



Chalk Talk

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PLEASE SHARE CHALK TALK WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES !!!**Letter from the Editor**

Dear Educators:

In his 2005 book, *[Blink - The Power of Thinking Without Thinking](#)*, Malcolm Gladwell talks about how we, as human beings, store information and form perceptions in our minds that allow us to react quickly and make snap judgements in order to survive. This same capability can also lead to making assumptions about people and places and things that can be entirely incorrect.

A few months ago a couple of my preconceived notions were tested when one of my colleagues had a visitor from Kentucky who dropped by our offices. While he waited to go to lunch, I had the opportunity to chat with 'Dave'. A man, I'd guess in his mid-thirties, I was fascinated to learn that he had served in the U.S military and had completed a couple of tours of duty in Iraq. As I'm old enough to remember the similarly unpopular Vietnam War and had had older American cousins who had served, we got talking about his experiences in Iraq. He quickly dispelled my ill-informed notions about what a typical modern-day soldier might be like. A spirited, inquisitive, friendly young man, married with children, he spoke freely about his activities which had included work to rebuild Iraq and help its families.

Then out of the blue, he dispelled another perception that many Canadians hold about how much knowledge Americans have about Canada. As it turned out, Dave had majored in Canadian History at university. He could name all of our Prime Ministers, knew what year Canada had adopted its current well-known red maple leaf flag and much more. He enthusiastically and good-naturedly shot questions at me though I can't say how well I scored on this impromptu quiz. In a half hour of conversation, he dashed two unfounded notions, changing not only my perceptions but in a way, he changed ME.

This week's issue features an essay competition that will inspire junior and senior students to write about people who have made an impact on their lives. CoEd Communications is dedicated to supporting the important work of teachers by providing access to free classroom resources and programs. We invite you to visit our website at www.4edu.ca.

[Your feed-back is welcome!](#)

Mary Kovack

A&E Classroom 2011 Essay Contest

A&E Canadian Classroom's 'LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST' challenges students in grades 5-12 to write an original 300 word essay on the life of a person they believe made the biggest difference on Canadian society in the past year. Students can win cash prizes for themselves and teachers can win cash prizes for their classrooms.



The submissions will be judged by a national panel of education experts and A&E representatives. The essays will be judged based on the following criteria: persuasiveness (33 per cent), creativity (33 per cent) and relevancy (33 per cent). Two winners from each grade level — 5th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade — will be selected.

2 GRAND PRIZES: 1 prize for each of Grades 5-8 & 9-12

- Student: **\$3,000** Cash Prize
- Department/Classroom of Teacher: **\$1,000** Cash for use in the classroom.

2 FIRST PLACE PRIZES: 1 prize for each of Grades 5-8 & 9-12

- Student: **\$2,000** Cash Prize
- Department/Classroom of Teacher: **\$1,000** Cash for use in the classroom.

[Note: Due to Provincial restrictions the contest is void in Quebec.]

Each entry must include the student's name, complete address, postal code, telephone number, age, grade, name of teacher, school, school address, and local cable system (if known). Send entries to: LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST, c/o Temple Scott Associates, 95 King Street East, 4th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5C 1G4.

NOTE: NEW FOR 2011! Entries may also be submitted online at www.facebook.com/LivesThatMakeADifference.



Educators are encouraged to have students in their civics, social studies, current events, literacy and history classes participate in this year's contest. **NOTE: Deadline is December 15th, 2011.**

For official contest rules and a consent form, please visit <http://www.livesthatmakeadifference.com/>.



A&E Networks' 'LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE'

2010 ESSAY CONTEST – WINNERS!

Be Inspired! Students Start Writing!

Last Spring, A&E Television Networks awarded cash prizes to the winners of its **2010 Lives That Make a Difference Essay Contest**. Selected from a record number of entries, the winners represent schools from Oakville, Ontario, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canmore, Alberta, West Vancouver, British Columbia. The Grand Prize winners received a \$3,000 cash prize and an additional \$1,000 for their teacher for use in the classroom. First Prize winners received \$2,000 cash prize and an additional \$1,000 for use by their teacher in the classroom.

It will come as no surprise that Canada's students were blown away by the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympic Games and that the winners are dominated with essays about The 2010 Games Canada's students celebrating the athletes and record-breaking events. As well, one ground-breaking and particularly memorable political event is among the winners. Here are the 2010 winners:

Grand Prize, Gr. 5-8:

Eva Rodriguez, grade 6, Laura Secord School, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Clara Hughes — Eva's essay focusing on athlete, Clara Hughes' significant achievements on-and-off the rink, "As a resident of Winnipeg, Ms. Hughes' hometown, Eva aptly reflects on the inspiration the Olympian has been to her community," said Dr. Libby O'Connell, Senior Vice President, Corporate Outreach and Chief Historian, A+E Networks. "Eva notes that Ms. Hughes' success did not come without struggle, and that she uses her fame to encourage others." Eva's essay notes that Ms. Hughes is, "full of hope, good cheer and optimism with the realization that hard work and some sacrifice is needed to go the distance."



Clara Hughes MIKE DEAL / WINNIPEG FREE PRESS ARCHIVES

First Place, Gr. 5-8:

Dasha Metropolitansky, grade 5, W. H. Morden Public School, Oakville, Ontario

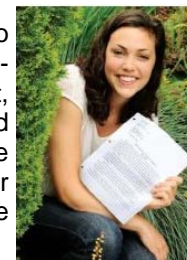
The Day the Earth Stood Still – Dasha's essay recounts the success of Canada's men's hockey team at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver. "There is no doubt that Canadians watched with nervous anticipation as Canada's men's hockey team entered overtime," said Dr. Libby O'Connell, Senior Vice President, Corporate Outreach and Chief Historian, A+E Networks. "But as Dasha's essay notes, the experience of watching and celebrating Sidney Crosby's historic goal brought Canadians together." Dasha's essay reflects on the goal scorer, saying that his success at the Olympics makes us "forget our differences and unite with pride for our team, our country and the honour and privilege to be Canadian."



Grand Prize, Gr. 9-12:

Katherine Keyes, grade 11, Sentinel Secondary School, West Vancouver, British Columbia

Alexandre Bilodeau — Katherine's essay celebrated Alexandre Bilodeau, the first Canadian to win Olympic gold on home soil, "What touched Katherine, and all Canadians, was Mr. Bilodeau's compassion for his brother Frederic," said Dr. Libby O'Connell, Senior Vice President, Corporate Outreach and Chief Historian, A+E Networks. "Mr. Bilodeau has an Olympic gold and a heart of gold, both reflected in Katherine's essay." Katherine (shown right) also wrote on how Mr. Bilodeau's gold medal unified the country; the first win on Canadian soil after nearly 500 attempts. As she eloquently writes, "Knowing that every Canadian is feeling the same swelling pride for their country is the most unifying sensation that can ignite a nation."



First Place, Gr. 9-12:

Isabella Pedersen, grade 10, Canmore Collegiate High School, Canmore, Alberta

Mayor Naheed Nenshi — "Isabella wrote a very moving account of Mayor Nenshi's rise to electoral success," said Dr. Libby O'Connell, Senior Vice President, Corporate Outreach and Chief Historian, A+E Networks. "Mayor Nenshi shares the upbringing of many first-generation Canadians, and Isabella's essay demonstrates that Canada is truly a land of opportunity." Isabella wrote on how Mayor Nenshi's commitment to public service inspired all young people, even though the election was in Calgary. Talking about the impact of Mayor Nenshi's victory, Isabella wrote, "Without societal hindrances like racism, gender-discrimination or stereotypes, Nenshi shows that our generation can evolve for the better."



Mayor Naheed Nenshi





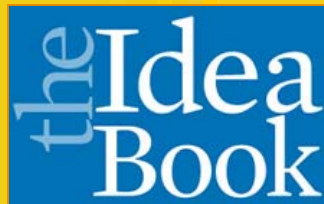
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