



## Career Education Newsletter

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### Contextual Learning?

So what's the best way to convey the many concepts that are being taught in a subject area so that all students can use and retain information? How can individual lessons be understood as interconnected pieces of the bigger picture, so that it gives the students a holistic approach to education rather than a segmented approach? How can a teacher communicate effectively with students who wonder about the reason for, the meaning of and the relevance of what they are learning? These are the challenges that every teacher faces every single day, the challenges that the new reform is now asking of teachers. So what can you do? First of all ask yourself the question, what helps you learn? Now;

1. Identify a relevant professional or personal learning experience you have had?
2. Contrast this to a learning experience that was not relevant.
3. Now ask yourself how important it is to make learning relevant and in context.

From this activity you can see the importance of learning in context. So let's go further to discover how you can incorporate this into the subject that you are teaching and still cover the competencies and broad areas of learning in the QEP.

### Contextual Learning: What is it?

Contextual learning helps student's process new information that is given to them in a way that makes sense to them in their own world of memory, experience and response (Parnell 1995). There are many other terms used to describe contextual learning including:

- Hands on experience
- Real world education
- Active learning
- Integrated learning
- Project based learning
- School to career
- Applied learning

(Berns & Erikson, 2001)

The importance of this type of learning is so that the child's mind naturally seeks meaning and context in the subjects they are being taught. Therefore, this type of learning can occur in a number of different places; in the classroom, a laboratory, a computer lab, outside, or place of work (CORD, 2001). Because of the flexibility of this type of learning a teacher can design a learning environment which incorporates many different forms of experience, including social, cultural, physical and psychological. So contextual learning:

- Gives meaning, relevance and usefulness to learning;
- Allows change to occur in the classroom;
- Allows teaching to be more fun; and

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- Be understood by the student; and
- Apply to a frame of reference or have context to the student

CORD 2001

**Our retention rate for how we learn is as follows:**

5% Lecture	10% Reading
20% Audio visual	30% Demonstration
50% Discussion	75% Practice by doing
90% Teaching Others	

(Colorado Department of Education, 1999)

**What Does Success Mean to You?**

As educators we all want our students to be successful, as your teachers wanted you to be successful when you were at school. On going back to my former high school my art teacher Mrs. Warner said to me, “So Kelly what are you doing now?” I told her, she smiled, and said “Wow, that’s great!”. So ask yourself the question what is success to you, and if you saw one of your former students, what would make them successful?

**Using Career Development to add relevancy to the classroom**

There are many ways in which a teacher can add relevance to the subject matter being taught in the classroom. One of the most exciting ways is to focus on career development. This not only helps the students see the relationship of academics to the real world but it also helps them to understand where their own strength and interests lie.

Having life goals is critical to success, and the “work” that we do on a day to day basis is an important part of who we are. Career development is a process just like learning to walk and talk, read and write, and there are certain stages that should be addressed at Elementary, Middle School, High School and beyond. The more choices a student is given throughout their schooling the more likely they are to find their passion. Projects that make connections between curriculum and the work place have been, “....a time proven approach for providing rigorous, relevant, contextual, applied learning in a manner consistent with how learning takes place in the adult world and is also comparable with how the brain learns more efficiently”

(Blank & Harwell, 2001)

Examples of Contextual Learning

- Even Tony Hawk Uses Math. This is a project that uses skateboards to integrate different Mathematical problems. For more information: contact Pat McQuatty [pmcquatty@wqsb.qc.ca](mailto:pmcquatty@wqsb.qc.ca) or Kelly Butler [kbutler@wqsb.qc.ca](mailto:kbutler@wqsb.qc.ca)
- Small Business in the classroom – set up a crayon recycling company (or any company) as part of an integrated science unit studying the environment and recycling. The company can run Tye-Dye Crayons: manufacturing, marketing, accounting, etc. For lesson plans and the complete unit on setting up a business go to [www.bizworld.com](http://www.bizworld.com)
- The Island Project: this is a project which can integrate many different subject areas from math through to physical education. The students are given set criteria, and then put into different scenarios which they have to overcome. For more information on the project please contact Kelly Butler [kbutler@Wqsb.qc.ca](mailto:kbutler@Wqsb.qc.ca)

In this sort of learning environment, students discover meaningful relationships between the subjects taught in the classroom and practical applications in the context of the real world; contexts are internalized through the process of discovering, reinforcing and relating information to their own life.

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Bern, R.G. & Erickson, P.M. (2001). Contextual Teaching and Learning: Preparing Students for the New Economy. The Highlight Zone: Research @ Work.

CORD, (2001). Learning Change in Education: What is Contextual Learning? [www.cord.org](http://www.cord.org)

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Parnell, Dale. (2001) Contextual Teaching Works! Texas: CCI Publishing.

# TOP THREE WEB SITES

I go to many elementary schools and when the students are asked what they would like to do as a career many of them say “work with animals”. Here is a site that may help you introduce careers and animals through science.

1. **Subject Area:** Science

**Title:** The Electronic Zoo Url:

<http://netvet.wustl.edu/ssi.htm>

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Rating:** \* \* \* \* \*

**Content:** This site is part of the University of Washington's NetVet: Veterinary Resources site and it features thousands of links for just about any animal you can imagine. This would also be a great way to introduce students to careers with animals.

2. **Subject Area:** Mathematics

**Title:** Probability Central Url:

<http://library.thinkquest.org/11506/>

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Rating:** \* \* \* \* \*

**Content:** Learning Section, Gaming Section, Website Feedback, Grafitti Wall, and more. So what are the odds that one or more of your students is having trouble with probability in Maths? Probably pretty high! Send them over to Probability Central, a Thinkquest site designed by students. Learn about probability theory, models, properties and rules and then complete a set of exercises when you have mastered your skills. Play a game of poker to see how probability applies to the real world.

3. Careers of the past. If you are teaching history and would like to link history to careers here is a great site to go to!

**Subject Area:** Social Studies

**Title:** Ethnologue: The HistoryMakers Url:

<http://www.thehistorymakers.com/>

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Rating:** \* \* \* \* \*

**Content:** Invite your students to The HistoryMakers, an archive of multimedia-filled biographies of African Americans who have contributed in some form or other to American history and the black community since 1900. Images and sound files accompany many biographies including their careers to enhance the learning experience.

## A Lesson on Life!

Life is an opportunity, benefit from it. Life is beauty, admire it.

Life is bliss, taste it. Life is a dream, realize it.

Life is a challenge, meet it. Life is a duty, complete it.

Life is a game, play it. Life is a promise, fulfill it.

Life is sorrow, overcome it. Life is a song, sing it.

Life is a struggle, accept it. Life is a tragedy, confront it.

Life is an adventure, dare it. Life is luck, make it.

Life is too precious, do not destroy it.

Life is life, fight for it.

Mother Teresa

## Activity: Human Tic-Tac-Toe

This is a leadership exercise in communication skills. The key is to discuss the feelings and frustrations that the players experience as they participate.

Materials Needed: 9 chairs

- Clear a large space in the centre of the classroom.
- Place the chairs in the form of Tic-Tac-Toe (3 rows and 3 columns) with space to walk between each chair.
- Two teams of five are chosen. The teams stand on opposite sides of the chairs. You could even have 2 games going at once.
- The objective of the games is to win at tic-tac-toe.
- The game MUST be played in complete silence, and with ABSOLUTELY no communication of any kind, verbal or non-verbal between teams or team mates. No grunting, pointing, eye movements, etc.

The lesson in the game is on perception – sometimes what we see isn't exactly what someone else sees. Usually in the first couple of games or so the player or players, will have the opportunity to win the game for their team, but will be in a defense frame of mind and therefore block the other team from winning. This game produces great fun and competition. A good variation allows the team that plays second to get 2 moves. What is interesting is that the team that gets the advantage rarely wins.

## For Students:

### Do you want some Money Son?

A letter to a parent and the reply you'll usually get.

From [www.akajokes.com](http://www.akajokes.com)

Dear Father,

School i\$ really great. I am making lot\$ of new friend\$ and Studying very hard. With all my \$tuff here I \$imply can't think of anything I need. \$o if you would like, you can ju\$t Send me a card, to \$ay hello a\$ I would love to hear from you.

After receiving his sons letter, the father's response was:

Dear Son,

I kNOw that astroNOmy, ecoNOmics, and oceaNOgraphy are eNOugh to keep even an hoNOur student busy. Do Not forget that the pursuit of kNOwledge is a NOble task, and you can never study or WORK hard eNOugh.

Love Dad

## Financial Planning for your Future

### How to search for scholarships on ScholarshipsCanada.com and SchoolFinder.com

Using a tool like ScholarshipsCanada.com or the Finance section of SchoolFinder.com is the first step in a thorough search for scholarships. But using the tool effectively is what can make a difference between a good search and an outstanding search.

To find out more about scholarships and how to apply for them go to:

<http://www.schoolfinder.com/finance/how.asp>

### The ScholarshipsCanada.com Entrance Awards Directory 2004 is available now!

If you would like to know about all the awards and scholarships out there this year's ScholarshipsCanada.com Entrance Awards Directory has all the information on over 37,400 awards for students in or entering into their first year of post-secondary studies.

The awards are worth over \$58 million. To order the directory go to: <http://www.scholarshipscanada.com/> and click on the top left box titled scholarships Canada.

The directory costs \$39.95 Cdn. plus shipping and taxes, and includes a brand-new SchoolFinder.com CD.

### Check out Books4Exchange.com for cheap textbooks!

Looking for a cheap textbook? Check out our used books site [Books4Exchange.com](http://Books4Exchange.com)! We list thousands of books from universities and colleges across the country!

### A guide to scholarships, awards and applications

So you would like to have a scholarship to help you through the battle of paying for your post secondary education, but, your not a legend when it comes to sports and you haven't been getting straight A's across the board. This article offers a few tips on how you may be able to find awards and scholarships.

To find out more go to:

<http://www.schoolfinder.com/finance/guide.asp>

### EDge Directory Scholarship

This month's scholarship is the EDge Directory Scholarship. Students must be entering into their first year at any accredited post-secondary institution in Canada. They must also submit an essay not longer than 1,000 words outlining their contributions to improving Canada. For more details, please visit:

<http://www.edgeip.com/company/scholar.asp>

For more information on other scholarships here:

<http://www.scholarshipscanada.com>

## Managing Your Dosh!

O.K. People lets put our accounts hats on. Keep reading, and I'm sure by the end of this article you'll be budgeting genius's. Now I'm sure you know that I can't wave my magic wand and make all of your financial difficulties disappear, and I know that these tips probably won't help you stay entirely debt-free when you move to college, but here are a few ideas for you to help you manage your dosh (cash).

Keeping it simple, there are two things you need to do to keep on top of the old "Dosh Leakage" problem, maximise your income and minimize your expenditure.

## Minimising Expenditure

Have you any idea where the phrase “Teaching your grandmother to suck eggs” came from? No, well this probably applies to many of you reading this.

Assuming you know where your money is going every month, here’s a few things you can do to stop the holes in your pocket.

Start by tearing up any credit cards you have. With interest rates of up to 30% you simple can’t afford them, so rip up that plastic ASAP.

## Making it large

Now you’ve done that you can work at upping your income. Now if you thinking a LOAN from the bank, remember they’ll be “Showing you the Money” but they’ll also be asking for it back with huge amounts of interest.....So, my advice to you is (you’d better sit down before you read this). Get a job!

It needn’t be too bad. A mate of mine went through university working at an indoor arena in the evening. Any Britney, Justin and other concerts that were showing she would be there watching, as well as selling a few programs and binoculars at the same time.

A more natural environment for most students is working behind a bar. Think of all the tips your gonna get.

Restaurants are also great places to work, but it can be very hard work. But look at what you could get: cash, free food and a few hours of warmth. Sounds good doesn’t it, especially if your stuck living in a freezing flat with the heating cut off because you can’t afford to pay the bills.

## Definite no no’s

Sell bodily organs: yes, yes I know it can be tempting and you could get something like \$200,000 for a kidney you don’t really need. But think of the impaired ability to join in at the union bar later on and the other possible health problems you’ll get.

## Other things to help you save money:

- Get off the phone: don’t go crazy on the phone talking to your long lost rele’s in Australia.
- Make a budget and stick to it: You don’t want be going out buying the latest gadget in technology. If you can’t afford to go to the cinema, don’t. Get a video or go on cheap night.
- Decide what your priorities are: do you really need to buy a packet of cigarettes/coffee everyday?
- Make your own sandwiches for lunch....You never know the caf maybe the last place you want to be eating...
- Instead of going out to eat have everyone around to your house and ask them to bring a pot luck.

Last but not least, think about the money you're spending. You're an adult now - it's time to take responsibility for your finances and not go mad just because your away from home. Good luck!

# Lesson Plan: Career Awareness, Exploration, and Planning

## Activity 1: Jobs and Roles

### Foundational Objectives:

- Awareness and knowledge of the interrelationships of life roles.
- Awareness and knowledge of different occupations and the skills needed to access, understand and use career information.
- Awareness and knowledge about changing gender roles.

### Learning Objectives:

The student will:

- Identify the physical activities associated with various jobs and roles.
- Describe the changing life roles of men and women in work and family.

**Time:** One class period.

### Activity:

1. Explain to the class that different members will be asked to demonstrate activities in different job roles. They are not allowed to use any verbal cues.
2. Secretly give each student an occupation to perform. Suggested occupations include teacher, farmer, banker, truck driver, fast food worker, trapper, salesperson, professional athlete, etc.
3. Students then take turns acting out the worker's duties, while the rest of the class will guess what jobs are being acted out.
4. Have the student discuss the physical activities of the job they just performed.
  - (a) Is there a lot of activity or little activity?
  - (b) Is there a great deal of heavy lifting or very little?
  - (c) Can the job be performed by both men and women. Why or why not?
5. In pairs, have the students discuss whether they would like a job that is physically demanding. Why or why not?
6. Brainstorm a list of changing roles of men and women and discuss the impact on occupational choices.

### Additional Activities:

Invite a construction worker to class as a guest speaker to discuss his/her job. If possible, invite both a female and a male construction worker.

Another Cool Activity

## Comic Ice Breaker

Photocopy the colour comics from a newspaper. Cut each individual comic into its separate frames. Mix up the pieces of comic strips and then have each person in the class take a frame from each comic strip.

Form groups according to what strip they have, and then ask the group to put the comic in order as it would have appeared.

Start a discussion in each group or the whole group about what is your favourite comic strip and why.