

Gathering to reflect on RiP: The “So What?” event

by Marina Niks

■ In 2007 we started to talk about the fact that RiPAL-BC’s funding would end on April 30, 2008. We knew that since we first got NLS funding in 2004, we had facilitated and fostered good research-in-practice work. We had facilitated workshops, supported practitioners who were writing and submitting proposals and secured funding for projects. So what? Had the work had any impact on the field? On practitioners’ work? On learners experiences?

We decided to use the last of our money to bring together BC practitioners so that they could reflect on the work done to date, how it had impacted the field, and what might be coming next. We put together a planning committee that included research friends and practitioners who had been involved in at least two RiP projects. Together we planned and facilitated a gathering held in Vancouver on April 25 and 26, 2008. To make sure that practitioners could participate, we offered subsidies for travel and accommodation.

The goals of the **So What? Reflections on RiP** gathering were to engage researchers and practitioners in a dialogue about research in practice, to use research findings to develop resources for adult literacy practice, to celebrate BC RiP projects and researchers, to reflect on the impact of RiP on the adult literacy field in BC and Canada, and to look at the future of RiP.

A RiP Poem

by June Hughes and Rebecca Beuschel

Money left over what do they do,
No time for a project, makes them feel blue.

They’ll get a group together led by Dr. Niks,
And have us see the research and hear about their picks.
We’ve sat and listened carefully and now we start to see,
That research makes a difference and changes policy.

This work has an impact, and we must surely trust,
That research won’t sit on the shelf and merely gather dust.

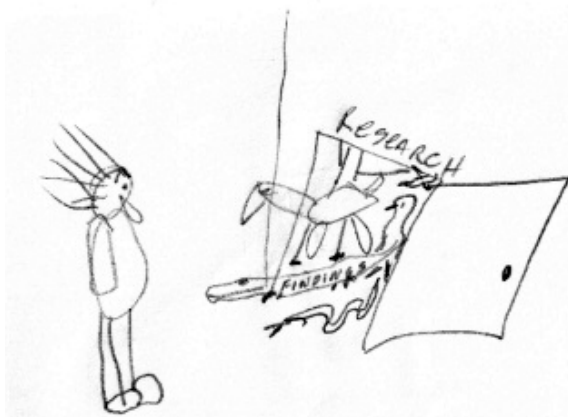
You tell us in the research that we should really delve,
To learn about the learners as they learn about themselves.

We now have come to understand the power of agency,
And see that you can change a life with just a quick Yahtzee.

We now feel enlightened and a lot more informed,
Cuz research has a purpose and it should be the norm.

So let’s go get the money, and help us spread the word,
That research is important, if the learners’ voice is heard!





Thirty seven researchers and practitioners from across the province attended. Along with two guests from Alberta and Ontario we spent two days reflecting on projects carried out in BC and discussing issues related to research in practice. To help with our process we used art, drama and good old time talk!

In the end the group decided to produce a kit with tools or “prompts” that practitioners could use to engage in conversations about research and their practice. These tools include cartoons, poems, digital stories, postcards and bookmarks. We have asked a graphic designer to work on our creations and we hope to secure some funding that will allow us to print enough copies to distribute to practitioners across the country. Stay tuned! In the meantime, here are some of the results from that day.

RIP RAP

by Shauna Butterwick and Nora Randall

Research in Practice
 Tells it like it is
 Research in Practice
 At the end there's a quiz
 Research in Practice
 Lots of things to share
 Research in Practice
 Join us if you dare!

Mobilizing knowledge
 What the hell is that?
 Research in Practice
 It's like herding cats!
 Research in Practice
 Get it on the road
 Research in Practice
 It's quite a heavy load

Now the funding's ended
 What the hell to do?
 Research in Practice
 We're sad, so sad boo hoo
 Research in Practice
 How to carry on?
 Research in Practice
 We'll sing this RIPPING song

It's fun this looking inward
 It also hurts a lot
 But now we're moving forward
 What can I say? We're HOT! ■

