

# Face the Facts



**Face the Facts is a program designed by the Staff and Learners of the Rabbittown Learners Program to encourage people to stay in school get an education or “Face the Facts”.**

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## **Introduction to the Rabbittown Learners Program**

In May 1988, responding to a community need, the Rabbittown Learners Program opened its doors as an Adult Literacy Program. The Program was certified as a Basic Literacy/Level I ABE program in 1999 by the Department of Education. Today, the curriculum consists of various subjects including Math, Language, Basic Computer Training, Science, Social Studies, Government and Law, Workplace, Consumer Education, and a wide range of Critical Skills.

Adding to the program's uniqueness is its level of interaction with other agencies in the community. This provides an integrated and innovative approach to literacy services. The Rabbittown Learners Program serves adults of all ages and backgrounds. It provides a safe, non-threatening environment that is adaptable for people with special needs.

The program has an ongoing support system where learners continue to receive help after they complete the program. The Rabbittown Learners Program extends its support and assists the learners in any needed areas. This may include help with resume writing, personal income tax returns, job application forms, and referrals to other agencies.

To the Rabbittown Learners, literacy embodies much more than academics. There are many issues that center around being illiterate. The program works with the whole person, including his/her barriers, strengths, weaknesses, hopes, aspirations and goals. Literacy is more than reading, writing, and employability. It reflects almost everything in a person's life. Interaction with family, the ability to

communicate, and the capacity to function in society, all have ties to literacy. While success is measured through academic testing, it is also reflected in personal growth and development.

This booklet is a continuation of our mandate and is produced to assist other literacy organizations.

## **Rabbittown Learners Program**

### **Mission Statement**

To provide literacy or level I (ABE) training so adults can upgrade reading and writing skills in a relaxed atmosphere geared to individual needs. It also reinforces critical skills reflective of working conditions and supporting family living. It provides support and motivation to the adult learner with the purpose of helping them achieve personal goals.

## **Background to Face the Facts Project**

Face the Facts was designed to provide awareness and to promote a greater understanding of the issues of literacy in our society. The targeted group was ages 12 – 17 as well as the general public, the medical community, and volunteer organizations. The project raised public awareness of the ongoing problems associated with school drop outs and established a strong working relationship with School Boards, Community Centres, Medical Professionals and Literacy Stakeholders.

Face the Facts was also used to develop information sessions for adult learners to discuss the effects of living with low literacy skills and the impact it has in the community. Many issues were identified by those adults living with low literacy skills which further reinforced the need to face the facts and that without a high school education one won't get a good paying job. Other issues identified with having low literacy skills include poverty, crime, substance abuse, and poor health which may result from not being able to read a prescription properly. Having low literacy skills limits the opportunities for people to improve their lives.

This project was an initiative of the Rabbittown Learners Program and was launched on Family Literacy Day 2003 at a local Community Centre. Funding for this project was provided by the **National Literacy Secretariat** in 2002-2003.

## **Face the Facts Phase II**

A significant positive response came from schools, teachers, students, Community Centres, parents, guardians and medical students who attended the original Face the Facts presentations. Through subsequent interaction with these groups the Rabbittown Learners Program decided to pursue the continuation of this project through a second proposal development.

The Rabbittown Learners Program submitted a proposal to the **National Literacy Secretariat** in February 2003 to produce a step by step manual to be used by other literacy organizations. Funding was granted in July 2003 and the Face the Facts Phase II project began. A review of all the recorded presentations was conducted to help support the following objectives:

- ▶ To target youth, parents, and guardians of youth at risk of the consequences of dropping out of school;
- ▶ To continue to raise public awareness of literacy issues in our society;
- ▶ To promote a greater understanding of the need for literacy; and
- ▶ To produce in print, a step by step model of the original Face the Facts project that could be utilized by other literacy programs and community organizations.

**Your Step by Step Guide**

**to**

**Face the Facts**

# What Schools, Organizations, Community

## Groups to Target

Junior High Schools (Grade 7 to 9) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Youth at the greatest risk of dropping out of school.</li></ul>
Youth Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Boys and Girls Clubs</li><li>• YM/YWCA</li></ul>
Community Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local Community Centres</li></ul>
Organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Volunteer groups</li></ul>
Medical Professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Medical School Students</li><li>• Nursing Students</li></ul>
Education Students

## Who to Contact to Schedule Presentations

School Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make contact with local School Board. Present information package on your organization.</li><li>• Discuss project and what may be accomplished.</li><li>• Request a list of the schools they would like you to visit.</li></ul>
Principal of Local Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Schedule a meeting with the principal of each school to discuss the project. Present information package on your organization.</li><li>• Discuss project and what may be accomplished from it.</li><li>• Suggest what grades you would provide the presentations to and the number of presentations.</li><li>• Set date and time for each presentation.</li></ul>

<p>Community Centre/ Youth Program Directors/ Volunteer Organization Director</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedule meeting and present information package on your organization.</li> <li>• Discuss project and what may be accomplished from it.</li> <li>• Set date and time for presentations.</li> <li>• Write an agenda for the presentation. See <a href="#">appendix A</a>.</li> <li>• <i>Make sure there is enough space available.</i></li> </ul>
<p>Health Professionals/ Education Professors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Instructors.</li> <li>• Schedule meeting and present information package on your organization.</li> <li>• Discuss project and what may be accomplished from it.</li> <li>• Schedule presentation during class time.</li> </ul>

## Preparation for Presentations

1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Put together an information package on organization.</li><li>• Include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– History of organization</li><li>– Mission statement</li></ul></li></ul>
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recruit Learners. Ask for volunteers who are willing to read their stories in public.</li></ul>
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Request a list from the School Board of the schools where they would like the presentations made.</li></ul>
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advise the learners if a presentation will be recorded.</li></ul>
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The learners who will be participating in the presentation should practice their story reading in front of some group.</li></ul>
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare an agenda for presentations at the Community Centres.</li></ul>
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare posters and flyers for scheduled events at Community Centres/Volunteer Organizations.</li></ul>

# **What is Required to Prepare the Adult Learners for Their Presentations**

1. Recruit the adult learners who are willing to take part in the Face the Facts Project.
  
2. Discuss the “Face the Facts” project
  - Explain the goal of the project.
  - Explain the role of the adult learner.
  - Ask for volunteers to write their stories on the issues and barriers to living with low literacy skills.
  - Make sure these volunteers are willing to read their story publicly.
  - Discuss with them who the intended audience will be and where the presentations will take place.
  - Tell the adult learners in advance if the presentations will be recorded.

Encourage your group of adult learners to brainstorm and discuss issues and

barriers of living with low literacy skills. Encourage them to write their stories even if they are not presenting.

- As the project moves forward some learners may gain confidence to speak to a group and share their stories.
- Emphasis should be put on the fact that they may help some young person stay in school.

3. Some adult learners may find it difficult to put their stories on paper. Some techniques that work well include:

- A. **The Boss/Secretary Technique**. This technique works best with the basic learner. The learner tells his/her story without having to write it down by him/herself. The tutor sits with the learner. The learner tells his/her story and the tutor writes it down. After the learner finishes, the tutor reads it back and asks if anything needs to be added or changed. The learner maintains a feeling of control because he/she can make changes if desired.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Staff of the Rabbittown Learners Program, *Rabbittown Learners Program, Guide to Writing*, Robinson Blackmore, St. John's, 2001, p.20.

**B. Word Web Brainstorming.** Word webs help the learner focus on a topic. It allows the learner to put thoughts on paper in any order. Then he/she can review and organize these ideas and begin the first draft. The steps are as follows:

- Place the topic in the center of the word web.
- Write the words that come to mind in the spaces provided.
- Each word goes into a sentence.
- Rearrange sentences into a paragraph or story.<sup>2</sup>
- See [Appendix B](#) for example of word web.

4. Once the learners are finished writing their stories have them recite it. This will allow the learners to hear what they have written and they can add or make any changes that they feel need to be made. Have the learner or tutor type their final copy.
5. When the final draft is finished have the learners, who will be participating in

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<sup>2</sup> Staff of the Rabbittown Learners Program, *Rabbittown Learners Program, Guide to Writing*, Robinson Blackmore, St. John's, 2001, p.11.

the presentations, read their stories in front of the group for practice. This is a key step because the readers will get feedback on their presentations. For example, they may be speaking too low, too fast, etc. The learner should practice reading often until they feel comfortable doing so.

\* See [Appendix C](#) for stories and experiences of learners who have participated in this project.

6. After the learner finishes reading there should be a question and answer period. Encourage each learner to ask a question or make a comment to each presenter. This will help prepare the learner for potential inquiries during the presentation.
7. When learners are giving their presentations a minimum of two learners should be chosen to speak at one presentation. This has proven to work exceptionally well as they give each other support.

## When are the Best Times to

### Schedule Presentations

<p>Junior High School (Grades 7 to 9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentations should be scheduled during the day when the students are in school.</li><li>• Make sure there is enough time given to allow learners to read their stories and answer questions.</li><li>• Each time slot should be approximately 50 minutes in length.</li><li>• Project co-ordinator should be on hand to keep control of questions and answers.</li><li>• 1 or 2 adult learners may give presentation.</li></ul>
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<p>Community Groups/ Youth Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentations should be held in the evenings. This allows for people, such as parents and guardians of youth, an opportunity to attend.</li><li>• Presentations should start around 7:00 P.M. and a time frame should be set. Example: 7:00 P.M. to 9:30 P.M.</li><li>• At the evening presentations 4 - 6 learners can share their stories leaving enough time for question and answer periods.</li><li>• <i>It would be nice to offer refreshments at the end of the evening presentations.</i></li></ul>
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<p>Volunteer Organizations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations should be scheduled when it is convenient for both parties involved.</li> <li>• This is a great learning tool for volunteer tutors.</li> <li>• 1 - 2 adult learners may give their presentations at a volunteer tutor training session.</li> <li>• Make sure enough space is provided to accommodate learners and the audience.</li> </ul>
<p>Medical/Nursing/ Education Students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentations should be scheduled during class time.</li> <li>• Class time may vary depending on the day and class.</li> <li>• 1 - 2 adult learners may give presentation.</li> </ul>

## How to Publicize all the Events

Advertising plays a key role in getting people involved in attending each presentation.

Posters	<p>Posters should be eye catching and may be done in various sizes.</p> <p>The poster should include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name of project.</li><li>• Name of organization.</li><li>• A brief description of project.</li></ul> <p>Eg: Adult Learners share their stories about living with low literacy skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Date, time, and location.</li><li>• See Appendix D for copy of poster.</li></ul> <p>Posters may be placed in public areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Schools</li><li>– Community Centres</li><li>– Grocery Stores</li><li>– Convenience stores</li><li>– Etc.</li></ul>
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Flyer	Flyers announcing date, time may be placed in mailboxes in areas where presentation will be held. This works well in local communities.
Advertisement	<p>Place an ad on the local community channel.</p> <p>This should be done for presentations at the Community/Youth Centre, and information sessions open to the public.</p> <p>The advertisement should include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name of project.</li> <li>• Name of organization.</li> <li>• A brief description of project.</li> <li>• Date, time, and location.</li> </ul>

Announcement	<p>Have an announcement made throughout the day of the presentation on a local radio station.</p> <p>Include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name of project</li><li>• Name of organization.</li><li>• A brief description of project.</li><li>• Date, time and location.</li><li>• See <a href="#">Appendix E</a></li></ul>
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## How to Evaluate and Record Each Presentation

Evaluation and recording each presentation is an important aspect of the project. Feedback from students, parents, and people in the community allows for the opportunity to voice opinions and/or concerns.

Evaluation Sheets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are a very important and useful tool.</li><li>• Easiest way to get feedback on each presentation.</li><li>• For copy of evaluation sheet see <a href="#">Appendix F</a>.</li><li>• May be filled out by students, parents, teachers, people in the community, etc.</li><li>• The evaluation sheet should consist of at least 3 or 4 questions.</li><li>• The questions should be simple and to the point.</li><li>• Leave a space at the end for any comments.</li><li>• See <a href="#">Appendix G</a> for comments from people who attended the presentations.</li></ul>
Tape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is a good idea to tape each presentation (only if it is possible)</li><li>• It allows the presentation to be reviewed the following day.</li><li>• It may be taped using a recorder or video camera.</li><li>• If in a bigger location a microphone may be needed for people to hear.</li><li>• Label each tape with the date and location for easy reference.</li></ul>

Designated Recorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There should be one person assigned to this duty at each presentation.</li><li>• Record location, time, date, and the number of people in attendance</li><li>• Record all questions, responses and comments made by the audience.</li><li>• Record the learners responses.</li></ul>
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# Appendix A

## Community Centre Agenda\*

### “Face the Facts” Project

- 7:00 Welcome from the Executive Director of Community Centre
- 7:05 Greetings from the Administrator of the Rabbittown Learners Program
- 7:10 Overview of Rabbittown Learners Program and Project
- 7:20 Learner #1 reads story
- 7:30 Learner #2 reads story
- 7:40 Learner #3 reads story
- 7:50 Learner #4 reads story
- 8:00 Question Period
- 8:30 Wrap-up
- 8:45 Refreshments (evaluation forms may be completed)

\* This agenda is subject to change!

# Appendix B

## Word Web

hockey	sliding	boots	icicles	ski-doo
snowballs	mittens	slippery	snowstorms	slush
snow forts	snow	accidents	fun	flu
snow angels	hats	<b>Winter</b>	shovel	skating
snow shoes	ice	snowsuit	firewood	snow tires
Jack Frost	Christmas	snowman	skiing	frost bite
snow board	cold	weather forecast	windy	skates

# Appendix C

**Name:**     *Aaron*

**1. Did you feel the project was a good idea?**

*Yes, it was a good project.*

**2. Was it difficult getting up and speaking in front of people, especially young people, telling your story?**

*I was nervous at first especially at the first presentation. It didn't bother me after that.*

**3. What do you feel you accomplished from taking part in this project?**

*I feel I helped some people. I hope they don't make the same mistakes I did.*

**4. How did you feel when you got feedback or applause?**

*It felt good.*

**5. Would you do it again?**

*Yes, I would do the project again.*

**Comments:**

*It was a nice project. I liked it and I learned a lot from it.*

## Aaron's Story

When I was sixteen I left school. I was really fooled up back then and didn't care about school. The things that I did care about were smoking pot, drinking beer, popping pills and pipping off. (I was out of school more than I was in). I was hanging out with the wrong people, but I don't blame my friends for what I did. They didn't twist my arm, it was my choice. I was in grade 9 when I finally quit school. I thought school sucked, and I thought the teachers were stupid. Now I regret leaving school. Look at me now, I'm nineteen years old and I don't have a job or an education. My uncle wanted me to go back to school but I wouldn't listen to him. Then one day I was at my friend's house and my father took a heart attack at my house. My mother told my uncle there was no sense leaving a note for me, because I could not read the note. My father could have died and I would not have known about it.

After this happened my uncle finally talked me into going back to school. So, my uncle got a good friend, Edgar, to look into getting me into some kind of program. They got me into the Rabbittown Learners Program and God love Doris for accepting me in the program. I am now able to read and write some, but I want to go on and get more education. My goal is to get my grade 12 and get a decent job. My advice to anyone who is 15 or 16 years old is to stay in school and get your education.

**Name:**      *Alicia*

**1. Did you feel the project was a good idea?**

*Yes, the project was a very good idea.*

**2. Was it difficult getting up and speaking in front of people, especially young people, telling your story?**

*At first it was very difficult for me to speak in front of the crowd. I was very nervous. After a couple of presentations I got used to it.*

**3. What do you feel you accomplished from taking part in this project?**

*I feel that I was able to get through to some of the kids.*

**4. How did you feel when you got feedback or applause?**

*I felt good when I got feedback from the group. I felt like I achieved something.*

**5. Would you do it again?**

*Oh, definitely. It was worth it.*

**Comments:**

*Keep it up. Keep the project going. That way more kids will get the help they need.*

## Alicia's Story

Hi my name is Alicia. I have a disability called Cerebral Palsy. I've had it since I was born. I have two children their names are Alexandria and Jessica. In 1998 I sat down and thought long and hard. I decided to go back to school to the Rabbittown Learners Program for Level I. I enjoyed the people there, especially Doris because she helped me get through the program and with my problems at home. Only for Doris I don't think that I would have made it through anything.

Seven months went by, Doris called me in the office and sat me down. She asked if I was ready to move on further into my education. I was a little scared but I said yes. That week I went to another school called the Atlantic Construction Training Center. I did very well there, the people were very nice to me. I went to Level II and I got the credits that I needed. I then went to Level III, and I got into the nitty gritty of things. It was easy at first. I got so far into the work then we all had to move to another school. We had interviews with two people. I talked to them and I told them that I had a problem with comprehension, which means I had trouble with understanding different readings. I asked if they could break my tests down. They told me that it wasn't their policy to do that. I went to the College of the North Atlantic, that's where we all had to go. Meanwhile I only needed eight more credits. I found it very hard there but the people were very nice.

I met a man there, his name is Matthew, he is a really nice person. He sat with me in class. If I had a question about my school work he tried to help me, he was good that way. As time went by in school it was getting really hard. There was

times I wanted to quit. If Matthew wasn't in my life I probably would have. He kept telling me, you can do it, and encouraging me to go to school so I kept on going. I missed a lot of school. The teachers called me in the office to talk to me and said that if I kept missing school they would have to dismiss me for good. They finally decided to break down my tests so I could understand what I was reading. Matthew helped me through all of this, he was a great help. He made me think of my children and him to get through my school activities. I'm glad he was there to get me through all of this.

In 2001 I finally did it, I graduated and it feels great. The real task is just beginning. Matthew and I got married in August 24, 2001. The wedding was perfect. I love Matthew so much he helped me through a lot and I am proud of him. I am now trying to find a job and it's not easy especially for me because of my disability, but that's not going to get in my way, I won't let it.

**Name: Derrick**

**1. Did you feel the project was a good idea?**

*Yes, the project was a really good idea.*

**2. Was it difficult getting up and speaking in front of people, especially young people, telling your story?**

*It was a little difficult getting up and speaking, especially in front of the younger ones. You really want to make sure you say the right things in front of them because they are at a vulnerable age.*

**3. What do you feel you accomplished from taking part in this project?**

*I feel I gained more confidence in myself by taking part in this project.*

**4. How did you feel when you got feedback or applause?**

*It felt really good to get feedback because I feel I connected with some of the students.*

**5. Would you do it again?**

*Yeah, I would do this again.*

## Derrick's Story

### Read Me This Book, Sir, Please

Illiteracy is a person who looks in the mirror in the morning and sees no face. Shame sets in, denial takes over, sends him into the down and out spin of depression. He hangs his head, makes up excuses. Imagine thousands and thousands every day of the year who look in a book to see only thick black ink lines spaces words white pages that have no meaning thousands with no purpose to their being .

A child confronts him: "Read me this book Sir, please." He is lost for words; he stumbles and mumbles. He grasps the child's hand, leads her to the toy box. He sits back in his chair, squeezes the book buckling the cover; can't handle it no more, decides to take a step in the right direction. He remembers the newscast of the before about this place, the Learners Place. Unsure, Nervous, afraid of failing, he walks in, butterflies in his stomach, speaks low sees nothing around him, like a small boy on his first day of school, takes the application form. The name is okay, the street address is okay, and social security number, But how to write the name of the city, the name of the province? He is about to leave when he hears a whisper: "Read me this book, Sir, please."

He doesn't waste his time, busy tutors buzz around like bees, teach the sound and power of words. He reads wonderful stories and poems. Oh thee dictionary, a book with many marvelous words to guide his learning; like desire, he finds its meaning in the book, something desired, to achieve his or her heart's desire. To be a writer of words, you must have the true knowledge of the words. People gaze in

awe, find themselves intertwined in the stories of fiction as one. The wonder of the universe, words amaze, guide us in the world to freedom from illiteracy (Tizzard, p.9).

\* This story was taken from Derrick's book "From my Heart and Soul." It can also be found in the book "Memory Lane," which is a collection of stories by adult learners, past and present.

**Name:**     *Dianne*

**1. Did you feel the project was a good idea?**

*Yes, I think the project was a good idea.*

**2. Was it difficult getting up and speaking in front of people, especially young people, telling your story?**

*Yes, at first it was a bit nerve racking. After speaking at a few sessions I was more confident and relaxed. I didn't mind it as much.*

**3. What do you feel you accomplished from taking part in this project?**

*I feel I have accomplished a lot. I feel I helped at least a few students to stay in school and think about what it means to not have an education.*

**4. How did you feel when you got feedback or applause?**

*It felt good getting feedback especially from the students.*

**5. Would you do it again?**

*Yes, I would do it again. That way I will probably be able to help another student or two.*

**Comments:**

*The Face the Facts project was a good idea to come up with. It not only helped students but adults to understand you really need an education to get anywhere in life.*

## Dianne's Story

Hello my name is Dianne and I am a single mother of four girls. I left school when I was thirteen years old and in grade seven. I lived with my mother and father, and was one of eight children. My father was gone most of the time working, so my mother had to take care of us by herself. Back in those days education was not as important as it is today, so my mother did not have the time to teach us. Not one of us graduated, but I would like to be the one that does. I used to do my homework after school when I was younger but I never put much time into it. However, at the same time I didn't have anyone to teach me or sit with me so how could I learn? I don't blame my parents. I think back in those days things were a lot harder then they are today.

As I mentioned before I have four children, one graduated from High School, one in grade eight, another in grade seven, and my four year old is in daycare. It was very hard at times especially when I would have to visit a doctor, and I didn't understand what they told me, or when I would go to the mall to see a movie, and I couldn't read what was written on the board. I found it very difficult to teach my children when they came home from school with their homework. I couldn't sit down and help them. I could only do so much. I would get upset with myself and

go into another room and cry. It's really frustrating. I tell my kids every day never give up. If you need help with school work ask a friend, a teacher, or get a tutor because you need to have an education to get anywhere in life.

I left school in grade seven but I only had a grade four when I started this program. I've been here for a year and a half. When I first came here I felt so alone until I saw so many other people just like me. Now it is time for me to get my grade twelve. I can't thank this school enough for giving me a second chance. I hear people say all the time how hard it is for a single parent, it's true in some ways. But if I can take care of four children and come back to school anyone can if they put their mind to it.

My dream is to get my grade twelve and go on to become a Childcare Worker. Never give up and your dreams will come true.

\* This story was taken from the book "Memory Lane." The book is a collection of stories by adult learners, past and present.

**Name:**     *Harry*

**1. Did you feel the project was a good idea?**

*It was a good idea no doubt about it.*

**2. Was it difficult getting up and speaking in front of people, especially young people, telling your story?**

*Yes it was difficult getting up and speaking in front of a group of people. I was very nervous at first.*

**3. What do you feel you accomplished from taking part in this project?**

*It gave me more confidence to speak in public. I am usually not a public speaker.*

**4. How did you feel when you got feedback or applause?**

*It felt good to get feedback from people , especially the kids.*

**5. Would you do it again?**

*Yes, I would do it again because it helps kids.*

**Comments:**

*I enjoyed helping with the project and it made a difference because the people who came were interested in what we had to say.*

## Harry's Story

### Listen To Me

I was born in the Town of Trepassey. I lived in Trepassey for forty-nine years. I went to school in Trepassey for seven years, back then you did a couple of grades at a time. I spent four or five years going back and forth to the hospital, because of a hearing problem that I was born with. I left school in 1964 and drove a truck all over Canada and the United States. I drove a truck for thirteen years. I took over my the family business in 1978. In 1998 I sold the business and retired. I am in school now. The hardest thing I have ever done in my life was coming back to school. My advice to you is to stay in school and don't get caught up in drinking and drugs. No matter how many problems you may come across in your life, you can overcome them. If you put your mind to it you can reach the moon.

*He has a very supportive and successful family. His wife and daughter are nurses and his 2 sons are Air Line Pilots.*

**Name:**     *Stewart*

**1. Did you feel the project was a good idea?**

*Yes, it was a great idea to come up with.*

**2. Was it difficult getting up and speaking in front of people, especially young people, telling your story?**

*No, I did not have a problem speaking in front of people. I have had a lot of practice. I spoke on “Bullying and Violence” at local schools a few years ago.*

**3. What do you feel you accomplished from taking part in this project?**

*I had a lot of good responses from both students and parents. I think I was able to help some students/adults think about quitting school and what it’s like with no education.*

**4. How did you feel when you got feedback or applause?**

*It was good to get feedback, especially from the younger people. It was really encouraging and made me want to keep going.*

**5. Would you do it again?**

*Yes, actually I am. I have been volunteering with the Community Youth Network. I am speaking at local youth groups and Community Centres.*

**Comments:**

*I think we should have kept on going. I feel that I have helped people in the Community Centres and they seemed to be glad we came. It helped get parents and kids aware of problems, such as poor reading and writing skills, learning disabilities, etc., that are still going on in our school system today. It was a good project. I enjoyed it very much.*

## Stewart's Story

Stewart participated in this Face the Facts project, but he did not read his story to the audience, he told his story. Stewart could not write nor read his story. He spoke of being in school and not getting anywhere academically. But sports was his passion. He adores basketball, softball, hockey. You name it he could play it and excel in it. He played for provincial teams and traveled to many places. But unfortunately he could only go so far without the basics of reading and writing. He quit school and started working for minimum wages. This was okay but became very difficult for him in working with machinery and not knowing how to read the directions for proper usage. Stewart asked the teens if they liked sports and if they expected to turn pro. There was much reaction to this question. He told them that sports was fine and fun, but you must have your academics first before pursuing athletic dreams. He reminded them that if they want big careers and fancy cars, they must have a solid education to find a good job.

*Stewart wants to be able to read to his kids. He has 2 sons and a daughter under the age of 4.*

# Appendix D

# **Rabbittown Learners Program**

presents

## **Face the Facts**

Date:

Time:

Location:

**Adult Learners share their stories of  
living with low literacy skills.**

Refreshments will be served

# Appendix E

**Please make the following announcement:**

**What:** Celebrating Family Literacy Day The Rabbittown Learners Program will present the Face the Facts Project. Four learners will tell their stories of living with low literacy skills and the importance of getting an education.

**When:** January 28, 7:00 - 9:30

**Where:** Community Centre

**Everyone Welcome**

*\*This is a sample announcement. Amend as appropriate.*

# Appendix F

**Rabbittown Learners Program  
Evaluation Form  
“Face The Facts” Project**

Presentation By:

Location and Date:

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Please Check One of the Following:

- |   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Not Sure</b> |
|---|------------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1. Was there enough time for this presentation?                       | ( )        | ( )       | ( )             |
| 2. Could you understand and hear what was said?                       | ( )        | ( )       | ( )             |
| 3. Do you feel you have learned anything today?                       | ( )        | ( )       | ( )             |
| 4. Would you be interested in having other presentations on Literacy? | ( )        | ( )       | ( )             |
| 5. Your comments on today’s presentation.                             |            |           |                 |

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*Thank You For Your Time*

# Appendix G

## Comments Teachers

- ▶ I admire the learners for admitting their problem and doing something about it. It is even harder for a parent to admit that they cannot read and write.  
Language Teacher
- ▶ I heard a lot of wonderful things about your presentations. I am disappointed that I was unable to see and listen to them. The kids really enjoyed it. It seems that you have reached a number of students here today. The presentations should be done with our grade seven students as well.  
Math Teacher
- ▶ As a teacher in a school where many students are unmotivated for learning literacy skills, I think this presentation was of great value. The conviction and sincerity of the speakers was very evident, and will probably influence our students – at least some of them.  
Language/French Teacher
- ▶ We had parent/teacher night last evening. A parent came in, his son went to Toronto to get work but it didn't work out and now he is back and has no job. He is only 19 years old and he quit school when he was in grade 11 but he doesn't have grade 11. Right now he is wondering what he can do and where he can go from here.  
Language Teacher
- ▶ You have had practice and you probably get nervous but for you to get up and read, especially in front of teenagers, it takes courage. You have come a long way. I must commend you. You are an example for these students here today.  
Principal

## Comments Students

- ▶ From this presentation I can see that choices are limited when you don't have an education.
- ▶ I learned through this presentation that even though you are going through a hard time you should work toward solving it and never give up.
- ▶ I thought the presentation was very well worth it. The speakers were very nice and you could tell that they meant every word of what they said. They got their point across. It was very touching.
- ▶ Today's presentation made me feel sad in a way because it made me think of two of my friends who left school but it also showed me the reason to stay in school. Today's presentation was really good.
- ▶ It was very interesting. I think it was very brave of them and I appreciated it. There should have been more time.
- ▶ I think today's presentation was very good and the things I heard today were okay.
- ▶ The presentation today was really good because I learned that if you quit school you will not get anywhere in life and that if you stay in school you can get a good job. From this presentation you could see where they got in life by dropping out of school.
- ▶ The presentation made me look at school in a whole different way. A more positive way. It was excellent.
- ▶ The presentation was sad.

- ▶ It was good and it made me think about my life.
- ▶ The presentation was excellent because it encouraged me to stay in school and work hard in school.
- ▶ I think these people are very smart. I am honored to have had these people in my school. I know I will never drop out of school. I'm going to be a lawyer so I have to stay in school to do that.
- ▶ I think the speakers had a lot of courage to do this in front of teenagers. I'm honored to have listened to what they had to say and they deserve a lot of credit for getting up and talking.
- ▶ It was sad because they quit school at a young age and they lost all of their dreams because of that.
- ▶ Very lame.
- ▶ The presentation was very good and bad. They have the courage to do it. I probably wouldn't be able to do it. I hope they do well and have their dreams come true.
- ▶ I learned how important education is but mostly the bad things that can come from not finishing school.
- ▶ It was really good and their words were really clear. You could understand what they were saying.
- ▶ I think it must be very hard to go back to school with only a little education.
- ▶ It was very good and I really hope they accomplish their goals.
- ▶ The Rabbittown Learners Program has inspired me not to quit school and not let sports come before school. It has also told me that you will not get anywhere in life without an education.
- ▶ I think it was very interesting to listen to people's stories and how hard it is to live without an education.

- ▶ I think that today's presentation was good and I learned some things. Thank you for coming in today.
- ▶ I think the people who spoke today were very brave. It was fun and interesting to hear their stories.
- ▶ I think today's presentation was really good and it takes a lot of courage for people who dropped out of school to go back. I think they made the right choice.
- ▶ The presentations were excellent. If I ever know anyone who drops out of school and is willing to go back, I will tell them to go to Rabbittown.
- ▶ I think today's presentation taught everyone in my class a very good lesson. That lesson is nothing is more important than education.
- ▶ I really liked it. It really shows how the program is helping adults with getting an education. We should really have more people come to our school again, it was great.
- ▶ I think that today's presentation was very interesting. It must have been hard for those people to get up and talk about it. I look forward to seeing them again.
- ▶ I thought that it was fantastic. It really left an impression on me.
- ▶ I loved your presentation, it was awesome. I had no idea how hard it would be to be an adult without an education. I'm definitely not going to quit school. No matter what!
- ▶ I think that your presentation was very good. Thanks for taking your time to tell us this because it really gave me something to think about!
- ▶ I thought it was great. I think everyone will stay in school from what you have said. We really appreciate you coming in and speaking to us. It was fantastic.
- ▶ It was very informative for most people, but not for me since I don't plan to drop out of school.

## Comments Community Centres

- ▶ I am very impressed and it took a lot of courage to do what you have done tonight. I wish you all the luck and with your determination you can do a lot more.
- ▶ It seems support is a big thing. You have overcome many obstacles to get where you are today. It is an honor to be here to listen to you.
- ▶ You are very young and you are already a role model. (Comment made to our 19 year old speaker)
- ▶ I was most impressed with the participants. It is great to see such determination and pride in what they are striving for. Good luck to all of you.
- ▶ Excellent! Very encouraging as a mother with four small children and one who is struggling with his reading now. Everyday I encourage my children to read and finish school. Thank you for encouraging literacy.
- ▶ It's amazing that learners in the program have the courage to present and discuss openly their individual experiences with low literacy skills. It was a night of wonderment and admiration. Congratulations and best wishes in your very worth while project.
- ▶ Don't give up.
- ▶ The presentation was really good. It was interesting to hear how they drew from their personal lives.
- ▶ It was very boring. I didn't like it.
- ▶ Everyone looks for a hero but you are your own. You are going to go far. (Comment made to our 19 year old speaker)

- ▶ I think through your stories you have helped people see you the way you want to be seen. I have learned a lot and have taken something away tonight with me. I hope others did as well.
- ▶ I learned that I won't do drugs and quit school.
- ▶ I thought it was helpful and informative. I am going through a period in which I dislike school. Hopefully this will change. Your stories have made an impact on me. Thank you for your time and we appreciate you coming.
- ▶ It makes me want to get my grade 12 even more.
- ▶ It was interesting. I took my son here this evening and I think the speakers opened his eyes. I hope he now realizes that he needs an education.
- ▶ I have learned a lot today! I want to thank you for everything today and I am proud of all of the speakers.
- ▶ Really well done. The audience participation showed the level of interest and you are to be congratulated for this presentation.
- ▶ It was a good way to motivate people in staying in school.
- ▶ Great to hear from presenters about the importance of staying in school and also the encouraging words "you can do it!"
- ▶ Some of the stories touched me so deeply, it brought tears to my eyes. When that happens it means God is smiling down on all who have been touched by a few words or someone's life experience.
- ▶ I feel so privileged to have my grade 12 and be able to do so much. To hear those people speak about their lives breaks my heart but I am so proud of them and I don't even know them.

- ▶ Excellent! The presenters did a wonderful job and they should be very proud of their accomplishments. I think “Rabbittown” is a great program and I’m seeing first hand what an excellent job the staff are doing.
- ▶ Excellent presentation, really important topic. Great success stories!

## **Resources**

Learners and Staff of the Rabbittown Learners Program. *Memory Lane*.  
St. John's: Robinson Blackmore, 2001.

Staff of the Rabbittown Learners Program. *Rabbittown Learners Program  
Guide to Writing*. St. John's: Robinson Blackmore, 2001.

Tizzard, Derrick. *From my Heart and Soul*. St. John's: Robinson  
Blackmore, 2001.

# Face the Facts

## A Guide for Literacy Providers

### Comments from Participants

“ I admire the learners for admitting their problem and doing something about it. It is harder for a parent to admit that they cannot read and write.”

“From this presentation I can see that choices are limited when you don’t have an education.”

“The presentation made me look at school in a whole different way. A more positive way. It was excellent.”

“I think these people are very smart. I am honored to have had these people in my school. I know I will never drop out of school. I’m going to be a lawyer so I have to stay in school to do that.”

“I think it was very interesting to listen to people’s stories and how hard it is to live without an education.”

“I learned that I won’t do drugs and quit school.”

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