who experience learning challenges. We offer a supportive setting for children who experience both academic and/or social challenges.

- Individualized Programming
- Certified Teaching Staff
- 8:2 student/ teacher ratio
- Emphasize Understanding of Core Curriculum

Club Quintilian

Social, recreational and academic programming for youth with learning and social challenges.

Homework Club

Mon to Thurs 3:00pm-5:30pm

Social Club

Tuesdays 6:00pm-8:30pm

Contact Us: 613- 542-0400

info@qpsk.ca www.clubquintilian.ca

Switch to Our Email List!

If you prefer to receive your newsletter by email, please email us at:

ldak@ldakingston.com to get on our email list. The money saved on postage and paper can be better spent on programming or resources for our clients.

Reading Clinic News

Last year, *The Reading Clinic* partnered with Masters of Occupational Therapy students from Queen’s to investigate how occupational therapy could assist students with dyslexia. This year the clinic is partnering with Jennifer DeLugt, a Ph.D. candidate at the Faculty of Education who is researching the suspected links between behaviour problems and reading disabilities. Contact Jan at the Reading clinic (547-5179) or visit our web-site www.thereadingclinic.ca for more details.

Jump Math: A Guided Discovery

Have you ever yearned to do something in your life but felt you couldn't? Meet Dr. Mighton—mathematician, playwright and founder of JUMP Math—a respected system he developed for teaching and learning math. He is also the author of the *Myth of Ability*—which chronicles the evolution of JUMP, along with insights into the teaching methods that have won raves on both sides of the Atlantic, and *The End of Ignorance* — a passionate examination of how we learn.

Mighton writes in *The Myth of Ability* that “based on my work with elementary students, I am convinced that all children, except possibly those who are so severely disabled that they would not be enrolled in a regular school, can be led to think mathematically”.

He started JUMP Math back in 1998 while tutoring Toronto students. Less than a decade later JUMP programs are offered in 114 schools in 31 cities across five provinces. In Ontario, alone, 36 schools rely on JUMP trained tutors to support classroom students in math. Schools in London, England, also participate in JUMP.

Mighton feels that one of the reasons JUMP Math is successful is that many of the things described in *The Myth of Ability* are now being confirmed by psychological research. There is growing evidence that the brain is really plastic, that people can develop new abilities and new intelligences can emerge at any time in life with training. This is referred to as neuroplasticity. But this research also suggests that it won't happen unless the mind is engaged and attentive. Mighton believes that excitement, fun, and a sense that you are going to conquer something, especially when collaborating with others can all magnify neuroplasticity. All these attitudes are embedded into the JUMP Math approach.

Mighton never believed he had talent for math, his marks fluctuating wildly in school. But in his 20's he discovered the work of poet Sylvia Plath and began to think he could develop a talent for writing. Plath taught herself to write by sheer determination, learning everything she could about poetry using imitation to determine how it worked and then writing her own version of it. At first her work was derivative, but she gradually developed her own voice, becoming one of the most celebrated poets of the past century.

This was a revelation for Mighton. He started imitating her poetry, other poets, then, eventually playwrights, and saw that with relentless practice he could develop a voice of his own. Ten years later the text for his play, *Possible Worlds* received the Governor General's award.

The same thing happened again in mathematics. He has always been intimidated by math and almost failed Calculus at university. But when playwriting failed to generate a living income, he started tutoring. He worked his way back through high school material at his own pace and through having to explain and repeat it over and over, things once mysterious to him became easier. This gave him the confidence to go back and do mathematics.

The experience underlies a lot of JUMP'S philosophy: even if you apparently lack a particular skill, you can develop it through rigorous work, guidance, and training. Many people think that things like originality, creativity, and an ability to discover new skills come out of nowhere. While sometimes this happens, it doesn't mean you can't develop those things in a person who appears to lack a natural gift.

The question Mighton raises in *The End of Ignorance* is why are we so reluctant to give children that kind of guided training? He emphasizes that it doesn't mean teaching in a rote way. If you tell a student everything and treat them like a robot and never explain why things work; never test their knowledge by giving them new opportunities to extend their knowledge—that is rote learning.

Jump Math: A Guided Discovery

However, guided discovery occurs when learners are allowed to take steps themselves to make a discovery, no matter how small the step is. Even with the simplest tasks, if you constantly embed bigger ideas into the process, helping them generalize and —as much as possible—expecting them to make those steps, or through self-talk demonstrating they understand different aspects of the concept, that is guided discovery. JUMP Math espouses this approach.

More evidence is starting to emerge that working memory is weak, as psychologists publish more research. Some state that we can usually only retain one or two things at a time, and that we need lots of practice before concepts emerge. If you haven't consolidated the basic concepts and skills before trying to learn a larger concept, you are often overwhelmed just with the mental effort of mastering the basic skills. No one expects a novice to play the piano or compose beautiful music without knowing where the notes are. But kids arrive in high school without those basic number facts and operations. Mighton asks why this is.

The success of JUMP methods is supported by current research. During 2006-2007, three independent studies were conducted in London, England and Vancouver. In all schools, teachers were asked to target those children who weren't expected to meet age-related expectations on the national tests at the end of the Canadian equivalent to grade 6. Four hundred and fifty-four students, 90 per cent of whom were at least two years below age-related expectations, received four-to-10 months of JUMP instruction. The national test results at the end of the year were particularly strong among children who were two years below age-related expectations. The results showed 69% were at or close to age-related expectations one school year later. Overall, 33% of the students achieved success, even though 60% were more than two years below age-related expectations at the start of the pilot.

Improvements in confidence and the attitude of all children participating in the program were almost universally reported. It was further stated that “effective use of the JUMP materials in accordance with the program's principles and methodology has the potential to support teachers to raise the quality of their teaching (and therefore children's learning) from satisfactory or good to outstanding.”

“All teachers reported a significant improvement in attitude and self-esteem in the vast majority of pupils participating in the pilot. Behaviour also improved; children who had been disruptive during lessons were engaged, focused and enthusiastic during the JUMP sessions.”

The emotional or inclusive aspect is one key area that teachers feel is addressed. It refers to the sense of security created with an approach that espouses such practices as:

- ⇒ Isolating the particular skills required to solve the problem
- ⇒ Assume there is something wrong in your explanation if your students don't understand your lesson
- ⇒ Use of explicit teaching
- ⇒ Engagement, encouragement and empowerment (use of psychology of learning)

One teacher stated “there is more of an awareness of emotional intelligence in this program that I love...the development of a sense of safety, the stimulation of self worth and value, dignity and a sense of community...reliability of logic...it weaves new positive connections in the brain, not just math connections.”

“Learning/remembering to break things down smaller and smaller and making certain they have the prerequisite knowledge to accomplish the task; sequential progression of concept learning”, commented another instructor .

Jump Math: A Guided Discovery

All these practices support writer David Sousa's claim that the learning environment is critical to the student's comprehensions of material. He says when "students felt positive about their learning environment, endorphins are released in the brain. Endorphins produce a feeling of euphoria and stimulate the frontal lobes, thereby making the learning experience more pleasurable and successful".

Vancouver feedback included the fact that teachers felt "that the simplification, incremental steps, repetition and reinforcement offered, reaches all learners and gives students the chance to overcome obstacles as well as build the memory of strategies and concepts. This includes the reduction of language.

There is also a perception that progressions of steps from simple to complex or from concrete to abstract builds the student's foundation slowly, solidifying key concepts that liberates them to strategize at deeper levels and take more risks. Furthermore, the teachers reported, "the use of JUMP Math unfolds the student's thinking skills, promotes independent thinking and serves to create excitement and curiosity".

Mighton states, "You can find concepts embedded in the simplest rules and procedures of math". We teach either too much in the small steps and procedures or too much in the bigger concepts. Teaching math should be like a hologram. If you cut a piece out of a hologram, you can know everything about the big picture-the entire picture is embedded in that piece. We have to start thinking of mathematical concepts as holograms, I think."

When asked about adults with learning disabilities and the potential they have for making progress with their learning, Mighton feels that what he calls "mental occupational therapy" (he compares it with physical occupational therapy that might be used for someone with a physical disability) can be done at any age. It's not too late for adults. He states that until 10 years ago people would have thought that the brain is fixed by age six. He states it is not and now the scientific work in the area of cognition is showing this. This is the hope he has for adults with LD.

Mighton's perspectives on learning and education also encompass how he feels about the state of affairs in our world. He feels hopeful for three reasons. Firstly is the new scientific work on cognition (plasticity) that is providing understanding about how the brain actually works and people are finally opening up to it. Scientists therefore are also beginning to recognize more about what kids need to learn. He feels much of the research results are supported in the JUMP approach. JUMP is now supported by the leading educators, neurologists and cogniscientists. There is a growing body of evidence that the brain can really change itself but only if we teach it according to certain principles which also take into account the limitations of the brain. This means lots of practice, scaffolding and attentiveness. Mighton believes this research will change education.

He also feels for the first time, people are really beginning to connect the effect of their actions to the environment, pointing to Al Gore's movie *An Inconvenient Truth* which contributed to a greater sense of conscience. It helped people to understand how small things add up.

Thirdly, he has seen what happens when teachers take education into their own hands-when they form study groups and mentor each other. He claims that what has been occurring in British Columbia is one of the most inspiring things he has ever seen and says that teachers are really mobilizing to improve their teaching.

John Mighton's approach to learning is empowering, inspiring and successful. For more information, visit JUMP's website: www.jumpmath.org.

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SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships Available to Students with Learning Disabilities

Please visit LDAC's website for a full description of the following four of LDAC's scholarships, criteria and application forms: www.ldac.ca and click **scholarships**

Doreen Kronick Scholarship: For graduate studies in a program which will train that student to work with persons with learning disabilities; \$500.00; application deadline is no later than **May 15**.



Carol Thompson Memorial Fund Scholarship: For students with learning disabilities to pursue college, private vocational school or an under-graduate program at a Canadian University. Value of Scholarship is \$1000.00; application deadline is no later than **May 15**.

The Donald Cummings Apprenticeship and Industry Training Scholarship for Students with Learning Disabilities: Open to students registered full-time as an apprentice in a program of 6 months or longer. Value of Scholarship is \$500.00; application deadline is no later than **May 15**.

The Joanna Townsend Applied Arts Scholarship - Awarded to a Canadian student with learning disabilities who has an interest in pursuing an education and/or career in any of the various applied arts programs. Value of scholarship is \$1000.00; application deadline is no later than **May 15**.

LDAK administers the following memorial fund: *One scholarship annually if funding permits*
Tristin Memorial Scholarship Application: \$500.00 scholarship will be given to a Canadian student with learning disabilities who demonstrates an interest in pursuing an education and/or to recognize an individual with a learning disability, who through effort and perseverance, is seeking to use his/her potential to its maximum. Postmarked no later than **May 15th**. For details: www.ldakingston.com

Other sites of Interest on Financial Assistance Programs and scholarships information for Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities:

<http://www.ldao.on.ca/landis.html>

Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario - Gloria Landis Memorial Bursary

<http://www.studentawards.com/english/can/>

Canadian database of thousands of scholarships, bursaries, fellowships, grants and other financial awards.



Roy Cooper Scholarship Award 2009: A \$1000.00 scholarship award will be given to a high school student who has a documented learning disability and will be attending University or College during the 2009-2010 school year, majoring in engineering and /or physical sciences discipline. Deadline for submission to local chapter is **May 28th**. Please contact LDAK at 613-545-0373 for an application.

RESOURCES IN OUR LIBRARY

Behaviour Management & Skills DVD

The DVD is designed for parents, educators and caregivers supporting individuals diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome, Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Anxiety and Mood Disorders, Learning Disabilities, Autism and other comorbidly diagnosed neurological disorders. This DVD is also an excellent resource for caregivers of all children.



AlphaSmart Keyboard - All ages

The AlphaSmart 3000 keyboard is designed to let students take notes, write essays or practice keyboarding without having to use a computer. The text can later be transferred into virtually any application on a computer, or directly to a printer.

The Alphabet Series

The Alphabet Series storybooks is a complete program for beginning readers. The storybooks are sequential and cumulative. They begin with simple consonant and short vowel sounds and gradually add more complex phonics concepts. With increasing confidence and fluency, children will enjoy learning to read.



Source for Non-Verbal Learning Disabilities—Sue Thompson

This book is filled with checklists, anecdotes, methods and resources for the identification and treatment of these children and youths.

The Oasis Guide to Asperger Syndrome—Patricia Romanowski Bashe and Barbara L. Kirby

This updated book includes new information on diagnosis, evaluation, medication, therapies and social skills development.



A Mind of Your Own—National Film Board of Canada

This video features four incredible kids who won't let their learning differences hold them down. This inspirational video will encourage and boost the self-esteem of kids struggling with learning disabilities and foster understanding in their peers.

**PLEASE NOTE WE WILL BE RECEIVING NEW RESOURCES IN THE
NEW YEAR**

**L. D. A. K. EXECUTIVE
2008 - 2009**

Executive Director	Annabelle Williams
President	Libby Running
Past President	Bruce Todd
Treasurer	Pat Dudley
Secretary	Judy Fox
Members	Bill Cormier
at	David Williams
Large	

RESOURCE CENTRE HOURS

417 Bagot St
Kingston, ON K7K 3C1

**Monday to Friday 11:30 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday Closed**

Resource Centre Co-ordinator
Lana Greenwood

Resource Facilitator
Janice Barling

Disclaimer

*THE LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION
does not endorse or recommend any of the
facilities listed or any of the methods,
programmes, products or treatments offered by
such facilities.*

*Our aim is to keep the community informed about
services and facilities that are available to people
with learning disabilities.*

*We urge consumers and service providers to
review carefully any programmes and services
listed in order to select those which will meet
most appropriately the identified needs of the
person with learning disabilities.*

Membership Application Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

CITY PROVINCE POSTAL CODE

Telephone: (H) _____ (W) _____

ANNUAL DUES:(Effective April 2/04)

Family/Individual - 1 Year Fee -\$50

Student (1 Year Fee Only) - \$20

Institutional (1Year Only) - \$125

Professional (Private Practices)
1 Year Fee - \$75

I would like to volunteer to help with:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |
- _____

Membership Advantages:

- ⇒ subscription to Communiqué & National
- ⇒ affiliation with local, provincial and national levels of LDA
- ⇒ free information on learning disabilities
- ⇒ free access to Kingston's resource centre and the lending library of LDA Ontario
- ⇒ discount on LDA conferences

**Your membership is important in providing
a stronger voice within all levels of the
Association.**

Please tear off and mail this form and cheque
(made out to **LEARNING DISABILITIES
ASSOCIATION OF KINGSTON**) to
Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston
417 Bagot St., Kingston ON K7K 3C1.