

INTERLAKE INSIGHTS

Writings by learners  
in the  
Interlake Adult Learning  
Association Project  
funded by  
National Literacy  
Secretariat

---

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

[SUCCESS IN LIFE](#)

[DREAMING](#)

[MY KNEE OPERATION](#)

[THE TRACK MEET](#)

[MIRACLE ON HUDSON BAY](#)

[BIKE RIDING IN SPRING](#)

[STORY WRITING ACTIVITY](#)

[HALLOWEEN](#)

[I GOT A LOT TO DO TODAY!](#)

[THE STORM ON THE LAKE](#)

[I LOVE!](#)

[A SCARY WALK THROUGH THE BUSH](#)

[LOVE](#)

[THE EGG EATER](#)

[SOMETIMES WHEN IT SNOWS](#)

[A LETTER TO MY SONS](#)

[SHERI-LEE GETS SICK](#)

[THE BIRTH OF MICHAEL](#)

[WONDER SHOWS](#)

[ROAD SIGNS](#)

---

## **SUCCESS IN LIFE**

Most people want to be successful in life. The public feels a person that owns a new car, house, beautiful yard, lots of wealth, is successful. He owns a plane, and of course he would also own a vacation home. He will also possess very nice clothing.

A person who has a career in sports such as these are successful: the NHL, NBA, CFL, NFL. These are the larger, well-known leagues. He would be in the public eye and have lots of fans who idolize him. And of course lots of money is involved in playing national sports.

The definition of success is having a couple of nice kids, a spouse, many friends, owning property, such as a house, car and truck, a couple of pets, and having no debts of any kind.

So, "yes", there are many ways to define success. It's just up to the individual to decide how or what success is. For me the last definition of success works.

**Pat Peterson**

---

## **MY KNEE OPERATION**

I first started to get pain in my knee about two or three months ago. I thought it was just a sprain so I did not go to the doctor right away.

But the pain did not go away so I went to my doctor at the beginning of August. I told him what I had and he sent me to Dr. Froese who is a knee "specialist". He looked at my knee, heard what I had to say, and believed it was a torn cartilage. So he booked a knee scope and possible surgery for November first. That gave me a couple of months to make arrangements to get to the Seven Oaks Hospital.

At first I was scared of the upcoming surgery because one mistake would have me suffer with it for the rest of my life. Another worry was the lack of wages during the recuperating time after the surgery.

The day of the surgery I was driven to the hospital by my cousin. The nurse sent me to the locker room to change into a gown, slippers and a robe. They had me seated in a lazy boy chair and given a warm blanket. Then they took me to physiotherapy where they gave me crutches and showed me how to use them properly. They showed me my exercises to strengthen my knee so it will go back to normal after surgery is all over.

---

Then I was sent back to pre-op for an hour's wait. During that wait I was asked about allergies and previous illnesses. They put an I.V. into my left arm. A few minutes went by. Then it was my turn for surgery. I walked into the surgery room where I was derobed and put on the surgery table. And given a needle in my spine which froze me from the chest down. It gave me a very weird feeling not being able to feel my whole lower half.

They had the knee monitored through the whole surgery so I could watch. Also the doctor could tell me what he was doing and what was wrong with my knee. He found that I had a torn cartilage. I also had a piece of cartilage the size of a quarter missing from my thigh. They ground off all the loose pieces and took out the debris.

Then I was taken to recovery. It took me about an hour to get my feeling back in the lower half of my body. Then I was sent back to pre-op. for another half hour. They gave me toast and coffee then let me dress. Then the nurse took me to my cousin's car by wheelchair.

For me the surgery was not as bad as I had feared. It's like they say; "Fear is what makes things look worse than they really are."

**Pat Peterson**

---

## MIRACLE ON HUDSON BAY

Briar and Jamie Green were going on a fishing trip on Hudson Bay. They were visiting their father, Mark Green. Mark is on business studying polar bears.

"What are you two doing today?" asked Mark.

"We are going to bring home a lot of fish," said Jamie.

"Be careful!" she said.

They hopped on their skidoos and drove off. When they arrived at a spot, they hopped off and started to clear the snow, and then cut the ice.

After they finished cutting, Briar fell in and started to go under.

"Briar, where are you?" panicked Jamie.

After about a minute Briar bobbed her head up and took a deep breath.

"Grab my hand!" screamed Jamie.

Briar tried but failed and went under again

"Try again!" he hollered.

This time she did grab his hand and he pulled her out.

"Are you ok?" he asked.

"Yes, but I'm cold," she answered.

"Let's go get Dad," said Jamie.

Both of them reached the skidoos and radioed their father.

Fifteen minutes later he came and took Briar to the hospital.

A day later they picked her up. "It's a miracle she lived," said the doctor. And they went home.

**(No name, please)**

---

## STORY WRITING ACTIVITY

For a story writing activity, each person chose an item from a variety of items displayed on the table. The large group was then arbitrarily divided into smaller groups. The groups were instructed to create a group story incorporating all the items chosen by the members of their group. Following are the results of that activity.

### STORY 1

Items: airplane, chickadee, matches, musical boy, newspaper

Our **PLANE** is in the future. It's flying above the earth. An anonymous person brought the **STATUE** aboard the **AIRCRAFT**. It comes alive and starts to play music. It's so beautiful, the **CHICKADEE** hears it and comes to life and follows the **PLANE**. **KATO, THE MUSICAL BOY** is dancing around the **PLANE**. He slips on the **MATCHES** and falls. **KATO** sees the **NEWS HEADLINE**: "Charles is to pay Di a king's ransom," and realizes he's been held hostage.

**KATO** realizes that Di is blackmailing Charles. She stole him from Charles. He's so mad that he starts a small fire with the **MATCHES** and the **NEWSPAPER** to force the pilot to land the **PLANE**. Then the **CHICKADEE** flies **KATO** back to Charles.

Authors: **Carole, Kathy, Brenda, Lee, Theresa, Marian**

---

### STORY 2

Items: deck of playing cards, ring in a box, green sports car

The news at 6:00 on channel 7 said the **QUEEN's ring** had been stolen. The police put a sign up on the board to find the **ring**. They are calling a ♠(spade) a ♠(spade). The suspect is no ♦(diamond) in the rough. He is dark, and he is wearing a new **suit** and he belongs to a ♣(club). The **QUEEN** has a broken ♥(heart) because of the lost **ring**. She saw the thief in a **green sports car** driving away quickly. The police are looking for a **JACK-of-all-trades**. Can you guess who the criminal is? He should be **DEALT** with!

Authors: **Rob, Theresa, Thelma**

---

### STORY 3

Items: candle, thermometer, chair, clothes pin, bar of soap

#### MY BIRTHDAY SURPRISE

Aloma's **CANDLE** heats up Norine's **THERMOMETER**. Janet is sitting on a **CHAIR** in the shower with a **CLOTHES PIN** holding the shower curtain closed. The doorbell rings and there goes the phone. Janet slipped on the **BAR OF SOAP** and grabbed the shower curtain. The **CHAIR** flipped over and tumbled out of the bathtub. That's when the **CANDLE** went out, plunging Janet into darkness. The **TEMPERATURE** dropped and Janet was cold.

All of Janet's friends were waiting for her in the kitchen. It was a surprise birthday party. Suddenly the door swung open and somebody turned on the lights. Surprise!! She grabbed the shower curtain and wrapped it around herself. She used the **CLOTHES PIN** to pin it closed. Saved by the **PIN!!** .

Authors: **Shirley, Janet, Mike, Aloma, Norine**

---

### STORY 4

Items: alarm clock, After Eights, swim goggles, sports bag, compact,

#### A DAY IN THE LIFE OF MADAM LINDA

The day began about 5 a.m. when the **ALARM** went off. Madam Linda rolled her 300 pound body out of bed and landed loudly on the hardwood floor. She stumbled to the bathroom. She vigorously searched for her **AFTER EIGHTS** to give her the strength to start her day. She knew she was late for her swimming class, so she quickly inhaled the box of **AFTER EIGHTS**, packed her bikini and **GOGGLES** in her **SPORTS BAG**, and started out the door.

Realizing that she was still in her baby dolls, she attempted to re-enter the apartment, but she was locked out. She looked in her purse for her keys, but realized that they were not there. She pulled the **COMPACT** from her purse to check her make-up because she realized that she would have to see the landlord whom people described as an earthbound Adonis.

Authors: **Frank, Rodney, Joan, Cindy**

---

## STORY 5

### THE ACL FUND-RAISING TOURNAMENT - DELAYED -

Items: pink ACL cap, airplane, green skipping rope, pliers, towel

Judy finished her business and turned to her left and reached for the door latch. It wouldn't budge. She tried forcing it. "Aw, Geez!" Judy cried, "Now I've broken a fingernail. This is just great!"

She glanced at her watch. Mickey's longest arm was already at the 3. She was already late. The **PLANE** would take off without her if she didn't get out fast. "HELP! ! " Judy screamed. No response.

Getting frantic, Judy reached for her purse and rummaged around. She pulled out her **GREEN SKIPPING ROPE** and threw it toward the window in the restroom door, hoping to attract attention. She had been standing on the toilet seat and slipped. One foot went into the toilet. The air turned blue.

Finally, the restroom door opened and she saw a **PINK HAT** pass by the top of the toilet stall door. Recognizing it as the ALL CRAZY LADIES group which she belonged to, Judy called out for assistance from the other side. "I'm locked in, and we'll miss the **PLANE**. My foot's stuck in the toilet. Go get help. The door is stuck!"

The **PINK HAT** disappeared and returned 2 minutes later with a mechanic in tow. The mechanic pulled out his trusty **PLIERS** and Judy was released in a flash (flush?).

Thanking the man, Judy hopped out of the restroom, grabbed her **SKIPPING ROPE**, and raced for the boarding gate. Fortunately, the **PLANE** was delayed. Unfortunately, the reason for the delay was a lack of a mechanic with a trusty set of **PLIERS**.

Judy and her friend boarded the **PLANE** and were last seen wiping the sweat from their brows with **GOLDEN TOWELS** and sipping champagne in first class.

Authors: **Linda, Brenda, Dodi, Shirley K., Ralph**

---

## **I GOT A LOT TO DO TODAY!**

One day as I was walking down a street, I saw Rod washing a tractor. He looked like he could use some help. He said, "Sure, I got alot to do today."

He showed me how to wash and rinse the tractor. He then showed me how to look after the equipment, like checking the gas and oil in the motor for the pump.

When we got back to the shop he showed me how to mix the soap and fill the water tank in the truck. He said we have to use a chemical to wash some really dirty and rusty trailers. He said to read some papers on the chemical so I would know what to do if something happened and he told me how to wash the trailers. I had to wet them and put the chemical on with a brush and rinse the trailers twice.

Then one day I saw a man installing a satellite dish. I asked him if he needed any help. He said, "Sure, I got alot to do today."

**E.D.C. Student**

---

I love  
The way he prepares the meals  
His gentle caress  
His loving touch  
The ways he laughs  
His butt when he walks  
His kindness which he shows to others  
The hope he instills in me.

**Brenda R.**

LOVE

LOVE IS BEING TOGETHER,  
IN WEDDED BLISS.  
LOVE IS NOT BEING A BOTHER,  
EVEN WHEN INTERRUPTING.  
LOVE IS TENSE FOR EACH,  
THOUGH YOU ARE BUSY.  
LOVE IS BEING WITH EACH OTHER,  
SO FOR LOVE'S SAKE,  
PLEASE CARE FOR EACH OTHER

LOVE

LOVE IS FOR THE YOUNG,  
LOVE IS FOR THE OLD,  
LOVE IS GOOD,  
LOVE IS BAD,  
LOVE IS TRULY GOLD,  
LOVE IS FOR YOU AND I,  
LOVE IS SEEING EYE TO EYE

**ROD R.**

---

### **SOMETIMES WHEN IT SNOWS**

Sometimes when it snows  
I think of making a snowman  
I wonder if he'll walk away  
Sometimes when it snows.

**Cindy Huston**

Sometimes when it snows  
I think I won't be able to go to work.  
I'll get to stay home and watch T.V.  
I wonder if it will snow tomorrow.  
Sometimes when it snows.

**Delores Derouin**

### **SHERI-LEE GETS SICK**

Sheri-Lee was sick. Her face was pale; it looked like the ghost. Sheri-Lee was coughing. I phoned the Health nurse and she checked her ears - they were red. I took her to the doctor and I put her to bed and gave her liquids, apple juice, and gave her medicine. I kept her home from daycare. Sheri-Lee got better from her cold and now she is this wild girl. I took her to the daycare and she played with the kids. I took her to the doctor again and now I give her vitamins. I will watch her to see she doesn't get sick again.

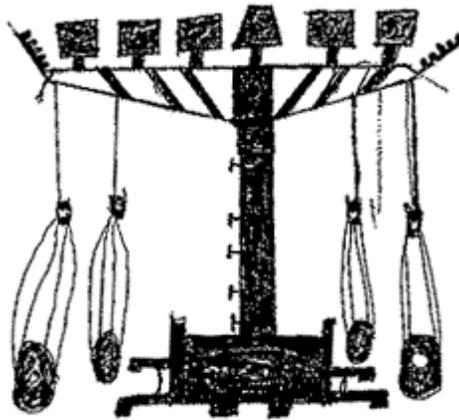
**by Theresa Dembowski**

---

## WONDER SHOWS

I enjoyed working for Wonder Shows. I worked for the big swings. There are 24 seats on the ride. I take the people's tickets and I put the people into the seats. Then I buckle them up and I walk around twice to see if all the buckles are done up. Then I go to the gate and close the gate. Then I start up the ride. I put the hydraulic lever down slowly so it will wind up slowly and then I put the lever down and the swings go up in the air. Then I slowly put the lever up and the ride slowly winds down. The people undo the buckles and get off the ride so more people can go on the ride.

Scribed for Vincent Tourand



*Vincent Tourand*

---

## **DREAMING**

When I was a little child,  
Maybe five or six,  
I dreamt I'd have a family  
And make a lot of friends.  
When I counted fifteen candles  
On my birthday cake,  
I dreamt each one became a wheel  
That sped off out of sight.  
The day I got my first big job  
I began to plan my life.  
A wife, some kids, a house, and a van  
Would be mine without much strife.  
When I get to the big 4 - 0,  
I want to holiday in style.  
I think I'll visit Disney World  
And then cruise down the Nile.  
And when I reach retirement age,  
My big job is at an end,  
All my grandkids will keep me young,  
And I'll dream of golf and gin.  
I'm told when I'm eighty or ninety years old,  
There'll be nothing left to plan,  
But I'm going to write my memoirs down,  
And dream I'm young again.

**- Gimli Evening Class -**

---

## **THE TRACK MEET**

On Saturday I am going to a track meet in Winnipeg.  
We are leaving at 7 o'clock in the morning and we are staying all day.  
I am going to run in the 200 metre race.  
We are going in Judy's red car.  
We have to take black shorts, purple T-shirt, and running shoes.  
And we have to take lunch -- a sandwich, fruit, and juice.  
We cannot take cookies.  
We have been practicing at the school every Tuesday.  
We do warm-ups and run around the gym four times.  
I like running.

**(Scribed for Laura)**

---

## **BIKE RIDING IN SPRING**

The weather was beautiful today, so I decided to ride my bike. I wore my hat and jacket, but not mitts, because it was so nice outside. The roads were clear. I went around the puddles, or I drove over them, **FYOOM!!** I lifted up my legs off the pedals before I got splashed. The fenders on my bike protect me from getting wet. I don't get a wet streak up my back.

I went to Taylor's to get Advil, but I was home by 2 o'clock so that I could watch "Days of Our Lives".

I'd sooner ride my bike than walk.

**- Scribed for Gimli Evening Program Learner -**

---

## Halloween

Big, orange jack-o-lanterns,  
Sitting out on a porch,  
Making all kinds of faces,  
Some have smiles,  
Some pout

No screaming,  
No slamming doors,  
They sit on the porch  
Frowning.

Hot, waxy candle  
Burning inside the pumpkin,  
Lighting up for the kids  
That come for treat or  
tricking.

by Joyce Nelson

---

## **THE STORM ON THE LAKE**

There was a day when I was working on the boat and we got into a big storm on the lake on the way to pick up a load of sand from Black Island.

We left Selkirk in the morning. There was the captain Frank, the mate Earl, the engineer Reuben, the cook Barb, and the two deck hands I and Glen. We were on a boat that was 80 feet long.

When we got out on the lake the wind started to blow a little. Frank was driving the first hour of our six hour shift.

When I started to drive the boat, Frank told me to watch the radar because there was a storm on the north east corner of the lake. We both thought it would just pass on the other side because the wind was coming straight north. Frank went to watch a little TV we kept in the kitchen and to have a snack.

I was watching the radar and keeping an eye on the storm. started to grow. As it got closer, the wind changed.

The waves got bigger and I had to do something fast, so I called Frank the captain by blowing the horn on the boat. When he got to the wheel it was raining really bad. We couldn't even see the barge that's how bad it was raining. The mate came up from his room and the engineer came up, too. The other deck hand was in the kitchen tying the food down.

The engineer went to close up the back of the engine room door. I went to put away the ropes that we keep on the side of the boat.

When I got back to the wheel house the captain told me to look for the barge but we couldn't see it. The mate left to see if the engineer could see the barge.

The water started to come in the windows. Then the captain told me to keep an eye on the wheel for a second; he was going outside to see if he could find the barge. All of a sudden he came in and said it was right beside us and going straight into the wind.

The lake was really bad that day because of how strong the wind was blowing.

**E D C Student**

---

## **A Scary Walk Through the Bush**

When I was a school child, about eleven years old, I and my sister Elisabeth (who was next to me in age) and Elma (who was the next youngest), liked to play with little children, especially my cousin's children. They lived about one and a half, maybe two, miles from our place, through the bush, one curve, and another curve, and up the hill, and a curve down to the water. The longest stretch was through the bush.

One day my mother said that when we got home from school and when we had finished our work, then we could go to my cousin's place.

Oh, dear, how wonderful it would be! And we worked eagerly to finish our work. And then we set out, happy as could be, because we were so glad to meet the little children. We also took something special to eat for them. When we arrived there, they were all so glad to meet us, and we to meet them.

When the time was up, we left for home. The happy time was over. We were almost at the creek by the curve. Elisabeth was in front - she was always faster than I. Suddenly she cried out and came running back. We could hear that she had cried in fear. I and my sister Elma also began to run as fast as we could. But we didn't know what was wrong.

"There is a tiger! There is a tiger!" shouted Elisabeth.

When we came out of the bush to where the people lived, we were very tired. I couldn't say anything. My oldest sister told the story; I was glad about that. They directed us to go to the next neighbour; they would take us home with a tractor and trailer because it was already dark. But first they ate their supper, and then they took us three girls home. My brother's birthday will be in two days, so they might as well go to our place today as on the 25th of March. When we met our mother, we couldn't hold back our tears as we tried to tell her why we came home so late.

That was the last time we girls went through the bush alone.

As for the tiger, we don't know what happened to it. Nobody ever saw it again.

**- by Mary Reimer -**

---

## The Egg Eater

The girls were busy. One daughter, Erna was going to do the milking, and another daughter was going to feed the calves. So I thought I would gather the eggs today. I took the egg fillers and went along the nests and gathered the eggs.

When I was almost at the end of the nests, I saw something strange. What was that, a piece of wood? No, it is moving a little bit. I shivered and I felt angry and afraid. Oh, it is a snake!

It is getting dark. What should I do? I don't have a machete to kill it. And by the time I get my machete, the snake will have run away.

Oh, the worker is forking the grass for the calves. I will ask him to come and help me kill the snake. He is still right near the barn.

Oh, sure, he will come right away. is sharp enough to kill the snake.

He brought it out from the egg room.

And, sure enough, the knife

\_ We were all curious to see how it looked, and whether it was poisonous, and how long it was. It is maybe 7 feet 6 inches long, brownish, with dark and light stripes on the back.

"Is it poisonous?"

"No," said the worker. "That's a rat eater."

Really, we shouldn't kill that kind of snake, but I think maybe this is our egg eater, and then we must kill them. It looks like it eats eggs, and that's not a poisonous one.

The poisonous ones look very pretty, with colors of red, yellow and white, or yellow and white. The little ones which are poisonous are bright red, black and white, like the one we saw on the road as we went to the village one evening. The kind we killed are very poisonous, especially when they are rolled up. Then they are getting ready to strike and they are really dangerous.

Some people say that when we kill a snake, it doesn't die until after sunset

- Mary Reimer -

---

Dear Conrad, Brenden and Wesley,

When I was a tiny little girl I would make my own toys. I would take Grandma's good catalogue and cut out all the people. That would be my make believe dolls. Then I would find an empty salt box, make two seats in it and that would be my make believe car. Then I put the paper dolls in the car and they would go for a ride. My make believe playhouse would be a few boards, some broken dishes and old discarded furniture. I used to imagine that I was living in a beautiful house and I had fun for hours and hours.

When I got older I met Daddy and we fell in love and got married. We had three boys, who were like three living dolls. First there was Conrad, then there was Brenden and last but not least was Wesley. The first time I held each of you in my arms was the best feeling imaginable. From the first moment I loved you more than life itself. Everytime you boys accomplish something I get so proud I could burst.

LOVE MOM  
WENDY COUTU

---

## **The Birth of Michael**

Into this world Michael Leonard esjarlais was born on June 16, 1984 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Michael was born at the Women's Pavilion. His mother was in labour for 12 hours but she didn't mind one bit. She said the pain was worth it and I agree 100%

My sister and I went to the hospital a week after he was born. I remember thinking I don't care about this little boy. He was jaundiced and my sister was crying. Two weeks later I held him in my arms. My attitude changed alot. I love him so much now.

I'm so glad he was born. He brings me alot of joy. I feel happy when he's around. My days are brighter when I see his cute little face. I find it cute when he giggles or laughs or acts silly. I act silly alot when I'm around him. He's only eleven. So what can you expect? Naturally I want to play with him.

We play cards or we play tackle football in the summertime. Michael and I play snowball fights in the wintertime. Sometimes we play tickle man or cops and robbers or we watch T.V. I always have fun when I'm with Michael.

---



*Ray Carter*

---



Ray Carter

---



*Ray Carter*

---







*Play Center*



