

E D U C A T I O N

# F O R U M



Aboriginal ways of knowing

strategies that the authors believe, when practised as “habits of mind,” can lead to academic success. The book is arranged in the following parts:

**Part I Creating an Environment for Learning**

1. Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback
2. Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition
3. Co-operative Learning

**Part II Helping Students Develop Understanding**

4. Cues, Questions and Advanced Organizers
5. Non-linguistic Representation
6. Summarizing and Note-Taking
7. Assigning Homework and Providing Practice

**Part III Helping Students Extend and Apply Knowledge**

8. Identifying Similarities and Differences
9. Generating and Testing Hypothesis

**Part IV Putting the Instructional Strategies to Use**

Instructional Planning Using the Nine Categories of Strategies

Each category is thoroughly explained with suggestions for implementation and application. The authors recommend that teachers embed the strategies while planning for instruction and stress that all strategies complement the others.

They also recognize the challenges of teaching in the 21st century. Acknowledging that classrooms are increasingly diverse, both culturally and linguistically,

it is noted that the constant influence of external distractions such as social media, television and the Internet is also a reality. Teachers are encouraged to develop or modify skills to meet the needs of students learning through technology.

Although extremely text-heavy with few graphics, this publication is thorough in its coverage of each of the categories of strategies. Users are directed to an Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) website for additional material such as graphic organizers and online content not included in the book.

Classroom teachers, new to the profession or seasoned veterans, who want to improve student learning through effective practice and fair and mindful instruction should add this book to their professional reading list.

**Susan Robinson** is an Occasional Teacher in District 6A, Thunder Bay and represents OSSTF/FEESO on the Teacher Education Liaison Committee at Lakehead University.

**WEBSITE REVIEW**

**myBlueprint**

[myblueprint.ca](http://myblueprint.ca)

Reviewed by Marilyn MacLennan

The web-based resource myBlueprint is designed for use in intermediate and senior grades. It provides a vehicle for students to set goals, record extra-curricular activities and volunteer hours, create an individual pathway plan (IPP) and research post-secondary and occupation information. Students involved in Specialist High Skills Majors programs are also able to document their progress. This website also has an option for students to complete interest/skills inventories called “Discovery” for Grades 7 to 10, and “Explorations” for Grades 10 to 12. An online course-selection function is also available. Additional enhancements are being developed.

The website also has excellent resources for teachers to use, including user guides,



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PowerPoint presentations and lesson plans, some of which are linked to the Ontario Career Studies curriculum. In addition, webinars and video demonstrations assist teachers in learning how to best use this program in their schools.

Students are able to create individual pathways plans by choosing courses for high school in the “High School Planner.” They can create more than one plan by selecting courses they might take through to graduation that can lead to either apprenticeship, college, university or the workplace. The program helps them discover the post-secondary and occupational opportunities available to them for each plan.

As a user of myBlueprint for the last four years, I have found it a useful tool. I have employed it in the fall with Grades 9 to 11 and again in February, when students choose their options for the following year. With this program, students are engaged in the process of setting goals, recording their activities and planning their future. Guidance counsellors can monitor their students’ progress towards achieving their goals.

This year I chose the “Course Selection Module,” which allows students to reflect on their previous planning when choosing their courses for the following year. This function allows me to see issues with their course selections before they are transferred to our Student Information System, issues that could include lack of prerequisites, not enough courses chosen, too many courses chosen etc. Having access to the individual student profiles is helpful when working with students.

It is a user-friendly program that has received the seal of approval from both my students and parents. While I do not believe that any program has everything, myBlueprint is a very useful tool for student planning when used in conjunction with other resources.

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## CONFERENCES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### November 15–16, 2012 Overcoming Obstacles in Education 2012 Educational Services Conference

Hilton Suites Toronto/  
Markham Conference Centre

This conference will offer best strategies to identify and address the many obstacles faced by those working in education in elementary, secondary and university settings. Workshops relating to the theme of the conference include: Aboriginal/First Nations/Indigenous Issues, Adult Education, Attendance, Bullying & Harassment, Community Involvement, Funding, Mental Illness & Addiction, Parent Involvement, Progressive Discipline, Special Education and Student Success. For more information, visit [www.osstf.on.ca/ESconference2012](http://www.osstf.on.ca/ESconference2012).

### July 3–27, 2012

Native Language Teacher Certification (NLTC)

Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, ON

The Certification Program is designed for individuals who want to teach a Native Language as a second language in a primary or secondary school. It focuses on developing skills required for second-language teaching. The curriculum is designed for students who enter the program with an Algonquian Language background. For more information, contact Bruce K. Beardy, Co-ordinator, NLIP at 1-807-343-8003 or [bbeardy@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:bbeardy@lakeheadu.ca).

### July 9–11, 2012

Barbara Coloroso’s 2012 Summer Institute—Teaching with Wit and Wisdom  
Ryerson University, Toronto, ON

For K-12 classroom teachers, special education teachers and administrators.

Topics include:

- Day 1: Teaching with wit and wisdom.
- Day 2: The bully, the bullied and the bystander.

•Day 3: Just because it’s not wrong doesn’t make it right: helping kids to think and act ethically.

Visit [kidsareworthit.com](http://kidsareworthit.com) for additional information and to register.

### October 11–12, 2012

2012 Ophea Conference  
Nottawasaga Inn, Alliston, ON

Are you passionate about the health and well-being of children and youth, and committed to promoting healthy, active living in your school or community? Join us for the 2012 Ophea Conference, an invaluable professional learning experience that will give you the opportunity to connect with colleagues from across the province who share the same passion and commitment. The early-bird deadline is June 28, so don’t miss out! Register now! For more details and to register, please visit [conference.ophea.net](http://conference.ophea.net).

### October 11–12, 2012

Merry Wars: Stratford Festival Annual Teachers’ Conference  
Stratford, ON

The Teachers-Festival Liaison Council’s 31st annual Teachers’ Conference at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival includes workshops and seminars for English and drama teachers (both secondary and elementary), performances of *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Much Ado About Nothing*, and social events. For more details, visit [www.tflc.ca](http://www.tflc.ca).

### October 19, 2012

Shaw Festival Fall Teachers’ Day  
Niagara on the Lake, ON

Paint a show-stopping set on a shoestring budget in a workshop with Gwyneth Stark, Shaw Festival Head of Scenic Art. Registration fee includes lunch, refreshments and parking. An evening performance of *Come Back Little Sheba* is optional and an additional cost will apply. Registration: \$92.50 (tax extra). For more information, visit [www.shawfest.com/education/for-teachers/teachers-days](http://www.shawfest.com/education/for-teachers/teachers-days).

