“Vancouver: Spectacular by Nature.” Thiscity neatly sums up the unique blend of cosmopolitan amenities, natural splendors, and cultural attractions that define the host city for “Bringing the Gap.” Vancouver’s location on the Pacific Rim makes it ideally suited for an international conference. The city is well connected to the major North American and international centers by major airfares. Hundreds of flights arrive here daily from around the world. Longer for a few days, after the conference and savoir all the city has to offer. Or, use Vancouver as a point of departure for a cruise to Alaska, a trip through the magnificent Rocky Mountains, a ferry ride to Victoria or Vancouver Island, or a tour of the wine country in BC, or Washington State. Vancouver is the gateway to Western Canada—and to all of the Pacific Northwest.

The theme of “Bringing the Gap for Conference ‘97 truly reflects its host city as a gateway. Six distinct, yet interwoven, themes link the conference together:

**Thinking Skills: The Bridge Between Data and Knowledge**

Transforming unconnected bits of data into related pieces of information, then integrating into it prior knowledge and adjusting their own beliefs and values is central to students’ educational success. This process has become increasingly complex due to the explosion in both the quantity of information and the range of sources of information.

**From Today to Tomorrow: Bridging the Future**

Societal changes and expectations, as well as expanding technologies, are producing major changes in education. The skills and abilities teacher-librarians will require to fulfill their mandate of access, process, and use information independently must be upgraded and expanded to serve the future needs of students.

**Traveling to and Arriving in Vancouver**

**Location**

Vancouver is located on Canada’s pristine west coast, just 250 km (155 miles) north of Seattle, USA, and a day’s drive west of the Rocky Mountains.

**Travelling to Vancouver**

Vancouver is very accessible from many parts of the world as it is an equal distance from Europe and the Pacific Rim countries. The Vancouver International Airport serves most major international airlines. Delegates are advised to book their air travel early as flights fill up quickly for this popular summer destination.

**Entering Canada: Passport, Visa, and Border-Crossing Information**

To enter Canada a valid passport is required for citizens of all countries except the United States. Visas are required for residents of certain countries; please contact your local Canadian Embassy, Consulate or High Commission Office for the specific requirements for your country of origin.

**Cultural Understanding: Bridging Diverse Cultures**

What makes a culture unique is a set of shared experiences, history, language, beliefs and values. While we may not be able to completely understand another culture, we can move beyond the study of food, folk tales, festivals, and faith to examine why people think and act as they do.

**Cultural Expression: Creating Bridges of Meaning**

The creative voices of different cultural and ethnic communities open the world to young people, enhancing their understanding and empathy for others, and assisting them to develop an appreciation of the richness of their own and other peoples’ cultures encouraging student writers to explore their own cultures for inspiration building literature programs that focus on both individual and cultural voices.

**Access to Information: Narrowing the Gap**

Some regard information as the most valuable commodity in the world today. Others argue that free access to information is critical for equal opportunity for all members of society—including students—no matter what their economic or social background.

**Mass Media: Spanning the Globe**

The power of mass media to deliver a mediated experience to millions is such that we both love it and fear it, particularly for its impact on our youth. Questions like, “Who controls the news?” and “How can we use media while preventing it from using us?” are critical questions in a time of increasing centralization of mass media ownership.

**Taxis**

Taxis are available from stands located at both the international and domestic airports. The fare is approximately $20.00-$25.00 to the downtown area or to the UBC campus (maximum of four people per taxi). The ride to either destination takes approximately 20 minutes to half an hour depending on traffic.

**Airport Limousines**

Limousines, seating up to six people, are available from the stands located at both the International and Domestic arrivals. The fare is approximately $30.00 to the downtown area or to the UBC campus and is subject to GST.

**Airport Express (Vancouver Airporter)**

Express buses depart from the airport every 30 minutes between 06:30 and 24:00 and stop at many downtown hotels. Ticket office personnel or customer service representatives will direct passengers to the bus. The ride downtown takes approximately 40 minutes to one hour, depending on traffic and destination. The current fare is $9.00 per passenger one-way and $15.00 return. The bus stops at 41st Avenue and Granville Street and at Broadway and Granville on its way into downtown Vancouver. City buses going to the UBC campus or the conference hotels can be caught at all three locations. This method makes for a more reasonably priced trip than taking a taxi from the airport for those individual delegates who are travelling light. The Airport Express also stops at some major downtown hotels to pick up passengers returning to the airport. Call 604-244-9888 for more information.

**Car Rentals**

Car rentals are available at the airport from a variety of suppliers includingAVIS, Budget, Hertz, Thrifty, and Tilden. Advance reservations are recommended as July is one of Vancouver’s busiest months for tourists.

**General Information for your Stay in Vancouver**

**Climate and Clothing**

July in Vancouver is typically warm with temperatures ranging from a daily high of 23 degrees Celsius (74 Fahrenheit) to an overnight low of 13 degrees Celsius (55 Fahrenheit). The average precipitation level is approximately 18 mm (0.71 inch), so delegates should bring a sweater, a lightweight jacket, and an umbrella as a precaution. Walking shoes are also recommended. Vancouver is developing a reputation for being a casual city, making most forms of dress acceptable for almost any occasion.

**Airport Improvement Fee (AIF)**

Passengers departing Vancouver International Airport are required to purchase an AIF ticket. All tickets can be purchased from automatic ticket sales machines or AIF Passenger Offices located throughout the airport terminal. Payment can be made in cash (Canadian or American), or by Visa or MasterCard, or by some bank debit cards. AIF tickets must be presented along with airline tickets and boarding passes. Travelers are charged $5.00 for travel within British Columbia, $10.00 for travel to other North American destinations including Mexico and Hawaii, and $15.00 for travel outside North America.

**Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

The GST is a 7% tax charged on most goods and services sold in Canada. Visitors to Canada will pay the tax on most purchases. Under the Visitor Rebate Program, nonresident visitors may qualify for a foreign tourist rebate of the tax for short term accommodation and goods that are taken out of the country up to $500.00 CAD. Refund application forms are available at most tourism information centers, some hotels and retail sites, and Canada Customs Offices.

**Currency**

The Canadian money system is based on the decimal sytem, 100 cents constitutes one dollar. Visitors to Canada are...