



# LITERACY MATTERS

APRIL 2020



**LITERACY**  
**N A S S A U**

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

### What You'll Find in this Issue:

Orton-Gillingham Activities .....	2
Happy Birthday! .....	2
Resource Corner .....	3
Tutor Spotlight .....	3
Dyslexia Dash .....	4

### Our Staff Team

Karen Micciche, Executive Director  
 Anne-Marie Poliviou, Executive Assistant  
 Renae Katz, Bookkeeper  
 Kim Nau, Director of OG Services  
 Cindy Cabrera, Regional Director  
 Kelly Siry, Regional Director  
 Kate Quijano, Literacy Specialist  
 Jessica D'Aprile, Americorps VISTA

### Our Board of Directors

Judith Beckman (Pres.), Financial Solutions  
 Susan Santoro (VP), Oceanville Mason Supply  
 Iris Grover (Secretary), Reading teacher (ret.)  
 Sean Miller (Treasurer), TD Bank  
 Wendy Ehrlich, OppenheimerFunds (ret.)  
 Dorita Gibson, NYC Dep't. of Education (ret.)  
 Melissa Grote, Sunrise Medical Labs  
 Irv Miljoner, US Dep't. of Labor (ret.)  
 Irwin Scharf, S. Scharf Inc. (ret.)  
 Stefanie Singer, Novogradac  
 Craig Weintraub, Weintraub Films

### COVID-19 CANCELLATIONS

*(submitted by Karen Micciche)*

As you are likely already aware, fears about coronavirus (COVID-19) are slowing the world down tremendously. Literacy Nassau is far from immune to this, as most of our volunteers are retired folks. The last thing we want to do is put anyone at risk. With that in mind, we have several updates to share.

First of all, our annual (un)SCRABBLE gala, which was originally scheduled for March 31st, has been postponed to June 9th. It will still be held from 6:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. at the Chateau Briand in Carle Place.

Secondly, our Next Chapter Book Clubs and ESOL classes for adults have been cancelled until further notice. The purpose of these cancellations is to create the social distance that has been recommended by the CDC. We are currently looking into the utilization of online platforms for our ESOL classes and groups through Google Meet, Google Hangouts, and Zoom meetings. This is a work in progress and we will keep you posted as we begin beta-testing select classes and groups using these forms of distance learning. Should we find that they prove workable, we will then begin rolling them out to other ESOL classes and possibly to our Next Chapter Book Clubs

as well.

As of the date of writing this, our administrative office is still open and our Orton-Gillingham services are still being provided on a case-by-case basis. Any tutors or students (or families of either) who are concerned about their health being compromised are able to use Facetime or Google Meet as a platform for 1:1 tutoring during this time of extenuating circumstances. If at any point a staff member contracts the illness or reports that a family member has it, our office will close. We are taking precautions here including vigilant hand washing, extra office cleaning, and commercial disinfecting using the same company that the church is using.

Questions have already come up regarding our upcoming Dyslexia Dash (scheduled for May 2nd) and, of course, Recognition Night, which is currently scheduled for May 20th. At this point, it is too soon to tell whether or not these events will be rescheduled or cancelled. Like the rest of the world, we are it day by day as the situation with this virus is extremely fluid and evolving.

Most importantly, we recommend that you take care of yourselves and your families. Literacy Nassau will still be here when the world returns to its regularly scheduled programming.

### THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

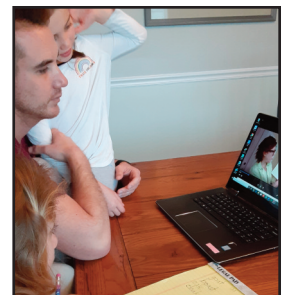
Hi Everyone,

Wow. These are some scary times! By the time you receive this newsletter (about 2 weeks from the date of writing this - March 13th) we might all be in quarantine without the ability to purchase toilet paper or go anywhere. Right now, things are not quite that drastic, but they certainly appear to be heading in that direction.

When I start to panic (as we all inevitably do), I remind myself that I've been through this before, 3 times that I can remember. The first was 9/11, when the world shut down. Then, there was the swine flu outbreak in 2009. I ran a Boys & Girls Club in Queens back then, and we had to close. Then, most recently, we lived through Hurricane Sandy, where so many of us were displaced and we were all without power for almost a month.

Scary times remind us that we are stronger and more resilient than we realize. They also serve to remind us of the things that truly matter the most: family, loved ones, and in this case, our health.

*Karen* 😊



Even though Waldorf promotes a screen-free environment, Haley's second-grade teacher has been working on videos to send out to the class with the daily main lesson.

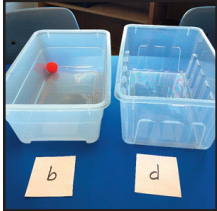
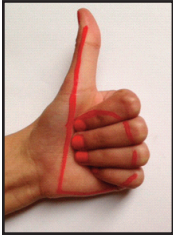


## ENGAGING MULTISENSORY OG ACTIVITIES

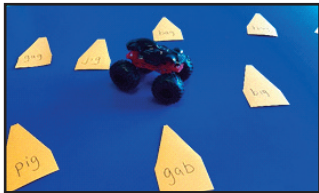
(submitted by Kim Nau)

Orton-Gillingham is a structured approach and teaching needs to be explicit. There are approximately 10 components to each lesson plan. Sometimes it can be difficult to find time to incorporate fun and engaging activities. Here are some simple activities to make learning fun for students.

I work with a total of four students. My second-grader struggles with b/d reversals which is a common error because the manuscript letters look the same. To work on this concept, I dictated words with the /b/ or /d/ sounds. My student had to repeat the word and then toss the ball in the correct plastic bin that had the letter that matched the sound. While doing this activity, I had him hold up his "b band" as a visual reminder of the proper formation of the letter b.



In the traditional OG lesson, we put the words that relate to the new concept on index cards and drill the cards for fluency. As a twist, since my student likes monster trucks, I put the words on orange cards to look like traffic cones. My first-grader drove the monster truck around each cone and read the word.



## RESOURCE CORNER: NESSY VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE

(submitted by Kate Quijano)

At a recent IST, we talked about syllable types and how learning about them can help students to understand vowel sounds better and decode longer words. While planning this training, I discovered great YouTube videos from Nessy. The videos are short and informative and I have used them with both children and adults. I have found them to be very helpful in understanding the different syllable types and how to identify vowel sounds in a word. They have videos on syllable types, spelling rules, silent letters, syllable division, parts of speech, singular and plural, suffixes, homophones, and so much more.

For Basic Literacy tutors using the ABCs of OG or Orton-Gillingham practicum tutors, you could find a video that goes along with the syllable types/ sounds you are working on and supplement your lessons with them. For ELL tutors, you could also find topics related to your current unit, or use the videos for specific areas of need you see that your students have.

This is also an opportunity for differentiation for small groups of adult learners. If you see one student needs work in a certain area, while the rest of your group doesn't or you know you won't get to it during your sessions, you could assign individual students to watch a specific topic for homework.

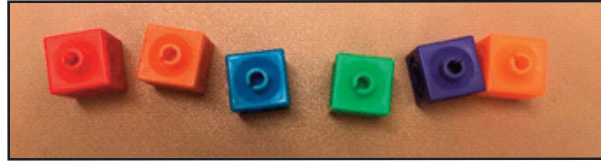
I like to change up the methods of instruction and provide outside resources whenever possible. I think this is a great opportunity to do so while still remaining true to the skills and approach to learning that we want to achieve in our sessions.

**Go to YouTube and search Nessy Videos or use this link:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/greenandfriendly>

My fifth grader, James, has been working on cursive. To make it more enjoyable, he used a french fry as a his "pencil" and wrote the cursive letters in a plate of ketchup. Cursive assists with muscle memory and can help to remediate reversals.



My seventh-grader struggles to segment sounds when spelling. He uses plastic cubes and moves a cube to represent each sound prior to writing the word down. This helps him to see, hear, and feel the phonemes as he sounds them out.



Phonetically irregular words need to be memorized and can be difficult for students to remember. One strategy is to have the student write the word in three-dimensional puff paint. Once it dries, the student can trace the word, saying the names of each letter. The act of feeling, speaking, and seeing engages the senses and helps enhance the memorization process.

Whether we are working with adults or children, lessons can be fun and engaging by using many kinds of multi-sensory techniques.

## Warm Birthday Wishes to the Following Tutors!



Kami-Leigh Agard – Mary Alibrandi – Zeba Ansari – Nancy Benchimol – Nancy Bob – Judy Caputo – Adrienne Carlton – Jennifer Cestaro – Kathleen Coleman – Eileen D'Antonio – Margaret Dudley – Wendy Fast – Anita Faulding – Madalyn Fernbach – Barbara Fritz – Janet Geduldig – Lauren Gilbert – Kelsey Greene – George Greier – Florence Harff – Michael Hauser – Kathleen Jeacoma – Nilsa Jorge – Dolores Joseph – Keon Karimabady – Lorri Klonsky – Audrey Korman – Eleanor Krebs – Carmelinda Kurtzberg – Jean Lesser – Carol Markman – Susan Mazur – India McClain – Helen O'Brien – Antonia Obara – Joanne Ortiz – Carol Padovani Josephine Palazzolo – Jean Pascale – Maureen Peraza – Amy Perlmutter – Terese Pizza – Linda Podhurst – Jane Quinton – Susan Rosenberg – Stephen Salyk – Carol Schrafel – Vasu Shah – Linda Shine – Ann Silverberg – James Tenney – Debbie Uckele – Rosemary Valenti – Virginia Walsh – Joan Whiteside – Jessica Zamora

## TUTOR SPOTLIGHT: NEIL MORAN

(submitted by Kelly Siry )

Neil Moran is one of our newest ESL teachers. He teaches a small group at the Oceanside Library. Neil's group started off small but continues to grow as he accepts new students from varying levels. As anyone who has taught ESL knows, it is not an easy task to have students on different levels in one group, but Neil seems to do this with ease as he incorporates real-life reading comprehension activities. Neil resides in Rockville Centre with his wife, Maureen. Teaching must run in the family as his three daughters are all educators in varied capacities. Neil retired in May 2000 as a Supervisory Special Agent in the FBI, in the New York Office after 29 years of service. In addition to volunteering with Literacy Nassau and spending time with his five grandchildren Neil also enjoys playing golf and traveling to Ireland. Since retiring, he joined a creative writing group and has begun writing a murder mystery.

I asked Neil a series of questions so we could get to know him better. Here's what he had to say:

### **Why is adult ESL education important to you?**

I feel blessed. I am thankful each day for having the opportunities to have had a wonderful career, family and friends. Our family immigrated from Ireland years ago and came to New York with nothing. One advantage the Irish had that many immigrants do not is that they spoke English. I couldn't imagine settling in another country and not have any working knowledge of the language and no immediate prospects for employment. To be able to make a small difference in someone's life by spending three hours a week with them is very rewarding.

### **What were you most apprehensive about before you began teaching with us? Do you still have the same apprehensions?**

My primary reservation was "Will the students respond and will it be apparent that they are learning each week?" I no longer feel that way. Now in only my second term, those who attended the first class asked to come back again and continue.

## BRUNCH AND LEARN

(submitted by Cindy Cabrera)

On Saturday, February 29th, Kelly and I had a great turn out at our Brunch and Learn in-service-training for all our adult English Language Learner programs. We all enjoyed our time talking about our students and the impact we have on our communities. One topic that stood out was the census. Many of our students may be weary about how to fill out the form. We discussed how to bring awareness to the students we serve. We also discussed the challenges that some tutors may have faced as well as the rewards of giving back to our community. The fact that our tutors give their days, evenings, and weekends to help people learn English is something that needs to be acknowledged. Kelly and I are extremely appreciative to all the tutors that help us to fulfill our mission here at Literacy Nassau. Those who missed this one, we encourage you to sign up for the next IST we will host.



The biggest challenge has been the language barrier and getting students to be more comfortable speaking in front of the class. I took Spanish in both high school and college and used it quite often in the FBI in my daily comings and goings, but I am far from fluent. Another challenge has been to get the students to work independently once they leave the classroom and hone their skills and what they have learned during class.



Neil (center) with his students at the Oceanside Library

Last week, a new student spoke out in the middle of class and said, "You are an excellent teacher. You explain things very well." I was taken back but at the same time quite flattered. The other students chimed in and nodded their approval as well. Some students come up after each class and personally thank me - what a wonderful feeling I have walking to my car!

### **If you were to meet someone who was thinking of becoming a Literacy Nassau volunteer ESL teacher what words of encouragement would you give them?**

I have already had this discussion with several friends, which went something like this: "Imagine being in a country where you have just landed with your family and you have no job and don't speak the language. How do you survive on a daily basis? How do you learn the currency? How do you interact with people when you cannot speak the language? How can you fill out forms, apply for programs where assistance is provided?" These are the types of things that we all take for granted and when you stand before your class and see people genuinely struggling, it is absolutely heartbreaking. If you can make a difference, it is among the most rewarding things in which I have ever been involved.

## Reduce your risk of coronavirus infection:



Clean hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rub

Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with tissue or flexed elbow



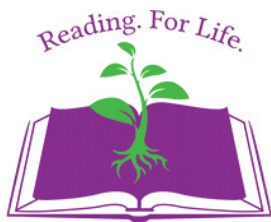
Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms

Thoroughly cook meat and eggs



Avoid unprotected contact with live wild or farm animals






**LITERACY**  
**N A S S A U**

1 Ivy Lane, Wantagh, NY 11793  
(516) 867-3580 ~ [www.literacynassau.org](http://www.literacynassau.org)

NON PROFIT RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**P A I D**  
Wantagh, NY  
11793  
Permit No. 29

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



SAVE THE DATE!  
**LITERACY  
NASSAU'S 2ND  
ANNUAL DYSLEXIA  
DASH**

A 5k Walkathon to Support Dyslexia Awareness

**MAY 2ND, 2020 | 8:00AM |  
WANTAGH STATE PARK**

REGISTER OR DONATE TODAY!  
<https://www.literacynassau.org/dyslexiadash>

Our 2nd Annual Dyslexia Dash is a walkathon taking place to help raise awareness on learning-based Disabilities. There will be a live DJ, a Zumba warm-up, and relay races for the kids! All proceeds raised will be used to support our donation-based tutoring center for kids with dyslexia and other learning-based disabilities.

Please arrive by 8:00am to register, the walk with begin at 9:00am. Advance registration (\$25) ends April 26th. Registration is \$35 after April 26th and T-shirt availability may be limited. Children under 2 are free.



Instagram: @literacyNassau  
Facebook: Literacy.Nassau  
Twitter: @LiteracyNassau

