

Biography of Kristy Kilpatrick, Grade 6 Teacher, Arctic Explorer!



I have been a teacher and learner for 12 years in the Greater Victoria School District #61. Every day brings new challenges, new situations, and new "teachable moments" for me and my students, and I thrive on the variety of experiences that each day brings. Although I have taught most grades in the elementary and middle school system, my focus has been on grade 6 and 7 students, in the age range of 11 to 13. Within the middle school model, specifically my school, Lansdowne Middle School, this means that every day I mingle with over 500 students between these ages, a situation unanimous with chaos, noise, enthusiasm, crises, and varied learning capabilities. I love every moment.

Along with being a teacher, I'm a mother of two amazing children, 21 and 18 years old, both at university. My son is an elite soccer and rugby player along with being a kinesiology student, and my daughter is a gifted writer in the writing program, both at the University of Victoria. I have a very neat little dog, Bogey (think Toto from Wizard of Oz!) and three cats that rule the rest of us, including my very supportive husband who would have loved to travel to the Arctic and re-trace some of Franklin's route. He provided me with numerous books on Franklin's expedition that gave me a greater understanding of the area I was travelling in (look for the reading list on this website).

I traveled to Inuvik about 10 years ago with my mother (who was in her eighties!) and my adventuresome sister, just for the experience. The tundra and boreal forest, the bracing air, and most of all the people, captivated me in my short stay. I have been interested in the Northern part of Canada for

as long as I can remember and since I travelled to Inuvik I've wanted to go back. I've travelled some - I've been to England, Scotland, Ireland, France and Greece - but it's my Canadian travels, across most of the country (we just have the East Coast left to do, maybe the summer of 2009!), and now my experiences in the Arctic, that remind me of what a rich and diverse land Canada is, and I fervently believe that while it's critical that my students study far away countries and cultures to gain a better understanding of their world, we need to connect them more to their own country, and the diversity that lies within it.

Travelling through the Northwest Passage with the Captain and Crew of the Sir Wilfred Laurier was an experience that I'm grateful to have had and that I'll never forget. I hope that by sharing my experiences with my students and colleagues, along with Linda, Ellen and the future teachers of CTBI, we'll help spread appreciation and understanding of the Arctic, and that we'll have a hand in caring for the unique, fragile ecosystem and culture as it opens to the rest of world with the melting of the ice.