

# THE OG UPDATE

## NEW YEAR = NEW BEGINNINGS

This year we are starting something brand new. Every month an Orton-Gillingham (OG) newsletter will be distributed to all of the families and tutors in Literacy Nassau's OG programs. We want to keep you updated on the upcoming events at Literacy Nassau and offer well-deserved support.

Our students are on a journey. They will not learn to read overnight but during each lesson, they will learn and apply skills to exercise their brain. Remember that a child with dyslexia learns differently than those who are neuro-typical. Their brain works overtime to complete (what may seem like) a simple reading task. For this, and many other reasons, Orton-Gillingham tutoring takes patience and dedication. This intense commitment by our OG tutors is admirable. Many of them volunteer their time with us in exchange for intensive training. We truly value their service to our organization. We are all on this OG journey together and Literacy Nassau wants everyone to feel supported along the way. If you ever have any questions, do not hesitate to schedule a meeting with me. It is our goal to make sure that everyone's needs are being met.

## Upcoming Events

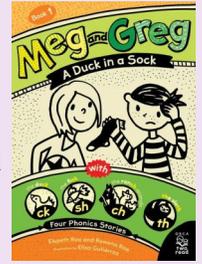
On **Thursday, January 14th**, I will be presenting a virtual workshop at 6:00 pm for Literacy Nassau parents. The topic will be *How the Brain Learns to Read*. The brain is not naturally wired to read, and not all brains are born with a reading circuit. Although brains can be wired differently, it does not impact intelligence. We will discuss how the brain can be remediated with explicit, multisensory instruction. A link will be emailed for the presentation.



On **Monday, January 25th**, I will be hosting a virtual presentation for the **Mineola SEPTA** chapter. All are welcome to attend. If you would like me to speak at your local SEPTA chapter, feel free to contact me. I would be happy to present about dyslexia and the programs that Literacy Nassau offers the community.

## BOOKMARK THIS!

We received a generous donation of decodable books written by Elsbeth and Rowena Rae. The series, Meg and Greg,



is specifically designed for shared reading. A more experienced reader reads the left side and the child reads the right side. The title that we have in our children's library is for students who are familiar with all of the basic consonant sounds, short vowels, and words with digraphs: ck, sh, ch, and th. Each story in the book builds on the next. Please let us know if you would like to borrow one of these fabulous books to read with someone special.

## VIRTUAL "COFFEE AND CONVERSATION" FOR OG TUTORS

Pour yourself a hot cup of coffee and sit down at your computer for a virtual evening of "Coffee & Conversation" on **Tuesday, January 19th** from **7:00-8:00 pm**. It's an opportunity for OG tutors to network and share ideas. Kim will be available to answer any questions and address any concerns. Please RSVP once the email is sent out.



## Did You Know?

According to the Orton-Gillingham Academy, there are **16** associate-level and **3** certified-level OG tutors on Long Island. **9** of these tutors have trained with Literacy Nassau.

## MY PATH TO ORTON-GILLINGHAM

By Melissa Mattia-Sansobrinio

Ten years ago, I could not have predicted the paths that life would take me on. For most of my adult life I was a scientist, having received my PhD in Biological Sciences in 2007, and working in cancer research labs from 1999-2010. I thought I would be a lab scientist forever but, in 2010, I needed to put my research career on hold to care for the unexpected medical needs of my infant daughter.



*“My favorite part of being an OG tutor is seeing the look of happiness on a student’s face when they ‘get it’.”*

### OGA ASSOCIATE-LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

- Accrue over 60 hours of coursework delivered by an Orton-Gillingham Academy (OGA) Fellow
- Complete course readings related to dyslexia
- Complete 10 supervised lesson observations
- Complete 100-hour practicum with a student
- Write a student profile
- Submit 3 detailed lesson plans to the Orton-Gillingham Academy
- Approval by the OGA is required in order to receive certification



Thankfully, my daughter’s medical condition improved, but during elementary school it became clear that her reading skills were significantly lagging behind her peers. When school interventions failed to help her, I stepped back into the role of “researcher” and found a private tutor that specialized in the Orton-Gillingham methodology. From my first meeting with the tutor I was certain that OG techniques could help my daughter. The systematic, explicit, and evidence-based methods made perfect sense to the scientist within me. I became a “true believer” in Orton-Gillingham almost immediately and sought to become OG-trained myself.

In 2019 I was privileged to be accepted into Literacy Nassau’s AOGPE Associate-Level Training Program, and I passed my certification with the Academy in November 2020. The training I have received from Literacy Nassau has been rewarding on many levels. It is wonderful to now be able to understand the English language in a systematic way, and impart that knowledge to students. It is an honor to work with children and help them with their reading and spelling challenges.

Surprisingly, OG training has taught me a great deal about patience, too. Our world is so focused on getting to the next thing that we very often rush through the basics. The direct and systematic nature of OG requires that instruction is given one step at a time, and reinforces that the best learning exists in an environment that allows for careful practice and continual review. These are lessons I try to be mindful of in other aspects of my life, too.

Since my certification, I have been working as a tutor for Literacy Nassau. My favorite part of being an OG tutor is seeing the look of happiness on a student’s face when they “get it”. Knowing that our work together has brought a child confidence and happiness is the greatest reward of all! Being an OG tutor may not have been the path I thought I would take a decade ago but, now that I am here, it is the only place I want to be.