

## ARC-BC Annual Report 2008-2009

The 2008/2009 school year was a very busy and successful one for ARC-BC (Accessible Resource Centre – British Columbia). This repository of alternate format materials based on the BC K-12 curriculum officially went online in September 2008. At that time, the repository was tested with the eight BC school districts involved in the ARC-BC pilot project. From September to December 2008, these districts registered users, conducted trials, and offered feedback and suggestions for improving the site. In January 2009, the site was opened to all BC school districts with 10 new districts being added per month from January to April. The remaining school districts joined the ARC-BC community in May and June.

ARC-BC is managed provincially by SET-BC and PRCVI. Throughout the year, the ARC-BC provincial team was very active in three main areas: alternate format production, repository development, and user administration.

### Alternate Format Production

- ARC-BC has three production assistants involved in collecting, creating, and cataloguing alternate formats of BC K-12 curriculum materials. This process was supported by a systems librarian who coordinated the alternate format production process, ensuring the necessary technical infrastructure was in place, the production flow was efficient and effective, and setting production priorities based on user feedback. The systems librarian also established the necessary cataloguing standards and procedures for all materials. The production process allowed for the creation and cataloguing of a number of alternate formats of print titles as well as the collection and cataloguing of alternate formats submitted from the ARC-BC community of users. Production priorities were adjusted throughout the year based primarily on user request through submission of actual print materials or feedback/requests submitted online. Additionally, production efforts were focused on migration of the existing PRCVI e-text collection to the repository, re-scanning and conversion of PRCVI print books, and acquiring and conversion of new, BC Ministry of Education recommended titles.
- The ARC-BC production work flow was finalized early in the school year to ensure the maximum possible efficiency in creating a wide variety of alternate format types. Research and development on the production and distribution of DAISY format books was also completed during the year and production of this alternate format is expected to begin in 2009/2010. The ARC-BC provincial team met with and collaborated with other alternate format producers (CAER) several times to discuss production issues and work flow efficiencies.
- As of June 30, 2009, the ARC-BC repository contained **1,784 individual titles** representing **48,258 learning objects** (alternate format files).

## Repository Development

- The ARC-BC provincial team was very actively involved throughout the school year in supporting the ongoing development of the actual ARC-BC repository. Two ARC-BC provincial team leaders, the SET-BC IT manager, and the systems librarian, in consultation with program administration, met frequently to discuss ongoing repository issues and to plan for improvements and expansion. The repository performed well from the very beginning with only a few minor glitches or bugs requiring attention. The biggest challenge during the year came when the server storage capacity was exceeded far earlier than anticipated. For several weeks in March, while a new, larger server was installed, additions to the collection were put on hold. Production continued during this period, however, and the backlog of files was quickly uploaded once storage was back online. Access to the repository was not interrupted during this time. The repository was accessible, without interruption throughout the year, the only downtime being the result of a building-wide power shutdown one weekend.
- The initial or “beta” version of the repository went live on September 8, 2008 with the eight pilot school districts registering users, testing the repository and submitting feedback until December 15, 2008. During that time, the user interface was completed and any “bugs” in the system corrected. Based on feedback, suggestions were incorporated as much as possible throughout that pilot phase. On December 15<sup>th</sup>, ARC-BC v.1.0 was finalized and the process for planning and implementing v.2.0 began. From January to April, the ARC-BC provincial team met to discuss improvements in the existing repository and the development of additional features. Early in May, the team met with the original repository programmers to finalize plans for completion of v.2.0. The new version is scheduled to be available in September 2009 (testing in July and August 2009) and will contain improvements or additions in the following areas:
  - improved reporting features to allow for more specific ongoing and summative tracking of learning object, district, and user activities
  - improved community area to allow for more community submissions of new alternate formats and improvements on existing resources
  - improved user registration process including the collection of additional user information and simplified password creation process
  - improved user interface including more visual cues for logging in and searching
  - addition of federated search capability on other online repositories such as Gutenberg and PRCVI’s online catalogue
  - minor improvements to cataloguing area
- The use of the repository increased steadily during the January to June period with very few problems reported throughout that time period. General feedback indicated the repository was easily accessed and searches of the collection being simple to perform and yielding good results.

As of June 30, 2009					
<b>Total number of individual titles downloaded</b>			544 titles		
<b>Total number of Learning Objects downloaded</b>			18,588 Learning Objects (alternate format files)		
Top 10 Most Downloaded Titles					
Total		Novels		Textbooks	
Holes	599	Holes	599	BC Science Probe 6	398
To Kill a Mockingbird	557	To Kill a Mockingbird	557	Crossroads	323
The Giver	417	The Giver	417	BC Science 8	322
BC Science Probe 6	398	Tuck Everlasting	358	BC Science 9	285
Tuck Everlasting	358	The Outsiders	349	Global Citizens	284
The Outsiders	349	Among the Hidden	322	Horizons	275
Crossroads	323	Touching Spirit Bear	296	Pathways	273
Among the Hidden	322	Hatchet	292	Ancient Worlds	239
BC Science 8	322	Manic Magee	268	BC Science Probe 4	238
Touching Spirit Bear	296	Charlotte's Web	239	BC Science 10	230
Number of Downloads by File Type					
.clx (Clicker 5)			4		
.doc (MS Word)			1,343		
.kes (Kurzweil 3000)			11,008		
.mp3 (audio)			2,261		
.pdf (Adobe)			851		
.pps (PowerPoint Show)			274		
.ppt (PowerPoint)			16		
.rtf (Rich Text Format)			1,761		
.txt (Simple Text)			1,069		
.zip (Zipped files)			1		

- Even with ARC-BC in its infancy, cost savings for school districts has been substantial. An example of these savings can be demonstrated by estimating production costs of the two most popular downloads – the novel “Holes” and the textbook “BC Science Probe 6” – in terms of preparing Kurzweil 3000 (.kes) format following the typical process used in schools (i.e. scanning book on flatbed scanner directly into Kurzweil 3000, saving files). \*Note that this calculation does not include the numerous additional hours needed to edit and proofread these same files prior to producing other alternate formats such as .rtf, .mp3, DAISY, etc.

Title	Number of hours to prepare and scan book / save files  Note: very conservative estimate	x estimated salary of assistant (\$25/hr)	x total number of downloads for title	Total cost if book scanned by individual assistants	Total cost of book when produced by ARC-BC  Note: actual cost including book
Holes	2.5 hours	\$62.50	x 599	\$37,437.50	\$46.00
BC Science Probe 6	4 hours	\$100.00	x 398	\$39,800.00	\$115.00

## User Administration

- Access to ARC-BC is restricted to registered users approved by ARC-BC District Contacts in those BC school districts who have joined the ARC-BC Community. From September to December, the only districts able to register users were the eight original pilot districts. All other BC school districts were invited to join the ARC-BC community in the fall of 2008 with access beginning in January 2009. As part of the ARC-BC Copyright Management Strategy, school districts joining the ARC-BC Community must identify an individual (the ARC-BC District Contact) who will be responsible for approving user registrations and for overseeing the district's training plan. In addition, district administration is required to sign an Agreement on Alternate Format Use which outlines the school district's responsibility in understanding and observing the Canadian Copyright Law 32(1) as it pertains to use of alternate format materials. The community application process and user registration procedures were developed early in September 2008 and worked well throughout the school year.
- As of June 30, 2009, there are **48 BC school districts** that have joined the ARC-BC Community and, from those districts, a total of **1,386 registered users**.
- The two ARC-BC provincial team leaders were involved in a variety of user administration activities throughout the 2008/2009 school year. These activities included online and face-to-face training, development of web-based informational and training resources, day-to-day monitoring and troubleshooting user issues, creation and analysis of year end user surveys, ARC-BC District Contact support and communication, and development of ARC-BC policies and procedures. In addition, meetings were held with a number of other provincial organizations and/or alternate format producers interested in developing partnerships with ARC-BC with a view to connecting regional or provincial repositories in the future.
- As part of the ARC-BC Copyright Management Strategy, a great deal of effort was put into providing training opportunities for individuals, teams and school districts. Online informational sessions were offered at least once per week throughout the year and, on request, face-to-face workshops or meetings were held in various school districts around the province. The ARC-BC provincial team was supported in their training initiatives by the SET-BC Regional Consultants who also provided team and district support. In addition to these real time training events, many web-based resources were developed which included presentations, tutorials, and demonstrations. These provided anytime information on alternate formats in general, ARC-BC and the Canadian Copyright Law, and how to use the repository effectively. All training materials were made available to the ARC-BC District Contact for use in their own ARC-BC training events. Daily monitoring of repository activities ensured that users were logging into the site successfully – many users required support retrieving their passwords. This monitoring also included identifying any instances of download abuse and analyzing searching and download trends to help guide alternate format production. Throughout the year, the ARC-BC provincial team leaders provided information and support to the ARC-BC District Contacts as needed. The first draft of the ARC-BC Policies and Procedures manual was created with an expected review early in the 2009/2010 school year.
- A small side project, the Contribute to Collection project, was undertaken in April 2009 with two BC school districts. Mobile scanning stations consisting of a laptop, scanner and Kurzweil 3000 was

provided to four teams in total. Two training days were provided to teach teams how to use the software to produce high quality alternate formats. As a requirement of the project, these teams are committed to contributing a number of resources to ARC-BC during the 2009/2010 school year.

- At the end of the school year, all ARC-BC users were sent an online year end survey to complete. This survey was designed to help identify the students that were supported through ARC-BC during the year as well as to gather information on the user's experience with ARC-BC in general. This survey provided a great deal of information that will help improve the ARC-BC service in the coming year.

### Results of Year End User Survey

<b>Total Number of Surveys Sent</b>	1303
<b>Total Number of Surveys Returned</b>	551

#### 1. Did you receive training on ARC-BC?

Yes	430
No	116
No Response Given	5
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>551</b>

#### 2. If yes, what was your primary source of training?

Online training	64
Workshop at school	93
Workshop in district	255
No Response Given	139
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>551</b>

#### 3. Did you log into ARC-BC?

Yes	460
No	89
No Response Given	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>551</b>

#### 4. Did you search the ARC-BC collection?

Yes	423
No	121
No Response Given	7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>551</b>

**5. Did you download materials from ARC-BC?**

Yes	261
No	283
No Response Given	7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>551</b>

<p><b>Variety of reasons for not downloading including...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not needed</li> <li>• no time</li> <li>• didn't find the title / format I was looking for</li> <li>• couldn't download on my computer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• just browsing</li> <li>• didn't have the programs needed on my computer</li> <li>• didn't know what to do with the files</li> <li>• not working with students</li> </ul>
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**6. Did you contribute alternate format materials to ARC-BC?**

Yes	37
No	503
No Response Given	11
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>551</b>

<p><b>Top reasons given for not contributing to ARC-BC collection...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nothing to contribute</li> <li>• no time / no opportunity / no training</li> <li>• don't know how / don't have scanner</li> <li>• didn't know you could</li> </ul>
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**7. What priority do you place on alternate formats of NOVELS?**

High priority	294
Low priority	36
Medium priority	149
No Response Given	72
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>551</b>

**8. What priority do you place on alternate formats of TEXTBOOKS?**

High priority	325
Low priority	40
Medium priority	117
No Response Given	69
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>551</b>

## 9. What priority do you place on the different FILE FORMATS?

	eText/RTF/doc	MP3/DAISY	KES	PDF
High priority	129	143	338	58
Low priority	96	86	27	125
Medium priority	145	152	91	139
No Response Given	181	170	95	229

## 10. Users were asked to respond (agree, disagree, not sure) to these statements...

- The website is **easy to use**.
- The **ARC-BC team was responsive** to my questions or comments.
- I **usually find what I'm looking for** in the collection.
- The **materials** in ARC-BC are **good quality**.
- The materials I have downloaded have made a **positive impact on my student's** educational program.
- I now spend **less time creating** alternate format **materials** for my students.

	Website Easy to Use	ARC Team Responsive	Usually find what I am looking for	Good Quality Materials	Positive Impact for Student	Less time creating materials
Agree	361	268	240	328	251	232
Disagree	22	4	66	51	2	37
Not sure	128	62	53	168	79	84
No Response Given	40	217	192	4	219	198

## 11. I would like to keep my ARC-BC account active for the 2009/2010 school year.

Yes	536
No	6
No Response Given	8
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>550</b>

## 12. What do you think is the most positive aspect of having access to the alternate formats in ARCBC?

- 312 users responded to this question. Their comments were analyzed and fell into six general categories. Sample comments in each category are included here – for a full list of comments, please contact the ARC-BC provincial team ([arc@setbc.org](mailto:arc@setbc.org)).

**1 Provided differentiated curricular materials to meet students' diverse learning needs, increase independence, and improve comprehension – 84 users**

- I have a student who has a severe disability in reading but has the ability to comprehend at grade level. He has been able to have his Science and Socials textbooks on his computer in a Kurzweil format and it has improved his letter grades from C- to B because he has the computer read to him the textbook. His confidence and self-esteem has been noticed by parents, teachers, principals and mostly by the student himself. Without this resource he wouldn't have access to these texts...I have tried to do it myself before and it has not had the quality that ARC can produce in it
- This service is fabulous. It brings tears to the eye! I could download a whole science 6 textbook in 5 minutes and now the student can 'read' with the rest of the class...and manages it all by herself!
- Kids have access to text that is at their level instead of having to read 'down' to where they can decode. i.e. they build stronger thinking skills and comprehension
- It has opened up a world of possibilities for my students who have severe dyslexia...and with ARC-BC, they can now access text materials independently to aid comprehension
- Simply the access to such a wide range of ready to use materials makes planning for my LD students much easier. It also gives them a huge boost in confidence to be able to work on the same materials as their peers.
- The accessibility means it's much easier to consider a variety of learning needs without worrying about having to save a huge chunk of prep time to get things going. UDL planning is becoming a matter-of-course, with is fabulous for students
- To see my students take on reading tasks again is the most positive aspect of using ARC-BC resources. For some reason, they continue to avoid reading books and novels but have found reading intertwined with computer technology a new refreshing start to reading.

**2 Provided materials which increased student inclusion, participation and peer acceptance in the classroom – 26 users**

- The most positive aspect is the access students get to same grade level materials and the impact that has on their social acceptance and feelings of well being and self worth
- The connection to curriculum for students who use alternate formats – now programs are more likely to be adapted and included rather than modified and exclusionary
- Being able to provide alternate materials for students that need support reading classroom novels and textbooks so they can be included in the classroom
- Enables students to participate with their peers in class discussions about the novel – enables students to feel successful – enables students to fit in – having an IPOD with a novel on it not only accepted but perceived as "cool" by their peer group

**3 Less time spent on creating alternate format materials allowing more time to be spent on other teacher/student activities – 69 users**

- I LOVE ARC! I love the time saving, the reduction in duplication of resources and time, easy access to materials kids are using now.
- It frees up my time to be doing other things with and for my student. Before ARC-BC I was spending A LOT of time scanning material for my student.
- It saves me lots of time preparing for the students. Now I can focus more time on helping the students in other ways
- Saves a huge amount of 'reinventing the wheel' as people over the province need the same materials, and broadening the scope of who has access to the materials

- It is a fantastic resource and goes without saying the time factor is unbelievable, previously EAs were scanning materials and taking an unreal amount of time to do so...I tell everyone it is like a gift, for it is so incredibly easy to use
- Being able to quickly provide documents for Kurzweil rather than scanning and cleaning them up has freed up hours of SEA time. My student can work more independently and the SEA can direct her attention to other students

#### **4 Having a centralized collection of good quality materials that is easy to access, search and download – 71 users**

- This is a sea-change in thinking about access to curriculum. It was a bold, great idea. While a few of us had developed some small collections of alternate format materials, having the whole scope of the BC collection available means so many more kids have access to the common curriculum, and have so many more opportunities to participate in the activities their peers are doing.
- It is magic! I go to the website, find the book, download it, change it to MP3, load to my student's usb memory stick and he reads book after book. My other student keeps up with Gr 7 academic tasks!
- The fact that this is so quick and easy to use is fantastic! This really helps in being prepared – especially when an unexpected need comes up!
- There are two 'most positive aspects'. The first is the quality of ARC material, particularly textbooks; the second is the ease of access and time-saving aspect
- Finally we are not all re-inventing the wheel in our small classrooms. It is absolutely wonderful to be able to fill a need for a student quickly and efficiently just by browsing the ARC BC library
- The quick availability is a wonderful aspect. Also, free access to the materials is wonderful
- The variety of resources. The instant availability, versus waiting for e-text to arrive through other organizations. Flexibility, I can do some work from home, versus everything happening at school

#### **5 Have not had time or need to use ARC-BC as yet – 45 users**

- I am anticipating it being a very valuable resource once we get it up and running
- I'm planning to use this next year, and have at least 2 or 3 students specifically in mind, but haven't had a chance yet to use or explore. I'm excited about accessing it next year.
- I am not sure because I have not yet "explored" I believe the concept is excellent and I will be exploring it next year!
- I am thrilled at the prospect of having these materials available for my high school students. This will definitely cut down on their frustration levels!

#### **6 Multiple, miscellaneous comments or no response – 17 users**

- Materials correlate with BC curriculum closely. It is very easy to have new material mailed in and added to the collection. The ability of staff to respond to questions quickly and effectively via email was outstanding
- Now we can actually make good use of Kurzweil in class. It was sooo hard to get a publisher to give us a digital copy of a text
- Most teachers I know spend hundreds of dollars each year subsidizing their classrooms, not to mention TIME producing suitable resources in place of outdated, inappropriate or bland materials. The more quality free resources an instructor has access to, the better

### 13. What could be done to improve ARCBC the collection or the website?

- 204 users responded to this question. Their comments were analyzed and fell into ten general categories. Sample comments in each category are included here – for a full list of comments, please contact the ARC-BC provincial team ([arc@setbc.org](mailto:arc@setbc.org)) .

#### 1 Add to collection – 51 users

#### 2 Improve quality of file formats available – 9 users

- Ensure files labeled as edited are COMPLETELY edited...have had the experience of some chapters not being edited...increase library of edited texts...use colour for all Science texts...please have BC Science 8 and the Workbook for September
- Human live voice recordings
- I have used the MP3 format of novels and have found the quality to be a bit lacking. For children with a learning disability, it is hard to focus on a computer generated voice that reads quite quickly

#### 3 More training and/or training materials needed – 11 users

- A 'quick use guide' might be helpful to remind users like me what steps to go through to search and download material
- How to download to MP3 players?
- A few online instructions in case I forget what to do. The workshop was a long time ago.
- Help to take you through the steps of downloading

#### 4 More communication needed to districts – 7 users

- At the district level, we need more time and training. We need to spread the word! This changes kids lives, and we need to do more to make it happen for all who need it. Teachers need support to access this resource.
- I think some 'testimonials' from classroom teachers would be helpful to share as I have had comments that this seems great but is one more thing I don't have time to do. I know once teachers could see the utility of ARC-BC they would get excited.
- Keep at it! I work at the district level and there are many people who still need to hear about it, in spite of our teaching and demonstrations. They are always amazed. And the students feel enabled.

#### 5 Improve downloading process and/or time – 13 users (may be district connection issues not related to ARC-BC – virtually all users reporting download issues came from one school district)

- Be nice if more books were available in one entire file as well as by chapter since some schools have pretty slow systems and it takes a long time to download multiple chapters or books
- My one and only biggest complaint is the download time. It takes a very long time to download a relatively small file. I can not think of any file that has taken less than 20-25 minutes to download for me, that is way too slow and frustrating at the same time
- This could be a local problem, but sometimes it takes me an hour or so to download one chapter of a textbook in kesi format. It is likely attributed to our slow server, and I am hoping it will resolve itself next year

## **6 No improvement needed – 41 users**

## **7 Improve website interface for registration, searching, etc. – 14 users**

- Change the look of the webpage after you've logged in. Several times I have thought that I couldn't log on because the login page is almost exactly the same as the page that shows up after you log in
- I'd like to see users leaving more notes in the community collection when working on the materials (zone editing, etc)
- Navigation around the site could be clearer. I was looking for novels of grade 7 curriculum and was unable to find them, although Paul Hamilton has spent time at the site now and located them so perhaps my less experience was a factor in my difficulties. However, should the site not be easily navigable by all levels?
- Sometimes it is difficult to search for a specific title – some words will trigger the title and some won't. Not sure how this can be improved.

## **8 Specific title or alternate format requests – 30 users**

- French materials (novels and texts) for students with disabilities, course books for secondary, possibly workbook pages (that accompany textbooks) so it can be altered with Kurzweil to give more access to these students
- To add Math resources and Steck-Vaughn Spelling program
- Update the High School resources to reflect the new grade 8, 9, and 10 science curriculum
- More picture book stories for children in grades K-3 and high interest and low vocab stories for grades 4-6

## **9 More .mp3 formats needed – 8 users**

- More mp3 format, some of our perceptually disabled (comprehension) do not have access to Kurzweil in class but would benefit from hearing novels and texts whenever they need to – including homework
- mp3 files with a more 'human' voice
- More current novels – high level ones to build student vocabulary and interest as they work through lower level reading practice as that material is often less interesting. The mp3 books have been most popular with us for novel studies, literature circles or even just for choice

## **10 Miscellaneous or multiple requests – 19 users (may be lack of user understanding or training)**

- Easier transfer of information to my students or students being able to have their own username and password would be key to their independence and increasing use. Voice improvements are only available for newer computers so this can be an issue for us, but is not limited to ARC
- Having download material compatible with multiple software versions; at least 1 or 2 versions below most current version. We try to have at least one computer in the Student Resource room and any student laptop at the latest version. However, if a student requires access outside of the above listed options many times the materials downloaded is of no value to them best the hardware has not been upgraded.
- Let the EAs that work front line with students do this work...as a school counselor I feel strongly that this is not my role. I appreciate the copyright issues however let the front line people do the work...often school counselor are not available due to emergencies etc and it is not right to be dependent on us...when someone else could provide the service just as competently

#### 14. Any other comments?

- 186 users responded to this question (359 users had **No Response**). Their comments were analyzed and fell into six general categories. Sample comments in each category are included here – for a full list of comments, please contact the ARC-BC provincial team ([arc@setbc.org](mailto:arc@setbc.org)) .

##### **1 Had problems related to downloading files – 6 users**

- I had much trouble when trying to download materials at school. It may be a network issues here, but often my downloads would stall.
- I would have loved to use the materials on the site but the downloads never completed. They would download partially and then stop. I asked the SET-BC rep for help but she couldn't figure out why this was happening. After that, I did not go back to the site.

##### **2 Survey itself was not clear / not appropriate / not able to be completed – 5 users**

- A survey that has the options of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree and N/A gives more accurate representation of opinion to questions asked than an either or selection. For example the rating of Quality question - some materials were good quality while other were not and that was not able to be expressed in the response format.
- It would be helpful if this form had draft capability. I was interrupted twice and had to redo the survey both times. I think I have sent it only once, but my apologies if you have my first 2 incomplete surveys!

##### **3 Haven't used repository yet / hope to use it in future – 62 users**

- Have just completed the training - on quick perusal I liked what I saw. Will get back to investigate more fully in the fall.
- I am so sorry that I did not access ARC-BC. I spoke about it with colleagues at my school, how useful it could for our students but I did not make the time to log on. I do believe that it will be useful and have every intention of accessing it for next year.
- I have the feeling that this is a rich resource that I would like to explore, but I have been just swamped with survival level of servicing my students and staff. It will no doubt take a little time to figure out what's there and learn how to grab what I need in a hurry. I do expect it will be worth the effort when it is feasible to make the effort.
- Unfortunately, my training and access to ARC-BC began quite close to the end of the year and I have not had time/opportunity to use the resources yet. I look forward to using it extensively next year.

##### **4 General thanks / great resource - 83 users**

- I cannot thank you enough for making these resources available. I work with student with learning disabilities (print-disabled). Their self-esteem and image of themselves as learners has improved immensely because they can now independently access the same material and complete the same assignments as their classmates. Being able to do grade-level work has made a world of difference to all of them.
- I'm just thrilled with this library. It's the most collaborative, supportive government initiative I've come across in a long time!!
- It is really wonderful that this program is available. My students have shown a huge increase in self-esteem because they are able to participate in their class' regular program because they are able to read the materials. I have also seen a renewed interest in reading and books in general that was

certainly not there before. I have had many students come to me and excitedly ask me if they can get a certain book or scan it themselves onto the computer.

- Thank you for this important project. I wish you could see the confidence and excitement about learning demonstrated by the students who were introduced to Kurzweil and ARC materials this year. (Again, this was a very preliminary introduction only and we saw amazing improvements with our first users!) Thank You!
- After being skeptical initially - I've become 'sold' on using these materials & this site. Many thanks.
- Great vision and implementation. It's so great to have this resource. What an excellent project.
- I am absolutely thrilled with the service! I have lots to contribute, and intend to start uploading shortly! On behalf of students and myself, thank you thank you thank you!

## **5 Suggestions for improvement - 21 users**

- I think that parents of special needs students and older students should have access to this collection. I realize that would create issues re copyright infringement, but it would make reading for pleasure a possibility for many students for whom reading now is simply a school task.
- I'd love to see students with access to the search engine, even if staff still need to be registered users. Then they can let us know what they'd like to use for projects and assignments. It's important for kids to be in charge of their learning, as much as possible!
- It would be a great to have access to worksheets in subject areas where you simply type in the subject, grade level and presto things pop up
- Teachers need more inservice to ensure they are using ARC materials to their full capacity.

## **6 Miscellaneous comments - 9 users**

- One of the most positive activities that our SETBC consultant, Flo Wong lead in our district was the Kurzweil camp that involved classroom teachers and SETAs working with their students. Your support to work with groups of teachers has positive long term impact.
- This resource is in its infancy. It'll be interesting to see whether or not it'll be funded particularly in these harsh economic times.
- When I searched it looked like many of the textbook and novel downloads require Kurzweil and some students use the one laptop that we have for Sp. ed. students that does not have Kurzweil . We have more computers in the school that our sp.ed students use, but do not have Kurzweil again. We'd love to purchase it with our sp. ed. yearly funding but do not get enough (i.e. we get \$150.00 only for 1 year and must spend it that year). We are hoping district will help us.

## Future Directions for ARC-BC

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of everyone on the provincial team and the support of the ARC-BC District Contacts and the SET-BC Regional Consultants, ARC-BC made great progress in the 2008/2009 school year. As a result of feedback, suggestions and ongoing analysis, there are plans already in place to expand and improve the service in the coming year.

### Alternate Format Production

- The ARC-BC production staff will continue to collect, produce and catalogue alternate formats. Production priorities will focus on print materials donated from districts, new Ministry of Education recommended resources and those materials requested through the user survey and repository feedback.
- Based on repository activity analysis, editing and proofreading efforts will be focused on the top 20 novels and textbooks downloaded.
- Production of DAISY materials will begin focusing on novels initially and textbooks as requested. Involvement in the national DAISY consortium will continue.
- Connections with the various educational resource publishers will be established to develop agreements allowing ARC-BC to acquire and distribute their electronic or derivative versions of novels and textbooks.

### Repository Development

- ARC-BC v.2.0 is currently in development, with testing expected over the summer and an anticipated release early in September 2009. This new version, as discussed earlier, will have a number of improvements for both the users and ARC-BC administration. Discussions for development of version 3.0 are planned for late fall 2009.
- Ongoing additions and improvements to the repository technical infrastructure will continue to ensure there is adequate storage for the growing collection
- The repository user interface will be updated to include more information on the repository and its use
- Discussions with other provincial organizations (e.g. CILS, Alberta Learning Resources, W. Ross MacDonald School for the Blind (Ontario), APSEA) through the CAER network will continue. Initial discussions will focus on establishing standards for repository user authentication and alternate format production to establish common procedures which will support future repository interconnectivity.

### User Management

- The year end user survey and ARC-BC District Contact survey provided a great deal of information to assist with future plans for user support. As a result of the surveys, and ongoing feedback, user management plans will focus on the following:
  - developing more web-based training resources which will provide, in particular, more information on searching the repository and on how to use the ARC-BC resources, once acquired, in the classroom

- more ongoing contact, through monthly e-newsletters, to help users understand the implications of the Canadian Copyright Law 32(1), to keep informed of additions and changes to the repository, and to point them to specific training materials
- updating existing web-based resources to reflect changes in ARC-BC v.2.0 with repackaging of training materials for ARC-BC District Contacts
- improving ARC-BC District Contacts access to ongoing and summative user activity reports
- increasing number of online and face-to-face training opportunities for users and districts
- The invitation to join the ARC-BC Community will continue for those few remaining BC school districts with hopes of having all districts part of the community by late fall 2009. Those districts experiencing difficulty completing the requirements for joining will be supported individually.
- A standard process for considering student access to the repository will be developed in consultation with interested ARC-BC District Contacts. This process will be tried on a limited basis during the school year.

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