



# ways an elemen improve literacy

**T**he role of the teacher-librarian in the Elementary School is an ever-changing one in this present educational climate. Elementary teacher-librarians could possibly have the task of running the library as well as teaching core classes or providing planning time. Lucky are those teacher-librarians who are full-time and have the time and resources to support teachers and program. Whether you are part-time or full-time, here are a few suggestions to help keep the library the focal point of literacy in your school.

## **1. PARTNERS IN ACTION**

Partnering with classroom teachers to support their programs or to plan a unit is a key component of the teacher-librarian role. The TL can support literacy activities in the classroom by working with small groups or whole classes. This allows both the teacher and TL an awareness of the programming needs of students.

The library is the hub for the school's information highway.

Students and teachers should be exposed to research strategies and resources allowing them

to become independent learners. By providing the tools needed to find out any information, the TL opens the door to all the resources available.

The constant change in educational initiatives and curriculum creates the need for teachers to find support wherever they can. Team planning, teaching and assessing with the TL is a way of dealing with these pressures.

## **2. SILVER BIRCH AND RED MAPLE PROGRAMS**

The OSLA's Red Maple and Silver Birch Awards programs are excellent ways to encourage junior and intermediate students to come to the library on a regular basis. These programs act as a reading incentive by allowing students the chance to vote on their favourite novel or non-fiction book after completing the required reading. This can be a whole class or whole school initiative or can be run as an enrichment program to enhance the junior and intermediate literacy program. Involving as many students in the program as possible creates an excitement about reading which culminates on voting day where they have the power to choose. For more information about the Silver Birch and Red Maple Award Programs, check out the OLA web site at <http://www.accessola.com>.

## **3. PICTURE BOOK AWARDS**

This program involves the K-3 students in the same way as the Silver Birch Program. At Russell D. Barber Public School, we have called the program the White Pine Awards. The librarian chooses 10 Canadian picture books. The choice should be from a variety of fiction and non-fiction titles. The program runs over a 2-3 week period. Keeping the time period short allows younger students to remember their reactions to each book. Have teachers read aloud the books to their classes and have them chart,