

**The Québec Education Program**

**Elementary Cycle Two**

**Information for Parents**

**October 2001**

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## INTRODUCTION

A major curriculum reform is under way in Québec's elementary and secondary schools. This reform is the result of lengthy, careful reflection and of a series of public consultations held over a number of years, such as the Estates General on Education, which ended in 1996.

The schools have a threefold mission: to provide instruction, to socialize and to provide qualifications. The Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec (MEQ) supports this mission, and encourages schools to be more responsive to each student's potential and personal aspirations. With this approach, the MEQ aims to meet the educational needs of today's young people to help them face the challenges of tomorrow, where, given the growing number of problems confronting our knowledge-based society, it is difficult to see what lies ahead. With the reform, Québec is following the example of the United States, Belgium, Switzerland and many other countries that have also made major changes to their education systems. These reforms, like the one under way in Québec, are based on studies that have given us greater insight into how human beings learn and how learning can be lifelong and useful to us, both as individuals and as members of society.

First introduced in the 2000-2001 school year, the **Québec Education Program** is now being phased in at the second and third cycles of elementary school, that is, up to grade six. The purpose of this brochure is to help you better understand the changes that will gradually occur in your school for the greater benefit of your child.

## **PART ONE**

### **THE ORIENTATIONS OF THE QUÉBEC EDUCATION PROGRAM**

In the following pages, you will read about the broad outlines of the **Québec Education Program**. Québec's schools are evolving in order to better educate your child. The changes taking place are based on a desire to help students achieve success according to their potential and to involve parents in helping their child to aim as high as possible.

## **A FAR-REACHING PROGRAM THAT BUILDS ON THE PAST**

Your child is in **Cycle Two**, that is, in either third or fourth grade. Students embark on this new phase of education with more confidence, for school has become part of their lives. They know the rules, have favourite subjects, have made friends, and the teachers and other members of the school staff are now familiar to them. By this stage, children are able to identify some of their strengths and limitations, but they still count a great deal on the school and on you to be there to applaud every success, to support every undertaking, and to offer reassurance in moments of doubt or hesitation.

In Cycle Two, students begin the formal study of Geography, History and Citizenship Education along with Science and Technology.<sup>1</sup> The emphasis will continue to be on reading, writing and math because these subjects are the basis for all other learning and they enable children to acquire new knowledge. The Québec Education Program aims farther, however, seeking above all to equip children to use what they learn to better organize their thinking and develop the intellectual skills required in a knowledge-based society.

The school provides students with many opportunities to reflect on contemporary culture, that is, on the beliefs, values and knowledge that guide our society. It is just as important, however, that students learn how men and women of earlier days wondered about many of the same things they do, how these men and women went about looking for answers, what life was like in their time and what they accomplished. Each subject holds a share of your child's cultural heritage and this heritage helps to give perspective and meaning to what he or she learns. By way of example, consider the history of number systems, the people behind scientific discoveries, the reasons for certain customs, or the associations we make between artists and their works.

The curriculum reform in no way calls into question the main learning objectives pursued by Québec's schools until now. On the contrary, it strongly reaffirms them by encouraging students to take what they learn in the classroom and to use it in their everyday lives.

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1. Please see the list of subjects at the beginning of Part Two.

## A COMPETENCY-BASED PROGRAM

Clearly, your child will be learning new things in school. But simply acquiring knowledge isn't enough to ensure that students are able to make connections between what they learn in class and how they use it in everyday life. That's why it's important to encourage them to pay attention, not only to what they learn but also to how they learn it, and to how they use this new learning. The goal is to have students become both **knowledgeable** and **competent**.

**Developing competencies** implies changing the way teachers work with students. Teaching no longer consists in delivering subject content to students while they passively take it in. Rather, it involves placing students in different situations by having them work on projects, participate in workshops or solve problems or puzzles. These hands-on activities stimulate their intelligence and help them to assimilate and organize all kinds of new facts, skills and knowledge. Little by little, as students grow more aware of their particular strengths, interests and weaknesses, they come to understand why they do well in some subjects and not as well in others. They also gain a better sense of what they need to do in order to improve in those subjects they find less appealing or more difficult.

The Québec Education Program is aimed at the development of two main types of competencies.<sup>1</sup> The first type are generic and, because they cut across all the subjects in the curriculum, they are called **cross-curricular competencies**. They consist of essential knowledges in four categories:

- **intellectual** (e.g. to use information, to solve problems, to exercise critical judgment, to use creativity)
- **methodological** (e.g. to organize one's work, to use available computer resources)
- **personal and social** (e.g. to know oneself, to cooperate with others)
- **communication-related** (e.g. to write without making mistakes, to express oneself effectively, to listen to others)

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1. To better understand the interrelationships and interaction between these competencies, please refer to the table in the middle of this brochure.

The other main type are called **subject-specific competencies** because they are developed by gaining the knowledge that is specific to each school subject. By learning math, for example, your child will be able:

- ***To solve a situational problem*** (e.g. use his or her reading skills to grasp and select useful information, to develop a solution and to check whether or not it works)
- ***To reason using mathematical concepts and processes*** (e.g. to estimate time and temperature, to calculate length, area and volume, to associate mathematical discoveries with society's needs)
- ***To communicate by using mathematical language*** (e.g. to interpret a situation using tables, diagrams, numbers or mathematical signs)

As with math, each of the other subjects focuses on three or four competencies that are specific to it; these competencies are outlined in Part Two. As you can see, with this approach, learning is not limited to memorizing facts in order to give the correct answer on an exam. Consider the following types of situations that encourage the development of cross-curricular or subject-specific competencies.

- When your daughter builds a model of the solar system in order explain it to her classmates she develops her ***capacity for scientific reasoning*** and ***using language to communicate***.
- When you help your son find the answer to a question by taking him to the library or do research with him on the Internet, you are helping him ***to use information*** and ***to adopt effective work methods***.
- When your daughter finds herself helping to resolve a school yard conflict, she is putting into practice an important aspect of her education. By taking the opportunity to contribute to a climate of harmony and justice, she is making progress toward learning ***to exercise critical judgment*** and ***to cooperate with others***.

These examples show that working with your child to develop competencies will help him or her to solve real problems. By keeping informed of what your child is learning at school, you will be better able to help him or her acquire and gradually master different competencies through the many opportunities that come up in everyday life.

## A PROGRAM BASED ON EVERYDAY LIFE

In addition to helping children develop competencies, the Québec Education Program is designed to help them **make connections between what they learn in class and their everyday lives.**<sup>1</sup> The Program features **five broad areas of learning** that more or less correspond to the big questions that confront young people and are part of their major life issues. These questions extend beyond the school subjects but, in order to answer them, students must have a good grasp of all that they have learned in the various subjects. As children acquire new knowledge, do activities or projects, on their own or with others, and interact with adults and classmates, they construct their own answers to these questions in an effort to give meaning to their present and their future.

The **broad areas of learning** aim to meet the expectations often expressed by society with respect to the education system:

- **health and well-being:** to learn to develop good lifestyle habits
- **personal and career planning:** to learn to know oneself and carry projects through to completion
- **media literacy:** to learn to develop critical judgment and creativity with respect to the media
- **environmental awareness and consumer rights and responsibilities:** to learn the importance of being a smart consumer and to learn to exercise responsible behaviour with respect to the environment
- **citizenship and community life:** to learn to play an active role within a group by showing openness and respect

These are the objectives that guide our schools in everything they do. You can make these goals your own by integrating them into your daily life with your child.

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1. To better understand the interrelationships and interaction between these competencies, please refer to the table in the middle of this brochure.

## A PROGRAM ORGANIZED IN TWO-YEAR CYCLES

The elementary level is now divided into **three two-year cycles**. The reason for this change is that helping students to develop competencies requires more time than simply teaching them subject content.

Two-year cycles allow schools to better **adapt to students' individual learning rates and styles**. They also allow homeroom teachers and subject specialists to coordinate their efforts more closely. Teachers have a more comprehensive picture of how your child is progressing and can therefore provide more effective support.

Thus, students beginning the third year of elementary school will have two years to complete the learning outlined for this cycle. For each competency, the Québec Education Program clearly states benchmarks for what may be expected of your child by the end of the cycle (these benchmarks are called “end-of-cycle outcomes”). The teacher will be careful to identify any difficulties your child is having and the school, with your approval, will develop support measures to help your child. Parents can support their children throughout the cycle by helping them to overcome problems, bolstering their motivation, helping them to recognize their achievements and encouraging them to persevere.

Today's classroom is a meeting place where students, who are all different and unique, form a small community. Each member of this community is important and has something to contribute. The children learn to get along and to help each other. Together, they ask questions and look for answers. In a school that is attentive to each and every individual, all students make progress according to their abilities and are motivated to do their very best.

## **A PROGRAM THAT LETS YOU FOLLOW YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ONGOING EVALUATION**

Evaluation is a means to an end, not an end in itself. In other words, the goal of evaluation is to help students to learn better. This, in a nutshell, is how the Québec Education Program defines evaluation, a much-debated aspect of the curriculum reform.

Schools use various communication tools to let you know how your child is doing so that you can offer support and encouragement. Some of these tools, like report cards and progress reports, have official status. Other less formal communication tools are equally important. These “unofficial” tools are more detailed and are produced on a more frequent basis. They provide you with useful information about your child’s achievements, difficulties and challenges and allow you to work more closely with the school on a day-to-day basis. Here are some examples:

- the teacher’s written comments about your child’s work
- your child’s journal
- the school agenda
- various evaluation instruments used in class: observation checklists completed by the teacher; learning verification checklists completed by your child; self-evaluation forms; peer evaluation forms; quizzes
- your child’s portfolio (a portfolio is a collection of the main pieces of work done by your child in a given subject, such as Visual Arts, that show his or her progress)

In addition to giving you a more rounded picture of your child than can be provided by marks alone, this type of information is a valuable guide that will help you to regularly monitor your child’s progress in acquiring knowledge and developing competencies. Evaluation is a means of preventing or reducing difficulties, whether they relate to content or method. Since no two students learn at the same pace or in the same way, evaluation is intended to show them how to make regular adjustments to their learning in order to attain the outcomes stated in the Québec Education Program. Here, your support is of vital importance to your child’s understanding and motivation.

It should be stressed that the objective of success for all will under no circumstances result in a lowering of the standards established for the acquisition of competencies. Essentially, evaluation provides students with an opportunity to recognize the progress they are making and to resolve to continue their learning efforts.

Evaluation also plays another role which consists in making a more formal and official judgment as to the degree to which your child has acquired knowledge and developed competencies. This judgment takes the following forms:

- report cards issued during the cycle
- the end-of-cycle progress report
- compulsory examinations in designated program areas at the end of Cycle Three

**The report card** indicates whether your child is making progress, the kind of progress being made and how far along he or she has come in relation to the benchmarks set out in the Québec Education Program.

**The end-of-cycle progress report** presents the teachers' judgment of the extent to which your child has acquired the subject-specific and cross-curricular competencies at the end of the second year of Cycle Two.

**Provincial examinations in designated program areas** will be compulsory for all students finishing Cycle Three, i.e. in sixth grade, as of June 2005. These examinations will be prepared by the MEQ and are intended to assess the extent to which students across Québec have acquired the expected knowledge and competencies stated in the Québec Education Program.

Regardless of the form it takes and of whether it is official or informal, the evaluation of learning is based on justice, equality, equity, openness, rigour and coherence and relies to a very considerable extent on the professional judgment of teachers.

## **A PROGRAM THAT RELIES ON THE SCHOOL TEAM'S PROFESSIONALISM**

The Québec Education Program relies on the expertise of teachers to help your child succeed and go on to Cycle Three of elementary school. You can count on the support of competent, specialized people who will help your child find the necessary motivation to learn and to progress.

While students have the primary responsibility for their own learning, it is nonetheless the professional role of teachers to observe and encourage students and provide remedial help as needed or enrichment that will allow them to keep learning and to become aware of how they learn.

In fact, the school team as a whole (i.e. teaching, administrative and school daycare staff), under the leadership of the school principal, is called upon to develop educational measures that will start students off on the road to success so that, young as they are, they can begin to develop goals in life and set about attaining them.

You can trust the school team not only to offer your child meaningful learning situations but also to ensure his or her continued learning progress.

## **A PROGRAM THAT STRENGTHENS TIES BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND THE FAMILY**

As a parent, you too have a pivotal role to play in this collective undertaking. Your child must understand that school is important and that what he or she learns in school is useful. Your role, then, is to make sure that conditions at home are conducive to helping your child do well in school. This means:

- nurturing your child's love of learning
- recognizing your child's strengths and weaknesses
- helping your child through the difficult times
- making sure that your child does his or her homework
- placing neither too little nor too much importance on evaluation
- trying to understand what the school expects and letting the school know what you expect

By keeping informed about what the school governing board<sup>1</sup> and the parent participation organization<sup>2</sup> are doing, and by being closely involved in school decisions on pedagogical matters, you are showing your child that you are interested in every aspect of his or her life. Above all, however, it is essential that you work with your child's school so that the development of competencies will become an exciting, stimulating adventure and so that your child will enjoy school now and for years to come!

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1. Every school has a governing board. It is responsible for adopting the school's educational project, overseeing its implementation and evaluating it.

2. Parents attending the annual meeting for parents may decide whether or not to form a parent participation organization. The purpose of this organization is to encourage the collaboration of parents in developing, implementing and periodically evaluating the school's educational project and their participation in fostering their child's academic success.

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## **PART TWO**

### **THE SCHOOL SUBJECTS**

Part Two describes how each of the subjects taught in Elementary Cycle Two will help your child develop competencies. The subjects are listed in the following table.

Each subject calls on you to find appropriate ways of supporting your child's academic progress and overall development. Your support is all the more important because what your child learns in school can be reinforced by what he or she learns outside school and vice versa.

**ELEMENTARY CYCLE TWO  
SUBJECTS**

- English Language Arts
- French as a Second Language
- French Immersion
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Geography, History and Citizenship Education
- Arts Education

Students take two of the following subjects: Drama, Visual Arts, Dance, Music

- Physical Education and Health
- Moral Education
- Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction
- Protestant Moral and Religious Education

Parents choose one of these three subjects for their child.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The new English Language Arts program for the elementary level is the work of dedicated master teachers who are very aware of the concern of parents that their children be well prepared for the demands of a rapidly changing society. The focus of English Language Arts is on creating readers and writers for life, as well as individuals who exercise critical judgment in their use of media and technology, who work cooperatively with others, who are confident about expressing their ideas, values and knowledge and who are aware of their rich literary and cultural heritage. By the end of Cycle Two, your child will:

- be an intermediate reader who reads a variety of written texts, including stories, poetry and information-based texts, that represent the range of reading material we encounter in our daily lives. In addition, your child will be developing reading preferences that indicate a growing love of books and reading.
- be a more experienced writer who writes about those subjects and experiences that are important in his or her life and that fulfill a need to communicate with friends and family. In addition, your child will be showing you all the things he or she has learned about print in the writing he or she does.
- be comfortable expressing personal views, ideas and needs to others and will be beginning to formulate questions about what he or she reads, listens to and views
- be aware that the texts he or she reads and writes have certain features, such as characters, charts, tables and illustrations, that convey messages, meaning and information to others
- be confident about taking risks as a learner—about learning by doing—and eager to express personal creativity
- be learning some of the basic features of the media and using computers, as well as the Internet, for different purposes
- be aware of some of the features of written, spoken and media texts, such as simple punctuation, spelling rules and patterns, organizational structures and the use of combinations of images and words
- be a collaborative participant in activities in the classroom and understand how to work with others to accomplish a shared goal

## **FRENCH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

In learning French, your child will realize that knowing a second language makes it possible to discover another culture and broaden his or her horizons. By being exposed to a rich linguistic environment that includes reading children's literature and viewing or listening to media productions that are appealing to young francophones in the same age group, he or she will have the opportunity to explore certain aspects of the French culture originating here and elsewhere. Your child will also develop an open mind by discovering the French-speaking world through cultural explorations geared to his or her level of development or through the pursuit of social, scientific, sports or other personal interests.

By the end of Cycle Two, your child will be able to understand short dialogues related to familiar subjects and to participate in simple exchanges in class through role-playing or spontaneous interactions. With the help of peers or an adult, he or she will also be able to read and understand riddles, songs, picture books and short stories. Your child may also explore pre-selected French-language Internet sites.

With the assistance of peers, the teacher and a variety of resources such as word lists, dictionaries and checklists, your child will be able to produce very short texts that are comprehensible. As a result, your child will be able to describe in words and short sentences what he or she has heard, seen or read. Your child will also be able to express, orally or in writing, his or her appreciation of media productions such as posters, very short films, excerpts from children's magazines, commercials or television programs.

Finally, your child will be able to speak French in familiar situations in order to express most of his or her class-related needs.

## **FRENCH IMMERSION**

In the immersion program, your child will learn the French language through other subjects in the curriculum also taught in French, such as math and science; in addition, he or she will gradually be introduced to the English Language Arts program. By offering a rich linguistic and cultural environment, the immersion program provides your child with the conditions that will allow him or her to become fluent in French and able to communicate with native speakers. Also, in learning French through other subjects, your child will develop a broader view of the language and its culture.

By the end of Cycle Two, your child will be able to understand and respond to texts that include more complex sentences and less familiar vocabulary such as that studied in the other subjects. Your child will also be able to use the French language in a more spontaneous way in a number of new contexts.

Furthermore, by producing meaningful texts on a daily basis, your child will be able to communicate fluently in French with native speakers. This frequent production of texts will enable your child to compare earlier drafts with recent ones in order to improve them.

Your child will be able to work on short projects with the help of peers, and make use of computer technology to produce meaningful texts and share them with classmates. Your child may also interact with other schoolchildren via E-mail, using and understanding expressions favoured by native speakers; he or she will be able to read and respond to texts such as illustrated books, comic strips, excerpts from short novels and children's magazines.

## MATHEMATICS

By the end of Cycle Two, your child will be able to count up to 100 000. He or she will be able to do mental or written calculations in a given situation, using the four operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) on natural numbers (e.g. multiplying 132 by 4). Students will be able to add and subtract decimals. For example, they will be able to calculate that if they buy a pencil for \$1.10 and a notebook for \$2.15, the total amount will be \$3.25. Students will also be able to calculate surface areas, such as the surface of their desk, and volumes, such as that of a cereal box. They will experiment with activities involving probability. For example, before throwing a die, they might predict that the number 3 is as likely to appear as any of the other numbers. Students will construct various geometric figures, such as a diagram representing temperature variations in the month of May.

Students will use a calculator or a computer to do their calculations. They will be able to use their learning in mathematics to solve situational problems in their daily lives, both at home and at school. For example, they will be able to count the money collected in the UNICEF boxes on Halloween.

**Through mathematics, your child will improve his or her capacity to reason. Students will learn to develop and use arguments to support and express their ideas. They will broaden their knowledge of the number system by discovering decimal numbers and using new operations such as multiplication. They will also improve their understanding of measurement by using units of measure such as the millimetre. By learning about the history of mathematics, your child will be able to make connections between mathematical discoveries and the needs of societies at different times in history.**

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In Cycle Two, through the daily exploration of his or her immediate environment, your child will learn to recognize questions that relate to science and technology, such as “Why do plants turn toward the sun?” or “How can I move a heavy object?” In this way, students will learn to become increasingly autonomous in finding explanations for and solutions to these kinds of questions and problems.

Throughout this cycle, your child will develop methods and knowledge related to matter, energy and natural systems. Students will begin to recognize and implement science and technology procedures and tools, such as creating prototypes or using measuring instruments. They will also make choices regarding the use of these procedures and tools when faced with such questions as “Is it preferable to use wind energy?” or “Why does milk come in cartons and since when?” Your child will also be introduced to scientific and technical vocabulary. Thus, he or she will gradually replace general descriptions such as “wheels with teeth” with more precise terms such as “gears.” Students will also use mathematical language when taking measurements or analyzing data.

Science and technology help students become aware that teamwork is important for better understanding problems and phenomena, and that creativity is essential in searching for explanations and solutions. Children will also see that science and technology are human activities and that many adults around them work in these fields (pharmacists, nurses, engineers, etc.).

**The study of science and technology will lead your child to reflect on the place these fields occupy in various aspects of everyday life, and will encourage your child to develop his or her creativity and critical thinking.**

## **GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION**

The study of Geography, History and Citizenship Education is integrated into the Québec Education Program under *Social Sciences*.

By the end of Cycle Two, students will be able to locate a society and its territory in space and time. They will have learned to identify aspects of human adaptation to a territory (transportation routes, agriculture, etc.) or transformations carried out to meet human needs (land clearing, division of land, etc.). They will note changes made to territories and societies and will be able to give reasons for these changes. They will have learned to identify similarities and differences in the way that territories and societies are organized.

**By the end of Cycle Two, your child will recognize the influence that people (Jean Talon, the Loyalists, etc.) and events (arrival of the Filles du Roy, the Conquest, etc.) can have on the organization of territories and societies and on the changes they have undergone. Your child will also be adept at identifying examples of how the past still influences modern life in Québec.**

## **ARTS EDUCATION (Drama, Visual Arts, Dance and Music)**

Arts Education includes four subjects: Drama, Visual Arts, Dance and Music. Two out of these four subjects are compulsory in elementary school. Your child's timetable will include the same two arts subjects each year in order to ensure that he or she reaches the expected level of competency at the end of elementary school. Your child will develop competencies in the arts by learning the language, rules and tools specific to the two subjects that his or her school has chosen to offer.

In Cycle Two, students will continue to develop their competencies in the arts by building on what they learned in Cycle One. They will develop their productions further, organizing them in a coherent manner. They will show a greater facility for working with the elements they have chosen to explore in their productions. In their media works in Visual Arts (e.g. a drawing or painting illustrating a story written in English Language Arts class), children will pay greater attention to elements that help clarify the message or meaning they are trying to convey. In Drama, Dance and Music, the interpretation of more elaborate works of varying length will enable students to demonstrate a greater control of the language, rules and tools specific to each of the Arts Education subjects offered. As students are exposed to a variety of works and productions, they will be increasingly able to make appropriate use of the subject-specific vocabulary to describe their appreciation of a work and to support their opinions, using precise criteria such as the special characteristics of a work or its originality. Their creations, interpretations and appreciations will reflect their emotional and social interests.

**In continuing to study the arts through two subjects in Arts Education, your child will develop his or her sensitivity and enjoy discovering, learning, creating and communicating using different artistic languages. Having contact with different artists, visiting museums, attending shows and participating in cultural activities of a diverse nature, either with friends or family members, will help your child strengthen his or her personal identity, develop an openness toward others, and gradually learn to make intelligent choices so as to take full advantage of the invaluable benefits of the arts and culture.**

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH**

By the end of Cycle Two, your child will have learned to perform different movement skills in order to adapt to the physical environment. Students will be able to climb, to go over obstacles and to throw and catch objects, while applying the principles of balance and coordination required by these activities. They will become more aware of their abilities and limitations and will be able to identify aspects they would like to improve in their practice of a given activity.

Students will develop ways of interacting by adapting their actions to those of others or coordinating their efforts with classmates. By taking on different roles (e.g. team captain) or positions (e.g. defence), children will learn to communicate with their classmates. Students will also learn to work in a team and to observe rules of ethics regardless of whether they win or lose.

**In the Physical Education and Health Program, students will learn to recognize factors that can have an impact on their health and well-being, while also becoming aware of their own lifestyle habits and different ways of improving them. For example, your child will discover the importance of good posture and regular physical activity. With your help, he or she will be able to identify personal lifestyle habits that are conducive or detrimental to good health and well-being and will look for ways to improve them.**

**NOTE: Parents choose one of the following three subjects for their child: Moral Education, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, or Protestant Moral and Religious Education.**

## **MORAL EDUCATION**

In Moral Education at the elementary level, your child engages in personal reflection and discussion with others to understand what life is about and to discover the reasons why people choose to act in certain ways, influenced not only by their values, but also by prohibitions, rules, rights and responsibilities. Students learn to solve moral problems that occur in everyday life. Faced with a moral issue, they try to understand the exact nature of the problem and its consequences and to find solutions that are in the best interests of a group of people. In engaging in dialogue with others to understand their world or solve problems, students learn to respect themselves, to respect others and to work with others to find answers to moral questions.

By the end of Cycle Two, students will understand what it means to belong to different groups, with a particular focus on the family, friends and classmates. They will better understand what getting along in a group requires of each individual in the group. They will have learned to recognize the different rules present in their environment and will have examined why these rules exist. They will have explored values that are essential to maintaining a good quality of life in a group. Students will have resolved problems involving people with whom they live or whom they encounter every day, whether at school, at home or in their activities. They will have learned to recognize what goes on inside themselves when they communicate their ideas and feelings, to accept the opinions and feelings of others, and to work with others to find solutions to moral issues by contributing their own ideas.

**Moral Education will help students learn about themselves and better understand how they are connected to the people in the different groups to which they belong. Your child will be better able to recognize moral issues that arise from group life, to think about their consequences and to come up with possible solutions. Increasingly, your child will come to think before acting. Students will be able to make choices and to explain the reasons for their choices, whether based on values they feel are important, rules present in their environment or a way of seeing human beings.**

**NOTE: Parents choose one of the following three subjects for their child: Moral Education, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, or Protestant Moral and Religious Education.**

## **CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS AND MORAL INSTRUCTION**

Catholic Moral and Religious Instruction offers children a unique opportunity to explore answers to questions they have about themselves, about others and about life. To guide them in their search for meaning, students will be introduced to Bible stories (e.g. David and Goliath, the story of Pentecost, the healing of a leper) as well as stories that relate the religious experience of historical Catholic figures (e.g. Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Francis of Assisi, Monsignor de Laval). By the end of Cycle Two, students will be able to choose, from each of the types of stories studied, the story that answers a question that is important to them. This question, which may sometimes be surprising, might have to do with family or friends, nonviolence, world peace or the environment.

Students will be able to tell their favourite stories in their own words, to say what happens to the characters and explain the universal message conveyed. Stories of people or organizations from other religions will be used to enrich the learning and reflection process (e.g. Gandhi, the Salvation Army).

Learning about these new stories will help children to know themselves better and to develop an attitude of openness to others and to diversity. As well, in a simple situation involving a moral issue, children will be better able to reflect on the values that could help them make an enlightened decision. They will be able to identify and describe the problem, to find a solution appropriate for their age, and to explain the reasons for their decision and present supporting arguments.

**Catholic Moral and Religious Instruction will enable your child to draw upon the living Catholic tradition in his or her search to find answers to questions about life and the world in which we live.**

**NOTE: Parents choose one of the following three subjects for their child: Moral Education, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, or Protestant Moral and Religious Education.**

## **PROTESTANT MORAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

By choosing the Protestant Moral and Religious Education program for your child, you are giving him or her the chance to learn about the Protestant tradition, to become familiar with Biblical stories and figures, and to discover their influence in history and on culture. Students will identify behaviours and attitudes conducive to self-respect and respect for others as well as to a spirit of openness to religious and cultural diversity.

By the end of Cycle Two, your child will be able to relate Bible stories. He or she will explain the role played by the characters in these stories and make connections between them and religious figures in history. One example might be Catherine and William Booth, the founders of the Salvation Army, whose dedication was inspired by the Bible. Students will describe and state the meaning of religious celebrations. They will value attitudes and behaviours that are respectful, welcoming and open, and that are accepting of cultural and religious diversity. They will recognize the more complex moral issues present in everyday life situations. Based on their experiences and religious and cultural heritage, they will be able to find possible solutions and to justify these courses of action.

**The Protestant Moral and Religious Education Program deals with religious and ethical questions using an approach that aims to develop children’s critical judgment and uphold individual conscience and liberty. The primary source of inspiration is the Bible. In addition to Christianity, a significant part of the program looks at other religions in a spirit of openness to diversity. Since children have the primary responsibility for their learning, the program encourages them to construct their own world vision, drawing on the two principal ethical values of Protestantism: responsibility and conviction.**

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

To find out more about the education reform, visit the MEQ Web site ([www.meq.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.meq.gouv.qc.ca)) or contact your school, school board or the MEQ regional office closest to you.