Singapore International Story Telling Festival
31 August ~ 12 September 2009

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Celebrating
Creativity

Your school is invited
to participate in the

Earth Stories **2009**
Storytelling Competition

ORAL

DIGITAL

Celebrating Storytelling through Traditional and Digital Creativity

Everyone has a story to tell. Every story can be a unique innovative experience. And every experience can be made memorable through its own rhythms and subtleties.

At Popular DMG, a member of the Popular Group, we believe that every student can be inspired and nurtured to craft a story. We are committed to supporting storytelling as a powerful tool for learning English Language and communication skills.

Popular DMG aims to help students master the intricate art of weaving traditional and digital approaches to storywriting. Visit us at www.epop.com.sg to preview our award winning digital content.

Content

Earth Stories **2009**
Our **Earth:**
Our **Gift,**
Our **Responsibility**

Foreword

The annual *Earth Stories Storytelling Competition* organised by the National Book Development Council of Singapore and Acropolis English Centre grew out of a desire to promote the ancient art of storytelling while at the same time campaign for environmental awareness. In a modern world highly dependent on advanced machinery and conveniences that require more goods consumption and less human activity, both the oral storytelling tradition and the lofty idea of environment conservation and protection seem to have taken a backseat.

In 2008, about 100 pupils from various primary schools in Singapore participated in the first *Earth Stories Oral Storytelling Competition*. Fifteen finalists were chosen from the qualifying rounds to compete for the top prizes at the Grand Final held in the historic Chamber Room of the Old Parliament House, now a premier arts centre called The Arts House.

This year, the *Earth Stories Storytelling Competition* is expanding its reach to include a digital storytelling competition for secondary school students. The fact that the youth of today seem more at ease with visual media than with the printed word does not mean that their desire to tell stories is in any way diminished. After all, the need to tell stories is something that all of humankind share. Thus, the digital storytelling competition will provide an avenue for these young students to tell their personal stories using a medium they are most certainly comfortable with: digital technology.

It is the organisers' vision to keep a sustained and committed promotion of environmental awareness. Using the platforms of storytelling and new media, this annual event aims to continue growing each year. In fact, the organisers are ready to introduce the *Earth Stories Mobile Phone Movie Making Competition* in 2010 with a goal to harness the artistic possibilities of mobile phone technology.

We hope that you can join us in our search for stories that are waiting to be told. "It takes a thousand voices to tell a single story," states a Native American saying. Add your voice to the telling of the story about our great Earth. *Tell your story now.*

R Ramachandran
Executive Director
National Book Development Council of Singapore

Sid Barkat
Director
Acropolis English Centre

Environmental Awareness Through Storytelling

In recent years, the subject of environment protection seems to have become nothing more than just a popular catchphrase, a politically correct stance that people readily assume but not really seriously consider.

The annual *Earth Stories Storytelling Competition* aims for a committed and sustained promotion of environmental awareness and for the development of a deeper and growing understanding of what it truly means to value and care for planet Earth. It is the organisers' vision to have this yearly competition serve as impetus for action among the school students.

The *Earth Stories Storytelling Competition* will consist of an **Oral Storytelling Competition** for primary schools and a **Digital Storytelling Competition** for secondary schools.

THEME · *Our* **Earth:** *Our* **Gift,** *Our* **Responsibility**

OBJECTIVES

- To lead audiences and participants to an appreciation of the beauty of the natural world, developing in the process an abiding respect for the environment;

- To promote awareness of the problems confronting the environment and the role humans play in causing such problems and their capacity to create solutions;

- To show the idea of sustainable development through stories;

- To promote the use of proper English for oral presentations.

Oral *Earth Stories*

CATEGORIES

Category 1:   Pupils of P1 and P2
Category 2:   Pupils of P3 and P4
Category 3: Pupils of P5 and P6

Each school is encouraged to send **one (1) contestant for each category**; a maximum of three (3) representatives per school. Four finalists will be selected from each category where there will be 1st and 2nd Prize winners and 2 runner-up prizes.

PRIZES

The prizes for each category are:

1st Prize	**$ 300**
2nd Prize	**$ 200**
2 Runner-up Prizes	**$ 150 (per winner)**

Each finalist school will also receive a plaque.

QUALIFYING ROUNDS

The qualifying rounds will be open for viewing by competing schools and their contingent of supporters. Participating schools will be divided into groups of 5-6 schools with each group to be given a block of 40-50 minutes within which contestants present their stories to an audience of about 60 people coming from school contingents within the group. **Each participating school are encouraged to bring a contingent of 10 people (teachers, classmates, and parents/guardians).**

Each pupil who presents a story at the qualifying rounds will be presented a certificate of participation.

LENGTH & TYPE OF STORY

The story must be presented within the time limit of **3-5 minutes**. It can be an original story or one that has been previously published. Participants can use classic myths and legends that highlight the magnificence of the natural world or they can tell stories about problems and solutions related to the preservation of the environment. For more details, **please refer to the COMPETITION RULES AND GUIDELINES**.

DATES & VENUE

Qualifying Rounds: **Thursday, 16th July 2009 and Friday, 17th July 2009**
Merpati Hall, Level 3
Geylang East Public Library

Each participant will receive an appointment to tell his/her story before adjudicators. Participants (through the school's appointed teacher in-charge) will be notified of the results by email by **12th August 2009**.

Grand Final: **Thursday, 3rd September 2009**
Auditorium
Woodlands Regional Library
2pm

Closing Date: All application forms must reach Acropolis English Centre by
Friday, 29th May 2009.
(**Please refer to the Application Form**)

SUBMISSIONS

Applications can be sent by post or fax. Alternatively, the application form can be scanned and sent by email to **earth.stories2009@gmail.com**.

Schools must also submit a copy of the stories they are using in the competition. The stories can be submitted together with the application form on or before the 29th May deadline. These stories can also be sent at a later time before the dates of the qualifying rounds. They can be sent by post, fax or email. E-mailed stories must be in either PDF or Microsoft Word format.

Please send your stories before **16th July 2009**. Failure to do so will mean cancellation of slots at the qualifying rounds.

INVITATION

All participating schools whose pupils qualify for the Grand Final will each be given 20 seats for supporters and well-wishers to attend the event on 3rd September. Schools are encouraged to bring supporters along. The care of participants and supporters from each school, including all transport arrangements, is the responsibility of the school.

JUDGING

The adjudicators will include but not be limited to people from the Singapore International Story Telling 2009 and Acropolis English Centre. The contestants will be judged based on the following criteria: Content, 10 points; Relevance, 10; Diction, 20; and Expression, 20 for a total of 60 points.

SPECIAL GUEST (GRAND FINAL)

There will be a special storytelling performance by a visiting international storyteller from the Singapore International Story Telling Festival 2009. The guest storyteller will entertain the audience after the competition and while the judges are finalising the results.

Please submit your application form (by post, fax or email) on or before Friday, 29th May 2009.

**For more information,
visit www.acropolis.com.sg and
www.bookcouncil.sg**

WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR SCHOOL'S PARTICIPATION.

1. The competition is open to all pupils currently enrolled in primary schools in Singapore.
A school has the option to send a maximum of three pupils, one for each of the three categories of the competition. Category 1 is for P1 and P2 pupils; Category 2 for P3 and P4; and Category 3 for P5 and P6 pupils.

2. The story must be presented within the time limit of 3 - 5 minutes. It must highlight the magnificence and beauty of the natural world, which can include the storyteller's (or a family member's) personal encounters with it. The story can also be about current issues that threaten the environment and how people are working towards its protection and preservation.

3. Classic stories such as myths and legends pertaining to the natural world can also be used. All stories can either be an original, unpublished work or something previously published.
If using a work by a published author, the storyteller must make sure to mention the author's name at the beginning of his/her storytelling performance.

4. A contestant's story must inspire respect for the environment and can take the form of any relevant story genre: horror, romance, comedy, tragedy, or even fantasy involving the supernatural.

5. Stories presented in the Earth Stories Storytelling Competition in previous years are not eligible to be used again.

6. Deadline for submissions of application is on **Friday, 29th May 2009** Late submissions will not be accepted.

7. Schools must also submit a copy of the stories they are using in the competition. The stories can be submitted together with the application form on or before the 29th May deadline. These stories can also be sent at a later time before the dates of the qualifying rounds. They can be sent by post, fax or email. E-mailed stories must be in either PDF or Microsoft Word format.

8. Failure to send the stories before **16th July 2009** will mean cancellation of slots at the qualifying rounds.

9. All submitted entries (not including copyrighted and published stories) become the sole property of the National Book Development Council of Singapore and Acropolis English Centre. The two organisations reserve the right to promote, edit, publish, and use otherwise said entries without permission from, notice and compensation to the authors at any given time.

10. Participants will receive an appointment to present their stories at the qualifying rounds. Schools are allowed to bring a contingent of supporters of 10 people (teachers, classmates, and parents/guardian).

11. Participating schools and their contingent must be at the Merpati Hall of the Geylang East Public Library 15 minutes before their assigned time. Failure to make it to the appointed block of time will forfeit the school's chance to compete at the qualifying rounds. Requests for rescheduling on the actual days of the qualifying rounds will not be entertained.

12. Participants and their school contingent must leave the hall once their group has finished their round of presentations within the given block of time.

13. The contestant may opt to use props or wear a costume on the day of the competition but doing so will not affect judging in any way. The contestants will be judged based on the following criteria: Content, 10 points; Relevance, 10; Diction, 20; and Expression, 20 for a total of 60 points.

14. Stories must be presented from memory and must not be read from a script. Participants will have the aid of a microphone.

15. The care of the participants and supporters, including all transport arrangements, is the responsibility of the school. It must also arrange its own permission/consent forms from parents.

16. Participating schools will be notified of the results by email. There will be a total of 12 pupils, four for each category, to be selected for the Grand Final.

Digital *Earth Stories*

CATEGORIES

Category 1: Secondary 1 and 2 students
Category 2: Secondary 3, 4 and 5 students

Each school is encouraged to send a group of students for each category. A school is allowed to send only **one (1) representative group for each category**, for a maximum of two groups per school. Ten groups will be selected as Finalists whose digital stories will be screened at an awarding ceremony at the Gallery Theatre of the National Museum on 11th September 2009.

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PRIZES

The prizes for each category are:

1st Prize	Adobe Creative Suite 4 Master Collection
2nd Prize	Adobe Creative Suite 4 Web Premium
3rd Prize	Adobe Photoshop CS4
2 Runner-up Prizes	$200 (per group)

Each finalist school will also receive a plaque.

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QUALIFYING ROUNDS

Entries will be evaluated by a panel of judges who will determine the 10 Finalists. All participating schools will be informed of the results of the qualifying rounds by email on 17th August.

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LENGTH & TYPE OF STORY

The digital story should be approximately 2 minutes long and must not exceed 3 minutes. It must inspire appreciation and respect for the environment and must include a narrative that relates to the theme of the competition: Our Earth: Our Gift, Our Responsibility. The narrative can focus on the simple beauty of everyday surrounding or it can be about a pressing environment problem that is observed and experienced personally by the storytellers.

The digital story must be multi-media in composition and very personal in orientation. The stories must be an outward creative expression of what the digital storytellers feel and think regarding a specific topic.

For more details, **please refer to the attached COMPETITION RULES AND GUIDELINES**.

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KEY DATES

Deadline for Submission of Entries :	**Friday, 17th July 2009**
Announcement of 10 Finalists :	**Monday, 17th August 2009** (by email)
Final Screening and Awarding of Prizes:	**Friday, 11th September 2009** The Gallery Theatre National Museum

SUBMISSIONS

Participants must submit their entries on a DVD that is properly labelled for identification. The label must include the name of the school, the title of the digital story and the date of submission.

All entries must be postmarked no later than 17th July 2009. The organizers will not be responsible for entries that are late, stolen, lost or damaged in the mail.

INVITATION

All participating schools whose students have qualified for the Final Screening and Awarding Ceremonies will each be given 20 seats for supporters and well-wishers to attend the event on 11th September. Schools are encouraged to bring supporters along. The care of participants and supporters from each school, including all transport arrangements, is the responsibility of the school.

JUDGING

The panel of judges will include but not be limited to people from the Singapore International Story Telling Festival 2009 and Acropolis English Centre. The digital stories will be judged based on the following criteria: Content, 20 marks; Originality, 10; Technical Polish, 10; and Creative Storytelling Skills, 10 for a total of 50 marks.

Please submit your entries by post on or before Friday, 17th July 2009.

For more information, visit www.acropolis.com.sg and www.bookcouncil.sg

WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR SCHOOL'S PARTICIPATION.

1. The competition is open to groups of students currently enrolled in secondary schools in Singapore. A school can send a maximum of 2 entries, one for each category. Category 1 is for Secondary 1 and 2 students while Category 2 is for students in Secondary 3, 4 and 5.

2. Each participating group must consist of at least 3 and no more than 5 members.

3. The digital story must contain recorded narration and at least 2 of these components: music, photographs, drawings and video recording.

4. The digital story must inspire appreciation and respect for the environment and must include a narrative that relates to the theme of the competition: Our Earth: Our Gift, Our Responsibility. The narrative can focus on the simple beauty of everyday surrounding or it can be about a pressing environment problem that is observed and experienced personally by the storytellers.

5. The digital story must be multi-media in composition and should be personal in orientation. The group of storytellers is encouraged to present stories that are their personal interpretation of the competition's theme. The stories must be an outward creative expression of what the digital storytellers feel and think regarding a specific topic.

6. The digital story should be approximately 2 minutes long and must not exceed 3 minutes. It must be put together, edited and rendered on a DVD as a stand-alone file that does not need any plug-ins or special application to play. The final version to be submitted must be in either QuickTime or Windows Media format and must be in the highest resolution possible.

7. Sections of the digital story that are not in English must be accompanied by subtitles.

8. The digital story must be an original work by secondary school students. Teachers, parents and other adults should not have any direct hand in the creation of the digital stories, which includes but is not limited to researching, scripting, storyboarding, filming, editing and other post-production work.

9. The text for the narration must be original and written by the storytellers themselves. Music and visual media (photos, drawings, videos, etc.) can be an original work by the students or already existing files that are either copy-free or permission for use has been granted by the owners of said materials.

10. Participants must submit their entries on a DVD that is properly labelled for identification. The label must include the name of the school, the title of the digital story and the date of submission.

11. All entries must be postmarked no later than 17th July 2009. The organizers will not be responsible for entries that are late, stolen, lost or damaged in the mail.

12. Entries will be evaluated by a panel of judges who will determine the 10 Finalists. The criteria for judging are the following: Content- 20 marks; Originality- 10 marks; Technical Polish – 10 marks; Creative Storytelling Skills – 10 marks (total of 50 marks).

13. The panel of judges invited by the organisers will determine the 10 Finalists that will qualify for the top prizes to be awarded on 11th September at the National Museum. All participating schools will be informed of the results of the qualifying rounds by email on 17th August. The decision of the judges is binding and may not be contested.

14. All submitted entries become the sole property of the National Book Development Council of Singapore and Acropolis English Centre. The two organisations reserve the right to promote, edit, screen, and use otherwise said entries without permission from, notice and compensation to the authors at any given time.

15. By submitting entry/entries to the competition, the participating school agrees to abide by the rules and guidelines stated herein.

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WHAT IS DIGITAL STORYTELLING?

Digital storytelling is a multi-media approach to the traditional art of storytelling. Simply put, digital stories are narratives told with the aid of digital technology. In broad terms, digital stories can take the forms of blogs, electronic books, web stories and story-based computer games.

For the purpose of the Earth Stories Digital Storytelling Competition, a digital story will be defined as a personal narrative on the theme of the competition (Our Earth: Our Gift, Our Responsibility) that uses voice-over narration and at least two of the following components: background music, photographs (people, objects, artwork, letter, etc.), and video clips.

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HOW DOES ONE CREATE A DIGITAL STORY?

The steps in creating a digital story include but are not limited to the following general guidelines:

1 Choose a topic.

Competition rules state that your digital story must not exceed 3 minutes. This makes producing your story both easy and challenging. It is easy because the volume of materials you need to research is relatively small. It is a challenge, however, because you would need to tell a complete story that is emotionally engaging within a short span of time. This would require a great deal of focus and a lot of discussion within your group about what parts to include and what parts to discard.

When choosing a topic, it is not enough to just have something that touches on the theme of environment appreciation/protection. Your group is encouraged to link this environment theme with the realities and personal experiences.

Included in the process of choosing a topic is choosing a problem to highlight because any good story must always have a conflict. A fully thought-out story must have the dramatic arc of a beginning, middle and an end. The ending is usually about the resolution (or non-resolution) of the problem presented at the beginning of the story.

2 Write the script.

When planning and writing the script for your project's voice-over narration, it is very important to clarify two things: your group's point of view and the tone that you want to express. Point of view just refers to the position that your group takes regarding your chosen topic.

Tone is simply the overall emotion you wish to convey with your project. Is it a story that has a celebratory, optimistic tone or is it one that offers a darker, more serious and sombre tone? When discussing among your group members, you will be asking many questions, including these: What aspect of our life has to do with the broad topic of environment? How do we present this part of our life in our digital story in a way that will move audiences to think or feel deeply about the topic we have chosen?

3 Gather materials.

You can use visual media (photographs and/or video clips) that belong to your individual families. You may also want to ask for contributions from people in your school. If you choose to borrow materials from family, friends and people from your school, make sure that you explain to them that you are sending this project for a competition and that if it is selected as a finalist, it will be shown to the public at a screening session at the National Museum.

If you decide to use materials available from other sources such as published books and online sites, you must ensure to take care of copyright permissions. Images and other files gathered through Internet search engines are most likely copyrighted or have owners that specifically require written permission to be used by others. It is your group's responsibility to make sure that no copyright laws are broken.

You may also wish to use background music to add to the appeal of your digital story. There are several online sources that offer copyright-free music.

4 **Create a storyboard.**

Storyboarding is a standard process in visual media such as advertising and film-making. For your project, a storyboard will allow your group to plan and see how the materials you have gathered and the narration you have written can come together as a unified whole. Your storyboard does not have to be very elaborate. Simple sketches combined with the text from the script will do. Try to visualise how you want your digital story to look and build a storyboard panel by panel, representing your story from start to finish.

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EXAMPLES

To view sample digital stories follow the following links:

World Water Day Video from charity: water
www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEnlrE4iMBU

Awakening of Tradition
www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVm9QENjBJk

The Youtubies Tribes of Singapore
www.youtube.com/watch?v=ir5HqfrATsQ

Note: The digital stories above are general samples and do not reflect the theme of the Earth Stories Digital Storytelling Competition.

Oral *Earth Stories* • Application Form

I wish to nominate the following students from:

NAME OF SCHOOL:
....

for the above competition, the qualifying rounds for which will be held on 16th and 17th July 2009 in Merpati Hall at the Geylang East Public Library.

Category 1 (P1 & P2)

NAME: .... CLASS: ....

Category 2 (P3 & P4)

NAME: .... CLASS: ....

Category 3 (P5 & P6)

NAME: .... CLASS: ....

◯ **Stories attached** – TOTAL NUMBER: ....

◯ **Stories to send later** – TOTAL NUMBER: ....

NAME OF CONTACT PERSON: ....

OFFICE TEL NO: .... MOBILE NO.: ....

EMAIL ADDRESS: ....

NAME OF PRINCIPAL/HOD ENGLISH/ TEACHER-IN-CHARGE: SIGNATURE & DATE:

....

MAIL OUT ENTRIES TO:

Acropolis English Centre
261 Waterloo Street
#02-42 Singapore 180261

FOR QUERIES, CONTACT:

Tel: 6344 4494
Fax: 6336 3964
e-mail: earth.stories2009@gmail.com
website: www.acropolis.com.sg

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY POST, FAX OR EMAIL ON OR BEFORE **29TH MAY**.

Digital *Earth Stories* • Application Form

I wish to nominate the following students from:

NAME OF SCHOOL:
....

for the above competition.

Category 1 (Sec1 & Sec2)

TITLE OF DIGITAL STORY:
....

GROUP NAME:
....

LEADER: .... CLASS: ....

MEMBER 1: .... CLASS: ....

MEMBER 2: .... CLASS: ....

MEMBER 3: .... CLASS: ....

MEMBER 4: .... CLASS: ....

LEADER'S CONTACT NUMBER:
....

LEADER'S EMAIL ADDRESS:
....

Category 2 (Sec3, Sec 4 & Sec5)

TITLE OF DIGITAL STORY:
....

GROUP NAME:
....

LEADER: .... CLASS: ....

MEMBER 1: .... CLASS: ....

MEMBER 2: .... CLASS: ....

MEMBER 3: .... CLASS: ....

MEMBER 4: .... CLASS: ....

LEADER'S CONTACT NUMBER:
....

LEADER'S EMAIL ADDRESS:
....

Teacher-in-charge

NAME OF TEACHER-IN-CHARGE:
....

OFFICE TEL NO: .... MOBILE NO.: ....

EMAIL ADDRESS:
....

Category 1

STORY SYNOPSIS:
(Please provide a 50 to 80-word synopsis of the submitted digital story.)

....

....

....

THIS FORM HAS
2 PAGES

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Category 2

STORY SYNOPSIS:
(Please provide a 50 to 80-word synopsis of the submitted digital story.)

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DECLARATION

We hereby declare that none of the images, music, text, videos or other materials used in the submitted digital story/stories violates copyright laws.

All information provided in this entry form is correct at the time of its submission.

The participating secondary school students have worked independently and completely on the entries in every step of the process.

We have read and agree to the attached rules and guidelines of the competition.

NAME & SIGNATURE OF
TEACHER-IN-CHARGE:

NAME & SIGNATURE OF
PRINCIPAL/ VICE PRINCIPAL:

....
DATE

....
DATE

AFFIX SCHOOL STAMP HERE:

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FOR QUERIES, CONTACT:
Tel: 6344 4494
Fax: 6336 3964
e-mail: earth.stories2009@gmail.com
website: www.acropolis.com.sg

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MAIL OUT ENTRIES TO:
Acropolis English Centre
261 Waterloo Street
#02-42 Singapore 180261

Activities to look forward to at the festival

Since the inauguration of the *Singapore International Story Telling Festival (SISF)* in 2006, the annual festival has attracted more than 200,000 visitors with its key programmes for teachers, librarians, storytellers, social workers, professionals, performers, writers, parents, and children.

With the myriad of applications for storytelling, SISF 2009 presents infinite opportunities for development. The storytelling offerings will awaken your senses, warm your soul, inspire your creative expression, and help further your aspirations!

Important dates to note!

8-9 SEPT *Boot Camp on Digital Storytelling*

This state-of-the-art workshop describes the process of crafting a unique non-fictional digital story by combining multi-media production techniques with a personal narrative. You will be immersed in weaving personal tales using images, graphics, music and sound, all strung together with a personal story voice.

8-9 SEPT *Masterclass on Business Narratives*

Great leaders are storytellers who understand the persuasive power of stories. Many premier multinational companies have for years used stories to convey values, build relationships, transfer knowledge and ignite passion in their staff and customers. Join us and learn how to lead and inspire success through compelling stories.

11-12 SEPT *Asian Congress of Storytellers*

A meeting of professional storytellers that nurtures and empowers through keynote addresses, forums, workshops and performances that offer in-depth involvement in diverse areas of storytelling. Come share the insights of the storytelling experts coming to our shores!

11-12 SEPT *International Storytellers Showcase*

The International Storytellers Showcase returns for yet another highly-anticipated season where renowned storytellers bring to you a rich repertoire of myths and epics in intriguing styles. You will feel the sense of every nuance; and hear every inflection of the storytellers as they cast their spells on you.

More information will be available at our website in May 2009.