

The Editor's Notebook



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This past August I attended a conference. That's not so unusual for me. This conference, however, was the International Association of School Libraries conference in Kingston, Jamaica. It was my first time visiting Jamaica and my first time at an IASL function and both experiences were rewarding. I presented a paper on "The Factors that Support the Development of Exemplary School Library Programs," which stemmed from my Master's of Education capping paper research. There were many other excellent sessions from school library experts from all over the globe.

One panel focused on facilitating multiple literacies, which just so happened to be the theme for this issue of *The Teaching Librarian*. This was quite fortuitous, as the *TingL* editorial board selects the themes far in advance. The panel, moderated by Dr. Ray Doiron, featured Patricia Roberts and Dr. Clement Lambert from Jamaica and Dr. Jennifer Branch and Dr. Barbara McNeill from Canada. I scribbled madly, hoping to find inspiration for this column.

My favourite idea from this panel came from Dr. Branch, who said that teacher-librarians must learn to be multi-literate themselves. Dr. Branch used the example of her preschool-

age son. For him, *Curious George* is a book, a PBS website, a movie, a toy, and a game. She challenged the audience: Our students are multi-literate — are we? How can we be multi-literate?

She gave very practical, concrete ways we can become multi-literate:

- Play!
- Read and write across multiple platforms (write letters, send emails, blog...)
- Be an online content creator
- Build a professional learning network (PLN) with local and global connections

This conference was the perfect opportunity for me to expand my PLN. At my own workshop, I had attendees from Qatar, the Netherlands, Canada, Jamaica, South Africa, and Namibia. Financial literacy, visual literacy, media literacy, digital literacy ... there are many literacies out there; it is up to us to embrace them through our school libraries. ■