



LITERACY MATTERS

FEBRUARY 2020



LITERACY
N A S S A U

Literacy Matters is a recurring publication of Literacy Nassau, Inc.

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SECOND SEMESTER

(submitted by Karen Micciche)

Where were you on New Year's Eve? While most people were either out at parties or home with family, I was on an obscure little island just east of Mystic, CT, playing Taboo with a bunch of strangers.

It was halfway through my nine-day residency marking the beginning of my second semester of graduate school, and though I could have traveled almost three hours to be home for the holiday, it seemed silly, given that I had to report back to workshop the next day at 1pm.

The funny thing is, I'm not complaining. My residency this time was marked by lots of uncomfortable encounters with other writing students due to the combination of cold weather and lack of options for indoor space. And what happens when you put dozens of natural introverts into a small space together? Eventually, they start talking. I even made a few friends.

I learned so much this past semester about how to create space in my life for writing. I also learned that I'm probably the only student in the Fairfield University MFA program's history to complete a novel in just one semester. I'm now in the process of shopping my manuscript around to agents, hoping that someone will be interested in representing my work. I

began working on my second novel in preparation for this residency, and now that I'm back, all I want to do is write more. Partly that's because I am so invested in my new protagonist - she's edgy and sarcastic, and I love writing in her voice - but it's also because I got such amazing feedback about my submissions. One of my professors wrote: "This is first-rate work. Even if this wasn't a workshop, I'd be happy to read onwards to see where you take this and how you connect the dots. I trust you as a writer. Your control is a pleasure to experience." Another professor wrote (of my new work), "The writing is great, so that's my only suggestion - to slow down and go deeper into her thoughts and feelings so we, too, can be more invested in her concerns. I'm already invested, just want to feel her yearning for an unrevivable past a little more. I'm intrigued about her family life - that she was shuffled off to relatives, then summer camps annually. Something is definitely up with that, but because of the authority and authenticity of this voice, I trust the writing to reveal all that in time."

So now I'm back, poised and ready to work on the new book. This program is teaching me more than just how to write fiction; it's also teaching me to believe in myself.

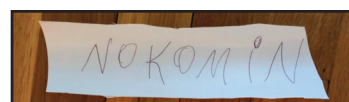
THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

When you're a busy mom, you naturally suffer from "mommy guilt," a powerful phenomenon where no matter how hard you try to be a good mother, you never quite feel like you're good enough. Such is the case for me right now, after returning from another residency at grad school. It was only nine days, but to my daughters it felt like nine years. Worse still, I loved school. It was fascinating learning from my professors, selecting a mentor for this semester, and diving into the start of my second novel. But nothing in life is free. I missed approximately 216 hours worth of moments, like when Julie tried to make a sign for her bedroom door telling everyone to stay out or when Haley taught herself to play "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" on her recorder. I can't get those moments back...but I hope that my girls know how hard I'm working, and that I am setting a subconscious example for them in the future.



It's 2020. Where did the time go? Haley is 7 and Julie is 6. I notice their growth more when I go away for a period of time and then come back.



Karen 😊





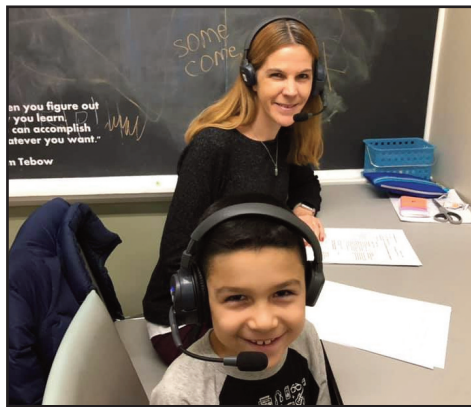
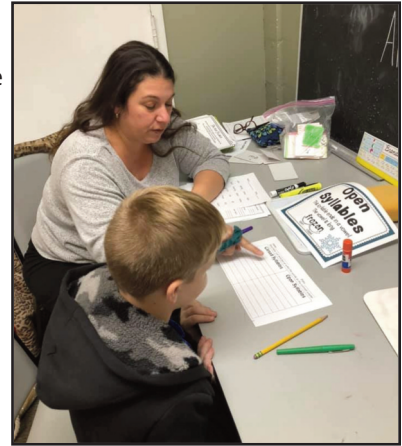
ORTON-GILLINGHAM SERVICES IN SCHOOLS

(submitted by Kim Nau)

At Literacy Nassau, we have tutors who are licensed Orton-Gillingham (OG) practitioners. We are happy to offer contracting opportunities to school districts who serve children with dyslexia and other language-based learning differences.

Often times, schools may follow a prescribed literacy program but it might not be the best solution for a child with dyslexia. Orton-Gillingham in its purest form is individualized to meet the unique needs of each student. All materials and lesson plans are crafted by our professional team of experts in the field to ensure that students learn how to read and write, creating benefits not only related to academic success, but social and behavioral improvements as well.

A new student in particular who I just began working with started to shut down in the classroom. During our first in-school tutoring session, his eyes began to well-up because of the fear and anxiety he had about reading. After consulting with his classroom teacher and his mother, they both shared about his love for dogs. I was able to craft my next lesson based on a photograph of my new puppy and I saw his face light up. I put the new words he was learning on paper dog bones and he “fed the puppy” every time he read the new word. The time it takes to customize each lesson can be lengthy but it enables us to set the child up for success and maintain student engagement.



For a fee paid for by the district, our AOGPE licensed Orton-Gillingham practitioners can provide private, 1:1 tutoring at schools during the traditional school day. Our services are affordable to school districts and can mitigate the issues commonly faced by schools. This also works two-fold because it enables us to make our donation-based tutoring center more sustainable.

We currently contract with a district in Suffolk County to provide Orton-Gillingham tutoring services for multiple children, five days a week. It can be a challenge for parents to secure these services but it is definitely possible. After receiving a dyslexia diagnosis from a neuro-psychologist, they often need to hire a lawyer or an educational advocate to assist them in the process. Districts are finally starting to realize that they need to better serve their students so they have been reaching out to Literacy Nassau for help. All children deserve a chance to become successful readers and spellers. They just need effective instruction.

Literacy Nassau's



Challenge 2020

(submitted by Jessica D'Aprile)

This year's (un)SCRABBLE gala will be hosted at Chateau Briand in Carle Place on Tuesday, March 31st beginning at 6pm. (un)SCRABBLE is our biggest fundraising event of the year! For those that are a bit baffled, (un)SCRABBLE is a little bit different from the traditional Scrabble game. (un)SCRABBLE, in a nutshell, is when teams compete in short, timed rounds, and the team that forms the highest scoring words from their Scrabble tiles in each round is the winner! It is called (un)SCRABBLE because the format is slightly different from the regular game – all of the tiles are exposed and the teams scramble to fill their boards. The evening is fun-filled with superb food, beverages and raffles! There will be 26 themed raffle baskets filled with fabulous prizes.

Advanced ticket purchase is required for this event. Purchase your tickets at <https://www.literacynassau.org>. All of the proceeds raised from this event will be used to benefit Literacy Nassau. We hope to see you there!

Do you have any unwanted gift cards? We are happy to accept them for use in the raffle baskets.

Warm Birthday Wishes to the Following Tutors!



Jacqui Alves – Linda Antin – Ruth Babicz – Margaret Barton
 Jodi Batan-Seegull – Linda Bleck – Joan Capello
 Lynne Ferraro – Deanna Glassman – Karen Grimes
 Bob Hanna – Bernie Hirschhorn – Judy Hoffman
 Pamela Jackson-Ware – Sylvia Jorisch – Christina Kachinoski
 Delia King – Susan Laufer – Nicole Maas – Terri Mangum
 Jessica Merkel – Carolyn Miller – Debbie Mincer
 Ephifany Morillo – Doreen Pechman – Cathy Perini
 Anand Persaud – Sandra Pesce – Joan Ratty
 Naomi Robles – Anita Schwartz – Pamela Shampam
 Margaret Sherman – Ethell Smith – Mary-Rose Waldron
 Steve Young – Monika Yu



OUR CREATIVE ESL TEACHERS

(submitted by Kelly Siry)

The curriculum we use with our ESL students is wonderful. It gives a great starting point for vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and much more. At the end of each ten week session, I am privileged to visit the classes to post-test the students and observe part of a lesson. I am continuously blown away by the creative teachers I witness. It is truly amazing to watch these volunteer educators take the basic curriculum and stretch it into so much more. This ingenuity is evident in the progress of their students. It can also be seen on their students' faces as they share stories about how wonderful their ESL teacher is!



Carol, who has been teaching ESL with us since 2016, shares a monthly poem with her class. She uses the poem to teach various skills. The students look forward to seeing a new poem each month!



Our volunteer, Karen, helps her students with time vocabulary by using a manipulative clock. Time is such a visual concept. The clock is a great tool. It helps her keep her students engaged and interested in the activity.



Adrienne printed flash cards with the names of various household vocabulary. She encouraged her students to tape the cards to different items in their home. The students loved the assignment! One of the students even used his knowledge of household vocabulary during his post-test.



Linda's students are always praising her for her use of a routine. She ends each class with a review of concepts like the days of the week, months of the year and holidays.



Literacy Nassau tutor Jean attended an IST and learned how to sort words by syllable type to help her students determine vowel sounds and words.

If you would like to meet your fellow ESL teachers and learn more about the imaginative ways they supplement the curriculum I would highly recommend you attend one of our In Service Trainings (IST). During these trainings we discuss various topics but it also gives you the opportunity to meet and chat with teachers who have wonderful ideas and best practices to share. Our next, ESL Best Practices IST, will be held on **Saturday, February 29th, 10am-12pm** at our office in Wantagh. Come and enjoy light refreshments while discussing innovative activities and brainstorming new strategies to use with your class.

At a recent Syllable Types & Syllable Division IST, tutors learned about the various syllable types and how they impact the sound of the vowels in the words. Then they learned syllable division rules to help students break larger words down into syllables. Both ELL and BL tutors found this to be very helpful in supporting their students' reading and spelling skills. They even had the opportunity to practice what they learned with a hands-on activity- sorting words into syllable types! It was a great day of getting to know each other better, sharing ideas and best practices, and planning lessons for our students. We are going to host this IST again for new tutors and anyone who missed it the last time. We would love for you to join us on **Saturday, February 18th 11am-1pm** at our office in Wantagh.

You may register for both of these ISTs through this link <https://www.literacynassau.org/current-volunteers>. If you ever have a suggestion for a topic you need further support on that we could prepare an IST for, please let your Literacy Specialist or Regional Director know and we would be happy to schedule something.



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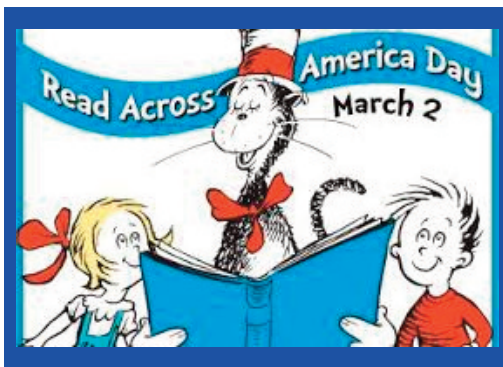
READ ACROSS AMERICA: MARCH 2, 2020

(submitted by Kate Quijano)

Read Across America is a day to celebrate reading and promote its importance. It's a great opportunity to have students share their favorite books or favorite authors with the class. They could write a book report or book recommendation to encourage others to read. You could also choose a book to read together as a class. If your students don't have a library card, this is a great opportunity to help them go through the process of applying for one and to go on a "field trip" to the various sections of the library.

This nationwide observance of reading coincides with the birthday of Dr. Seuss, known for his famous *The Cat in the Hat*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* among many, many others. Dr. Seuss created many fanciful characters and utilized a lot of rhyme and alliteration in his books. These are two very important skills that build phonological awareness, something we work on a lot with our OG students.

This March, take the opportunity to celebrate funny stories with Dr. Seuss and work on important reading skills. Here are some activities you could try:



1. Roll a Rhyme: print pictures on large dice. Roll two dice and tell if the two words rhyme. <https://thisreadingmama.com/free-roll-a-rhyme/>
2. Rhyme memory: Create a memory game. Turn over two cards and try to match two that rhyme. (You could also play where you have to match the first letter.)
3. Rhyme search: Photocopy a page from a book with a lot of rhymes. Go on a rhyme search, highlighting the rhyming words. If there are several different ones, use multiple colors to keep track of which ones rhyme
4. Create your own rhyme. Make a list of rhyming words. Then try to write a short poem or story with them.
5. Alliteration poem: Choose the sound you want to repeat. Brainstorm as many words as you can think of that start with that sound. Then create a short poem or story using those words.

For more information on Dr. Seuss and an opportunity to play some games, visit:

<https://www.seussville.com/>



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