

[Parkdale Public School](#) expressed a similar view, saying, “I think that it’s a good idea to have a boys’ book club because boys don’t usually have a habit of reading. Boys can be nervous or shy in front of girls, but not so much in front of boys. The boys’ reading club helps me read in a really fun way.”

At [Rene Gordon Elementary School](#), “some teachers were surprised to find several of the boys now purchasing books for entertainment, when before the book club they showed little interest in reading beyond what was deemed necessary.”

- **Use the power of technology**

Technology proved a powerful resource when used with care and purpose. Technology accelerated reading programs by, for example, providing immediate feedback. The wide range of social networking strategies used in the schools, such as blogs, wikis, smart boards, audio books, Comic Life, and gaming motivated and engaged boys.

The project team at [Bellmoore Public School](#) found that the use of technology attracted and held males and reinforced visual–spatial strengths. At [Our Lady of the Valley School](#), teachers “focused on trying to bring the digital world into the classroom.” For example, blogs were used to engage boys in writing. And at [Holy Spirit, St. Kevin, and St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic Schools](#), “boys gravitated towards a multi-genre approach and they responded well to interactive computer-generated reading materials.”

At [E.C. Drury High School](#) the focus on assistive technology (Dragon, Kurzweil, Write out Loud, Co-writer, Smart Ideas, and Alpha Smart) helped boys to become engaged in their learning. It also enabled teachers to see what students who are visual learners could do if they had the appropriate materials and resources. These tools were found to be highly effective for boys.

At [St. Gregory Catholic School](#), technology (such as smart boards, the Internet, and computer games) was used to motivate and engage boys. At [Rodan Public School](#), electronic graphic organizers allowed all students to be included in classroom activities and encouraged higher-order thinking. In particular, “Kidspiration” software allowed for motivational and assessment differentiation. [Pineland Public School](#) ensured that all classrooms had a gaming centre and have now decided that each classroom will have four computers to embed other learning activities to engage boys.

Teachers at [Our Lady of the Valley School](#) explored alternative ways for boys to demonstrate their learning. At a recent Conference on Aboriginal Education, boys displayed their learning with photo essays. The focus was on teachers “trying to bring the digital world into the classroom with their boys”.

At [St. Edward Catholic School](#), teachers found that using technology expanded the various ways in which boys could demonstrate their learning and that technology “gives students freedom to chose in what media they wish to express themselves”.

At [W. J. Watson Public School](#), teachers found that using technology such as Comic Life aided student writing. One student remarked, “The computer makes it easier to get your work done.”

- **Listen to boys and provide lots of choice**

Inquiry teams found that it was essential to understand boys’ learning needs. This was frequently accomplished by listening to student voices and providing lots of choices. At [Laggan Public School](#), for example, the team “spent more time listening and observing the boys in our classrooms. The most significant thing we learned as educators throughout this is to listen to our students.”

At [W. J. Watson Public School](#), students were provided more choice in responding to reading during preparation of the summative task. The project team wrote, “Giving students as much choice as possible helps engage them. Let them choose not only reading material, but the method in which they will present their knowledge and be assessed. During literature circles, students were free to choose the book they would discuss with their circle. They enjoyed being able to tell each other about what they were reading. They were also given the option of completing tasks with pen and paper or using technology. The boys chose to use computers whenever they could.”

At [West Hill Collegiate Institute](#), teachers said, “We realized how much we need to involve boys in decision making about what they will be reading. We also learned more about their reading tastes by involving them in choices and then using purposeful direct teaching. There really was a ‘tipping point’ which enabled our boys to move into higher levels of reading.”

At [High Park Public School](#), a teacher’s comment supported the merit of student choice: “When given a choice on what to write about and the proper tools to improve their writing, students, especially boys, enjoy writing more. [They] show a more positive attitude and ownership over their writing.” Similarly, at [Sacred Heart School](#), a student endorsed choice with the following comment: “I love having reading as a free choice.”

At [Holy Name of Jesus School](#), the provision of student choice for reading led to increased interest and motivation. As one student exclaimed, “Miss, I can read! I love the book. Can I take it home and read it to my dad? ”

Using student surveys can drive teaching approaches, selection of materials, and choice of reading responses. At [West Glen Junior School](#), the Reading Attitude surveys “provided us with the important information which guided our teaching practices to improve boys’ attitudes towards reading.”

- **Encourage student engagement and motivation**

Boys respond well to activities that provide immediate feedback and relate meaningfully to everyday events. Sustaining student interest by using competitions, games, contests, and quizzes as well as using mainstream texts enhanced student