

## THE OTTAWA CITIZEN Sunday, April 25, 2004



SIMON HAYTER, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

Wendy Maxwell demonstrates the Accelerative Integrated Method language learning to first and second grade students yesterday.

### 'The answer to every French teacher's dream'

Many call the Accelerative Integrated Method a godsend when it comes to teaching students a second language. Yesterday, about 100 teachers got a convincing demonstration, writes **JAMES GORDON**.

**L**ynn Plexman said she's cried with joy a couple of times since stumbling upon what she called "the answer to every French teacher's dream."

She watched with pride yesterday morning as her Grade 1 and 2 students from St. Gregory Catholic School in Carleton Place sat on stage at the Embassy West Hotel, ringing off

"Never in a million years would I dream the kids could do what they're doing today," said Ms. Plexman, who introduced AIM to her students at the English school about a year ago.

Despite having only 32 minutes a day of core French there, her students are now at the same skill level as their French immersion counterparts, who

working on," explained Mrs. Maxwell, who is now based in Vancouver.

"So I threw that program out and started writing stories and plays that included high frequency vocabulary they could use."

She continued until 1999, when she decided to add gestures to every word she taught. For example to demonstrate "regarder," the French word for to look, the kids made imaginary binoculars with their hands. For "marcher," the word for to walk, they walked their fingers across their hands.

'Before, they could answer

thetic learners."

Ask the children, and they say it's just plain fun.

"We get to do fun stuff and it's really easy," Mary Monk, 7, said following her presentation.

"Yeah, it's not hard at all to memorize all the words," added Zachary Mills, also 7.

Among other lessons this year, he and his classmates have been able to learn a theatre version of the *Three Little Pigs*, and about 100 questions and answers associated with it.

What seemed to impress the teachers attending the workshop and demonstration was how well-behaved the kids