

Can you read this?



by Kelly Trevors

To the one out of 5 Canadian s who can't read,

this is how all words appear. Five million Canadians are functionally illiterate. This means that they can not read, write, or use numbers will enough to perform ordinary tasks required as a part of daily living. They can't read a recipe, look up someone's phone number or even make a grocery list. One third of these Canadians have graduated from high school.

Not stupid or dumb

These people can not read a newspaper, a bulletin board or even a traffic sign. They can't order food from a menu, apply for a job or even read a story to their children. Most of these people are just like you and me. They are not stupid or dumb, and they are not lazy. Some of them do have learning disabilities but many of them don't. Their backgrounds vary, but they all have one thing in common, the need to learn to read.

But how could children go to school, and end up not learning how to read? Sometimes children are labelled and criti:ed by people working in the school

system. Children believe what they are told. If a child is told that he or she is dumb or stupid, then they'll believe it. It doesn't matter if its true or not. This negative criticism not only destroys self-confidence, but it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because the children believe they are stupid, they lose all motivation to try to learn.

Illiterate teenagers

The child grows older and becomes an illiterate teenager who can now quit school, enter vocational classes with little need for reading and writing. The rest just "slip through the cracks of the system." Then when they leave school, they have to find a job. With no

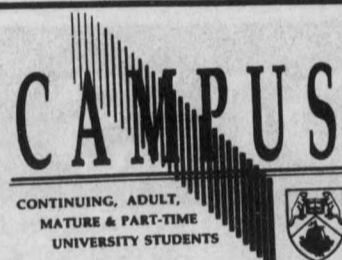
reading and writing skills, a good job is nearly impossible to find. But everyone deserves the benefits from being able to read. Being literate gives us the ability to make choices, and the freedom to live our lives to their potential.

International Year of Literacy

The new decade begins with a world-wide effort at promoting literacy as the United Nations declared 1990 as the International Year of Literacy. Illiteracy affects everyone. (Within Fredericton alone, there are over 5,000 illiterate adults.) There are numerous organizations and committees being formed every year, but the question you

should ask is "what can I do?" One possibility is to volunteer as a tutor. The training workshop is between 10-12 hours, and results in a tutor's certificate. The meetings between the tutor and student are kept confidential, and are held either at the student's home or in a public place such as the library. (Fredericton Literacy Council).

If you're not interested in becoming a tutor or just don't have the time, then there are other things that can be done. The Fredericton Literacy Council has planned a calendar of events designed to promote literacy and increase public awareness, but they need help. They plan to set up information booths and need volunteers to work in four hour shifts. If four hours is too much then divide the shift with a friend. There are other events as well.



The University of New Brunswick's organization for continuing, adult mature and part-time university students is seeking an

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This is a part-time position (approximately 10 hours per week from September to April) with the possibility of full-time hours for the period May to August.

The successful candidate will possess the following:

- strong written and oral communication skills
- organizational skills
- ability to work independently
- awareness of issues facing adult and part-time university students
- strong commitment to education

Apply in writing by March 14 to:

C.A.M.P.U.S.

University of New Brunswick
c/o Department of Extension and Summer Session
P.O. Box 4400
Fredericton, N.B. E3A 5A3

Include a resume; short (1 page) discussion of the challenges facing adult learners at university; and the names of two references.

C.A.M.P.U.S.

Event and Date	Convenor	Needed
Boyce Market, one Saturday morning, Spring and Fall	Cathy Mahoney, 459-3566	two four-hour shifts, two per shift
Fredericton Mall, August 17-18	Jean Benham, 452-2786	two or four-hour shifts to cover twenty-two hours
Bookstores and Businesses, Various dates	Pat McLeod, 472-5056	once designed, just needs to be transported, put up and taken down
FREX September 3-8	Beryl McLaughlin, 455-5321	four-hour shifts, two per shift thirty-six people
SEPTEMBER 8 IS WORLD LITERACY DAY		
Literacy play, late May	Lise Pennie, 455-6514	six to put up and take down; four ushers
Assistance at Manpower Mondays, 10-2 Begins Jan. 8/90	Marie Young, 474-0539	52 Mondays, one per shift Repeater if possible
Publicity	Jill Little, 452-8007	Any talents, including putting up posters
Parade, July 1	Literacy Library, 458-1396	as many as possible

For more information contact Juanita Fowler at at 458-1396 (library) or 454-4287 (home).