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“A Great Way to Challenge Children to Think Creatively”
STAPLES 4th Annual National Writing Challenge Closes October 31st, 2004

Popular children’s writer, *Paulette Bourgeois*, to contribute an original short story

TORONTO, ON - October 12, 2004 – STAPLES Business Depot’s 4th Annual National Writing Challenge theme, *“I’ve always wondered”*... will include a special short story written by children’s author, Paulette Bourgeois, author of the popular ‘Franklin the Turtle’ book series.

"As a big supporter of literacy, I am happy to be involved in this wonderful short story program with STAPLES Business Depot," says Paulette Bourgeois. "The National Writing Challenge is a great way for children to think creatively and get their ideas down on paper."

Children aged 7 to 12 years across the country are being asked to submit a 100-word short story based on this year’s theme *“I’ve always wondered...”*. Winning entries are then produced and published in a paperback for sale in 2005, at all STAPLES Business Depot/BUREAU EN GROS stores with net proceeds distributed to schools across Canada.

"STAPLES Business Depot is honoured Paulette Bourgeois accepted our invitation to write a special short story for this year’s National Writing Challenge book to support this important program," says Steve Matyas, President, STAPLES Business Depot/BUREAU EN GROS.

After receiving thousands of entries last year, STAPLES Business Depot/BUREAU EN GROS published 219 stories written by Canadian children in a short story book. The National Writing Challenge is strongly supported by teachers and parents as a useful resource and teaching tool.

For the last four years, STAPLES Business Depot/BUREAU EN GROS has invited children to enter their National Writing Challenge. Every year a theme is chosen. This year’s theme is *“I’ve always wondered...”*. Children are also welcomed to include an illustration to accompany their story. Entry forms are available at all STAPLES Business Depot/BUREAU EN GROS store locations across Canada until October 31, 2004.

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Three national prize winning authors will be selected, plus one winning author from each store location across Canada. The book, featuring all the winning stories, will be on sale in all STAPLES Business Depot/ BUREAU EN GROS stores from March until June 2005 and again in August until the end of October 2005. The recipient schools will receive their donation in November 2005.

About Paulette Bourgeois

Although Paulette is best-known for the Franklin books, she is also the writer of fiction and non-fiction for young readers. *The Sun: Starting with Space* was short listed for a Science in Society Book Award (1995), given by the Canadian Science Writer's Association, and won the honour of Parents' Choice Approval, given by the U.S. Parents' Choice Foundation (1997).

About STAPLES Business Depot/BUREAU EN GROS

The Business Depot Ltd. was founded in Toronto in 1991. It is Canada's largest supplier of office supplies, business machines, office furniture and business services for the small business and home office customer. The company is an everyday low price retailer. The chain operates stores in all provinces across Canada under the banners STAPLES® Business Depot™ and BUREAU EN GROS™. The company has over 11,500 employees serving customers through more than 230 office superstores, catalogue, and e-commerce. STAPLES® Business Depot™/BUREAU EN GROS™ is committed to making shopping easy by offering customers three ways to shop - on-line, by catalogue and in-store. In addition to the Canadian operation, Staples Inc. has stores operating in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands and Portugal.

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