

in year four – ANNUAL REPORT 2004/2005

CANADIAN LANGUAGE & LITERACY RESEARCH NETWORK

sharing the science. opening minds.

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Heather Reisman
CEO, *Indigo Books & Music Inc.*

“The single best gift we can give to children is the gift of self esteem. Without doubt, literacy is the foundation upon which self esteem is built.”

Paulette Bourgeois
creator of the Franklin the Turtle series

“When children love to read they are not only opening the pages of a book, they are opening the doors to their futures.”

Bryan Perro
author of the Amos Daragon series

“I believe that reading puts children in touch with an interior space that helps them develop their imagination, intelligence and capacity for abstract thought. Reading enriches our lives and gives us access to absolute freedom.” [adaptation]

Holly McNally
Co-Owner, McNally Robinson Booksellers

“Children who read, hold books as their own, can travel realms and understand truths. So great is the power of story. Literacy creates the leaders of tomorrow.”

Margaret Atwood

“Reading feeds you!
Reading speeds you!
Reading lets you know who needs you!
Readers are leaders.”

Valerie Hussey
CEO, President and Publisher, Kids Can Press Ltd.

“Literacy organizations will no longer be needed when every aspect of our society recognizes and participates in assuring a fully literate society. That is a wonderful future to imagine. As a publisher of books for children for over 30 years, I know how important books are to a child’s development.”

The Story...

Chapter 1

A child, new to Canada from Portugal, gains confidence as he masters a second language; a Canadian Aboriginal child overcomes literacy barriers by documenting her heritage; a French-Canadian child is finally tested for reading skills based on his own culture; an 11-year-old student in Winnipeg passes English for the first time. All grow up to make Canada richer, both culturally and economically.

These happy endings to real stories of language and literacy development are unfolding in Canada today. They are written one child at a time, but the overall effort is the basis for a strategy that can improve the lives of all Canadians. We all win when we reduce the percentage of future adults who will experience literacy and language problems, and when we increase the capacity of this country to compete internationally while improving our quality of life.

We are the Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network. Funded in 2001 by the Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE), we are Canada's largest integrated network of researchers, practitioners, partners, students and policy makers who collaborate to develop evidence-based research, interventions and education tools that will help our children achieve great futures. We bring ideas together, both in health and social sciences, to create new knowledge specific to Canadian needs. We share our work across all boundaries to open minds in policy development and with the private sector.

What follows is our 2004/2005 Annual Report, but just as important, it is a preview of the next chapter in a national language and literacy development strategy for our children.



Foreword

❧ Chapter 2 ❧

As the Chair of the Board of the Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network...

The past year has been one of great development for The Network. We completed a rigorous mid-term review, approved a new Strategic Plan, and received renewed Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) funding through 2008.

Our vision remains strong: to improve the language and literacy skills of Canadian children and to create an integrated network of researchers, practitioners and government agencies that will continue our work after our NCE support ends.

The next chapter in The Network's story is based on our need to ensure long-term sustainability. To this end, we have achieved Registered Charitable Status and are now conducting a planning study with an independent consulting firm. Together we are developing a long-range plan that will allow the legacy of The Network to continue beyond our current mandate.

Our challenge is to continue developing strong and lasting networks of researchers, whose collaborations with their client groups and partners result in quantifiable improvement in the language and literacy skills of children. Recent Statistics Canada studies tell us that disturbing adult literacy results have remained unchanged since 1995. But if we can improve the average literacy rate by just 1 per cent, the net effect would be an \$18-billion dollar annual increase in Canada's gross domestic product (GDP). We now know the most effective way to improve adult literacy rates is to improve the language and literacy skills of children.

The achievements in The Network's past year were many, and we owe a debt of gratitude to our friends who have decided to follow other paths, especially to Dan Sinai, Managing Director and COO, who helped create The Network four years ago.

The year also saw retirements from the Board. Betty Ann Levy, Joan Mantle and Joe Wigglesworth gave much of their time to the Board in its formative years and we thank them. We welcome Patricia Cleave, Ted Hewitt, Scott Murray, Helen Raham and Linda Siegel as our new Board members in 2005.

What lies ahead is a world of potential. I want to thank Donald Jamieson, CEO and Scientific Director, for his vision and leadership, as well as each Network member and the NCE Secretariat who are all contributing to make The Network's vision a reality. The Network is the strategy – in sharing our science, we are now opening minds.



Martin Walmsley, PhD
Chair of the Board



As CEO and Scientific Director of The Network...

Now that the NCE Steering Committee has approved our progress to date and our plans for the next three years, we are focused on the important challenges that are just *ahead* for The Network.

The Strategic Plan describes an ambitious agenda for the period 2005-2008. Our efforts will focus on improving language and literacy skills in four groups of vulnerable children:

- (1) Aboriginal children;
- (2) Children in immigrant families;
- (3) Minority language children; and
- (4) Children who require more intensive and targeted instruction or intervention.

Some important components of the Strategic Plan have already been implemented. A new Research Management Committee (RMC) is in place and membership includes senior, independent researchers, Network investigators, and research users from key partner organizations. I want to extend particular thanks to former RMC members Prudence Allen, Andrée Durieux-Smith, Robert Harrison, Megan Hodge, Raymond Klein, and Teena Willoughby for their contributions through The Network's early years.

In partnership with other leading organizations, we have found new ways to communicate effectively with practitioners and policy makers. With these partners, the coming years will see a series of targeted publications and events directed at applying research and available knowledge to the improvement of policy and practice. We have also established a Knowledge Transfer Office to facilitate and accelerate the uptake of research by our partners.

We look forward with great enthusiasm to the challenges of the coming years. The NCE program is designed to increase the impact of research and as Network participants write the next chapter in The Network's story, we know the benefits our work will bring to the lives of Canadian children.



Donald G. Jamieson, PhD
CEO and Scientific Director

Contributions

Chapter 3

Networks of researchers, practitioners, students, policy makers – put them together with one focus and the results are powerful. Change is possible. The challenge of the Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network is to use partnering and networking to get evidence-based results working in our communities.

SHARING - PARTNERING - DISSEMINATING

The 4th Annual Network Conference

Our annual conference held in Toronto in June was our most successful one to date. We enjoyed record attendance of 263 delegates (up 47 per cent over last year), welcomed additional new partners, and realized new firsts, including national media coverage and a student poster competition. Entitled *Building Blocks – sharing early childhood literacy research*, the conference focused on outcomes from within The Network and around the world, and informed new ideas for Canadian projects.

Invest in Kids™

The Network and Invest In Kids™ are partners in a unique project to translate early childhood language and literacy science into user-friendly, frequently asked questions (FAQs) with answers that parents can easily understand. Acting as liaison, Randy Lynn Newman, PhD, Network Student Executive Chair, worked with researchers to provide evidence-based answers to commonly asked questions. The partnership currently has 13 messages that can be reviewed at www.investinkids.ca.

Lecture Series

In 2005, The University of Calgary, The University of Alberta and The Network presented its first series of lectures on *Language, Literacy and the Next Generation*. As a pilot project, more than 250 participants attended from five locations. All sites were connected by video-conferencing, and participants engaged in a live question period. Videos are available at www.cllrnet.ca/lectures. The series was delivered by Network researchers, who discussed factors affecting the literacy performance of Canadian children.

Looking to our future

A significant mandate of The Network is to engage, encourage and support higher learning and the next generation of researchers. Our past year successes include:

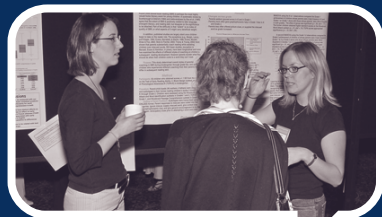
- **TRAVEL GRANTS FOR STUDENT MEMBERS OF THE NETWORK.** This supports the need for students to share their studies on language and literacy through scientific conferences. Grants are valued at a maximum of \$800 each.
- **STUDENT POSTER COMPETITION.** This inaugural competition was an exciting and important part of our 4th Annual Network Conference. \$500 prizes were awarded to: PhD – Corinne Haigh, The University of Western Ontario; Masters – Kate Spere, University of Guelph; Undergraduate – Marie-Claude Boudreault, Université de Montréal.



Attendance increased 47%
at the 2005 Conference.



Conference keynote speaker
Dr. Richard Olson.



Student poster competition:
a Conference first.

The Story of Ricardo

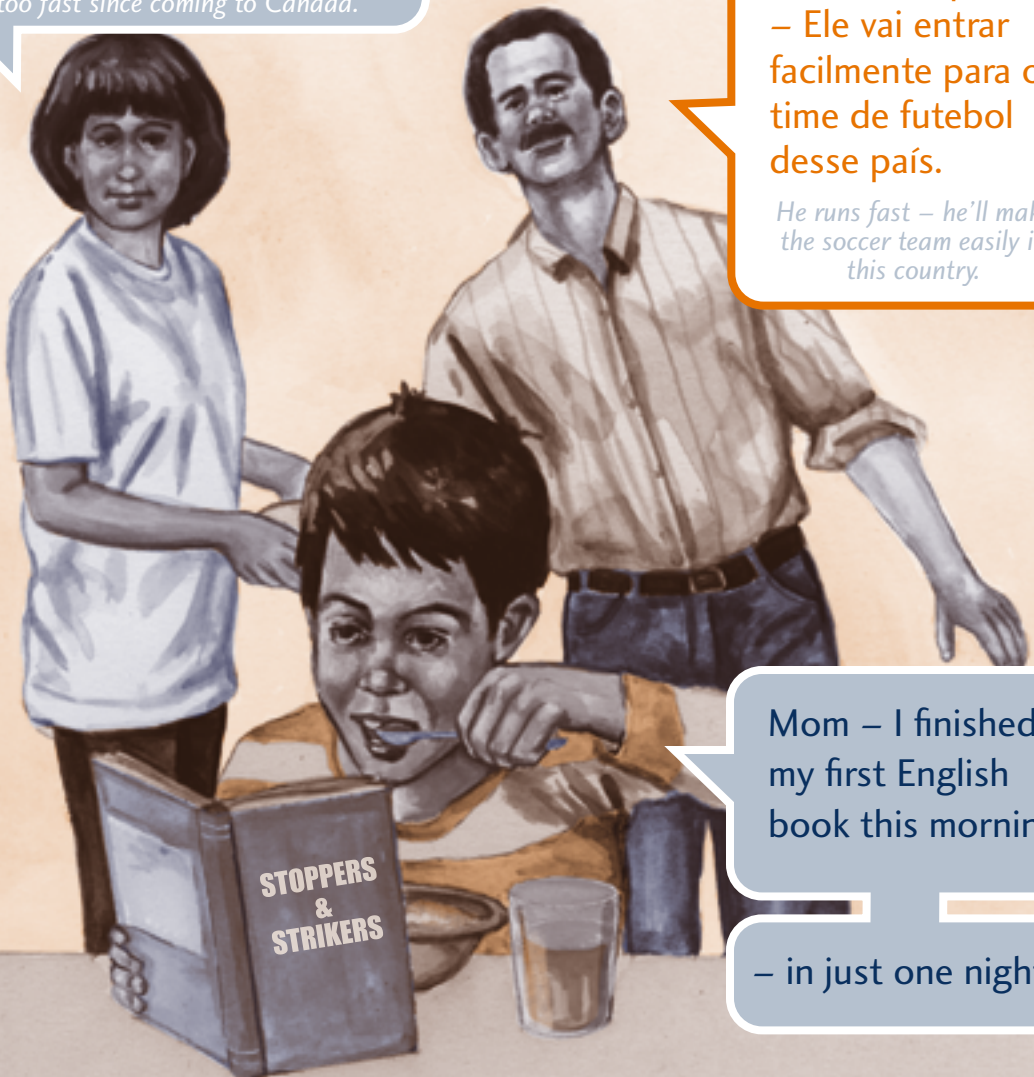
Ricardo and his family immigrated to Canada last year. At home, the first and only language spoken is Portuguese – in his new life, at school and at play, he is struggling to learn English so he doesn't get left behind. Time is precious – school board and family resources for tutoring are stretched to the limit. And the longer it takes, the more barriers this new Canadian will encounter as he grows up.

Ele está comendo muito rápido desde que veio para o Canadá.

He eats too fast since coming to Canada.

Ele corre rápido – Ele vai entrar facilmente para o time de futebol desse país.

He runs fast – he'll make the soccer team easily in this country.



Mom – I finished my first English book this morning

– in just one night!

Principal Characters

Chapter 4

New immigrants – Canada’s future can’t wait

IT CAN TAKE FIVE TO SEVEN years to develop a complete mastery in a second language. For a child new to this country, five to seven years is a lifetime. Understanding how children learn language and literacy skills is key to shortening the time required to do so – yet most literacy research is focused on monolingual readers.

There are more than 141 languages spoken in Canada – in our larger cities, as many as 60 per cent of the children in school speak English as a second language. Helping these children in this capacity is key to our country’s future.

Network researcher Esther Geva, from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (University of Toronto), is conducting a study into *Understanding Reading Development in Second Language Learners*. The research looks at reading acquisition patterns over a six-year period with outcomes that include identifiers and remediation of learning disabilities in second language learners, and an assessment of the value of kindergarten testing to identify children most likely to have difficulty reading in their second language.

Research outcomes will improve educators’ understanding of how to help second language learners in reading instruction. Learning to read earlier and faster will mean our new Canadian children won’t have to play catch up.



The Story of Wasewek

The legends of Wasewek's family go back generations – in recounting these stories, tradition is preserved and learning happens. So what seems like a tall tale is more accurately an age-old way to educate young people through legend and oral history. Placing culture into the foundation of literacy programs is the next step.

Your father rode a whale
from one continent to the
next to get food?

It took three months –
he picked a slow whale.

The same whale
started the tides in
the Bay of Fundy.



Aboriginal children – Making history

LITTLE HAS CHANGED FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLES since a census conducted over a decade ago discovered significant issues in native education (almost three times the average drop out rate). Reading is the core of learning and staying in school – improving reading skills with young Aboriginal children can change their prospects for life.

A research project now underway is based on a successful rural family literacy study in Prince Edward Island that concluded in 2002/03. Network researcher Vianne Timmons and her associates are replicating the project in four Mi'kmaq communities. The research began with a needs assessment study which was used to create a comprehensive family literacy program for those communities.

What the families in the assessment identified as important was to embed the content of the reading strategies in a cultural context. Partners on the project believe that literacy is a part of everyday life, involving relationships between self, community, nation and creation with a focus on words, language, listening and comprehension.

What we know is that family culture passed from one generation to the next is the basis for Aboriginal story-telling, and that is solid ground for building reading skills. The results of the project when complete in 2007 should mirror results of the earlier rural program and lead to significant gains in reading comprehension, listening comprehension and basic reading.



The Story of Emile

Emile and his family have lived in St-Charles-de-Bellechase, Quebec, for five generations. They have gone to schools there for five generations. Their first language is French, they learn in French, and build their lives in French. But when it comes to their education, there is a cultural disconnect – between how and where they learn and how they are tested. Culture is connected to learning – it must also form the basis of the standards in education we want to achieve.

Lorsque je suis à la maison, je suis capable de lire, mais je ne suis pas capable de réussir mes examens à l'école.

I can read at home – but I have trouble with the tests at school.

Tu devrais peut-être te présenter en classe plus souvent?

Maybe you should show up more often?

Ou alors – ce sont peut-être les examens qui ne sont pas bien faits.

Or maybe it's just that the tests are irrelevant.



French children – French testing needed

PUTTING A READING SKILLS TEST TOGETHER necessitates the use of stories and other content that comes from the culture of the participants. If the cultural content lacks relevance, the test results can be misleading.

Network researcher Alain Desrochers and his team are finalizing a project to develop a standardized, multi-component test battery for the detailed assessment of reading skills among Canadian readers of French (aged 5 to 21) and in the process, are investigating the foundations of skilled reading in French. It will be the first battery of its kind developed in Canada for French-Canadians and other readers of French as a first language.

As a result, French-language children will have access to a more relevant literacy assessment in their own language, based on their culture. It will become the critical first step in identifying and treating reading disabilities. The first stage in the project is focused on children aged 5 to 12.

With that outcome, Canadians can finally start asking the right questions and take steps to keep French as a first language vibrant and alive.



The Story of Danny

Danny loves hockey. He plays it on the street, he plays it on his computer, and he plays for the best team in town. What he has trouble with is reading – whether about his favourite hockey heroes or his assignments from school. Danny has fallen through a gap in the education system – no one knew he couldn't read – and like hockey, the skills we develop early are the skills we use as we grow in the game of life.

Did you read that story about the hockey player?

I liked the pictures better.

I think this picture equals a thousand words.



Filling the reading gap with early intervention

TWENTY PER CENT OF CANADIAN STUDENTS encounter great difficulty in learning to read, and another 20 per cent do not read well enough to enjoy it or engage in independent reading. The gaps, evident even in kindergarten, become very difficult to remediate if not addressed early in a child’s academic life.

Network researcher Linda Siegel, University of British Columbia, is leading a project to develop an effective system for identifying children at risk before the problems become severe, and to support practices that prevent or close the gaps over time.

The project will determine the impact of intervention, based on in-school supports for educators that include literacy mentoring, reduced class sizes where more children are at risk, and the application of preventative reading instruction that uses phonological awareness (*Firm Foundations: Early Literacy Teaching and Learning*). The objective will link teaching activities to outcomes in classroom contexts.

Phase One of the study has been completed in North Vancouver, B.C. Reading difficulties among students where English is a first language decreased from 25 per cent to 5 per cent. Difficulties among students where English is the second language dropped from 49 per cent to 7 per cent. The project has expanded to include Prince George, B.C. where results are already trending in the right direction.

Soon, this new knowledge and classroom-tested supports will be available to help all Canadian children achieve their full potential.



Credits

Chapter 5

Industry

Partners (17)

ABC Canada Literacy Foundation
AutoSkill International Inc.
Avaaz Innovations Inc.
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)
Computata Systems Inc. Conference Board of Canada
Edudata Canada
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
Harcourt Canada Ltd.
IBM Canada Limited
MedTech Partners Inc.
Office of Industry Liaison (OIL) – The University of Western Ontario
Phonak Canada
PriceWaterhouseCoopers LLP
Scholastic Canada Ltd.
The Toronto Star
Welch Allyn Medical Products Inc.

Federal Departments and Agencies (8)

Canadian Institutes of Health Research – Institute for Human Development, Child and Youth Health
Industry Canada
National Literacy Secretariat
National Research Council Canada
Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council
Networks of Centres of Excellence Canada
Social Development Canada
Social Sciences

and Humanities Research Council

Research

Partners (48)

Alberta Children's Hospital
Atlantic Regional Training Centre
Calgary Health Region
Calgary Learning Centre
Canadian Academy of Audiology
Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA)
Canadian Centre for Knowledge Mobilization (CCKM)
Canadian Centre for Research on Literacy
Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF)
Canadian Health Services Research Foundation
Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities (CIRLM)
Canadian Research Institute for Social Policy (CRISP)
Canadian Teachers' Federation
Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board
Capital Health
Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development (CEECD)
Child, Youth and Family Program (Nfld. & Labrador)
Cornell University
Dublin City University, Ireland
Expressive Communication Help Organization (ECHO)

Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec (FRSQ)
Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français (FCAF)
Frontier College
Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital
Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic District School Board
Harvard University
Healthy Child Manitoba Office
Hincks Dellcrest Institute
Indiana University
Integra
Invest in Kids™
Macquarie Centre for Cognitive Science, Australia
Masonic Foundation of Ontario
Middlesex-London Health Unit
New Brunswick Department of Education
New Brunswick School District 1
New Brunswick School District 2
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE)
Ontario Ministry of Education
Ontario Principals' Council
Palliser Health Region
Prince George School District
Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education (SAEE)
Thames Valley District School Board
The Hanen Centre

tykeTALK
UNESCO Institute for Statistics
Woodstock General Hospital

Member

Institutions (33)

Acadia University
Brock University
Carleton University
Centre de recherche de l'Hôpital Sainte-Justine
Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario
Concordia University
Dalhousie University
Huron University College
McGill University
McMaster University
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Queen's University
Robarts Research Institute
Simon Fraser University
The Hospital for Sick Children
The University of Western Ontario
Université de Moncton
Université de Montréal
Université du Québec à Montréal
Université du Québec à Rimouski
Université Laval
University of Alberta
University of British Columbia
University of Calgary
University of Guelph
University of Lethbridge
University of New Brunswick
University of Ottawa
University of Prince Edward Island
University of Toronto

University of Victoria
University of Waterloo
Wilfrid Laurier University

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Coplan, Robert
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Coyte, Peter
Dagenais, Diane
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Lee, Christopher
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Montesino, Isabelle
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Parel, Rolande
Parent, Sophie
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Parsa, Vijay
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Service, Elisabet
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³ **A Canada
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Bilous, Leanne
Bird, Laura
Bouchard, Caroline
Bouchard, Marie-Eve
Boucher, Caroline
Boudreault, Marie-
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Cote, Kimberley
Cox, Myra
Cressman, Cara
Cunningham, Todd
Cuthbert, Kimberlee
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Czutrin, Rachel
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Gokceokan, Deniz
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Boucher, Caroline
Boudreault, Marie-
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Chiang, Pi-Yu
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Codina, Monica
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Cote, Kimberley
Cox, Myra
Cressman, Cara
Cunningham, Todd
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Cuthbertson, Heather
Czutrin, Rachel
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Dul, Kari
Edison, Shannon
Etmanskie, Jill
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Mask, Lisa	Patrick-Harris, Susan	Roy, Mia	Starcevic, Katarina	Yang, Muran
Mattock, Karen	Pauchulo, Ana Laura	Roy-Charland, Annie	St-Louis, Ariane	Youssef, Amer
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Miceli, Sonia	Pursoo, Tiffany	Seward, Carrie	Tremblay, Maxime	Undergraduate
Miller, Mariel	Redford, Brynne	Shaw, Deborah	Tseng, Elenita	Summer Research
Molnar, Monika	Redina, Tetyana	Sherman, Jody	Turnbull, Rachel	Assistantship
Moos, Beatrice	Reid, Caroline	Simon, Jessica ¹	Turner, Juanita N.	(UGRA) Employee
Mueller, Julie ²	Reynolds, Kailey	Singh, Hena	Vigneault-Maclean, Bronwyn	² 2004 Postgraduate
Muir, Patricia	Rhody, Mandy	Sirianni, Danielle	Vilalba, Eva	Scholarship
Nadeau, Patrick	Ricard, Nathalie	Sivakumaran, Rishanthi	Vukovic, Rose	Supplement Winner
Newman, Randy Lynn	Rioux, Anne	Slade, Keith	Waese, Michelle	³ Peter Czowski
Ng, Stella ²	Roberts, Martha Anne	Smith, Martha	Walker, Kerry	Scholar
Nguyen, Kim ¹	Robertson, Erin	Smith, Nicholas	Washington, Karla	
Noel, Julie	Romero, Manolo			

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Financials

Chapter 6

The following financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles. The Network follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions, which include government grants. Externally restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable.

Audited statements are available upon request. Please contact Jennifer Starcok at jennifer@cllrnet.ca to obtain a copy.

CANADIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY RESEARCH NETWORK INC.

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2005

REVENUES

NETWORK OF CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE GRANTS	\$3,109,495
SERVICES IN-KIND (note 1[a])	\$632,735
INTEREST REVENUE (note 1[b])	\$30,143
OTHER REVENUE (note 2)	\$35,860
	<u>\$3,808,233</u>

EXPENSES

RESEARCH PROJECT GRANTS (note 3)	\$1,407,000
OTHER GRANTS	\$243,500
SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS	\$158,689
IN-KIND EXPENSES (note 1[a])	\$632,735
SALARIES AND BENEFITS	\$556,086
PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES	\$59,833
EQUIPMENT	\$22,515
STAFF TRAVEL	\$71,859
SUPPLIES AND OTHER EXPENSES	\$67,422
NETWORKING DEVELOPMENT	\$336,946
COMMUNICATIONS	\$186,368
BUSINESS TAXES	\$203
TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	\$65,077

EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES

NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR	-
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	<u><u>-</u></u>

NOTES

- [a] The University of Western Ontario (the "University") is party to the NCE funding agreement and functions as the Network Host for purposes of administration of the grant funding. The University provides accounting and administrative support services as well as office space without charge to the Corporation. These services have been reflected as "In-Kind" services and expenses on the statement of operations and have been determined by the University based on use of space and percentage of time spent on the Corporation by staff and faculty of the University.
[b] As detailed in the Funding Agreement signed among the Corporation, the University and the NCE, external funds received by the Corporation are held in trust by the University. These funds are not held in a bank account separate from the University's funds. The University pays interest, on funds held, at an amount equal to the rate of return on 30 day Treasury Bills for the immediately preceding calendar quarter. This is reduced by 115 basis points per year to contribute to the cost of custodial services and investment management fees.
- Other revenue includes non-NCE revenue that was generated from software sales, web hosting services, and external donations for specific research projects.
- Research grants committed in the current year are expensed.

