



Fred Maybee shows off his new book *Song Writing: A Classroom Approach*. The book, written by the Truro resident, offers insight on how elementary school teachers can incorporate song writing into the music program. (CRASWELL photo)

Teacher writes book on writing songs

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TRURO — When elementary school teacher Fred Maybee started writing songs with his students in the early 1990s, he never dreamt it would lead to his own book.

Maybee recently published *Song Writing: A Classroom Approach*, a book that offers music teachers a way to instruct children in song writing, and a way for Maybee to compile songs he wrote with his students.

"The idea there was to compile all the songs we had done in the 90s," said Maybee. "But beyond writing and keeping them as a package deal, I wanted to be able to offer teachers the 'here is how we did it'."

The book gives insight into projects

Maybee undertook as a school music teacher and offers tips on how other teachers can do the same.

"The idea is that everything can be done in the classroom including the recording of it," said Maybee. "I felt it was a good teaching tool that perhaps some other teachers hadn't thought of."

As a teacher, Maybee would make it part of the program to have children write a song.

The children would brainstorm to come up with ideas and lyrics, while Maybee would add the tune.

Teaching children how to write music is no different than poetry or short stories, he said.

"It is meant as a companion of all the curriculum guidelines. The lyrics pretty much come from the kids, using their language and using the words

they would use, he said.

"It ties (song writing) into the other areas that they are learning by making connections to other subject areas. It's not just song writing that way."

Attached to the book is a CD containing 26 songs of the 125 Maybee worked on with his students.

To have all the work as one piece is something special, said Maybee.

"It's an accomplishment that I just kind of dreamed about doing and it is hard to believe that there it is as a package.

"Hopefully it will be helpful to other teachers approach a project like this."

The book is currently available online at www.classroomresources.com. Samples of the songs are available in MP3 format on www.baylite.ca/song-writing.