

Calling all Canadian Authors-in-Training!

Today's students are digital natives and yet some are daunted when putting pen to paper to express their ideas. One strategy to reach and engage these students is to use technology and the internet. This is where the International Children's Festival and the Telus Cybertales® Educational Program can help. This award-winning, free program encourages students to take risks with their creative writing and creates opportunities for them to become **authors with an audience**.

The Telus Cybertales® Program is a vehicle to create a motivating and safe environment for taking risks. The [double bubble maps](#) (PDF) allow students to identify the areas for class mini-lessons in writing and strategy instruction. Current research shows well-designed strategy instruction can produce *substantial* gains in writing quality for young writers.

Collaboration among students, by participating in Telus Cybertales®, helps them gain a deeper understanding of how to use strategies to help them write creatively and free their imaginations. Real-world connections and questioning (What does a good author do?) engages students.

The Telus Cybertales® Educational Program complements the Alberta Education curriculum and helps teach sentence and paragraph structure while developing collaborative creative writing. The program promotes teamwork and emphasizes the importance of maintaining deadlines and working with plot guidelines.

How does the Telus Cybertales® Educational Program work?

Storyteller and educator **Sandy Cooke** has created two progressive stories, one each for grades 1-3 and 4-6. We invite classes to work collaboratively and email us your story threads. One submission for each category will be chosen every three weeks and added to the developing stories online. You can find the story threads on the Festival website, along with last year's completed stories at http://www.childfest.com/cybertales_submit.php#2010. All participating classes will receive a professionally printed and bound copy of the stories to add to their libraries.

After months of imaginative input from classes across Alberta, the stories will be performed at the **International Children's Festival** (June 1-5, 2010). Participation in these high-energy performances is optional but must be pre-booked (\$2 per student) beginning February 16, 2010.

FAST FACTS

Cost: There is no charge to participate in writing/posting the stories

Registration: You can register your class online
http://www.childfest.com/cybertales_submit.php#register
anytime between now and May 21, 2010

Suggested Submission size:

150 words per submission

(Contributions must be submitted as a class project)

Written Expression Interventions:

- Create a literate, motivating, risk-free environment
- Provide direct instruction in the writing process
- Teach text structures
- Provide daily practice
- Provide strategy instruction

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Tammy at 780-459-1692.