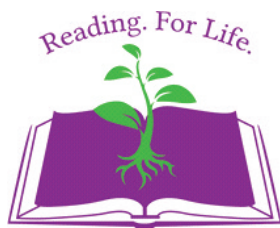




LITERACY MATTERS

JULY 2020



LITERACY
N A S S A U

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

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NEW AND EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES!

(submitted by Jessica D'Aprile, VISTA)

The past few months have been very successful for Literacy Nassau in the area of grants received. We have been awarded two new grants to provide funding assistance for two of our programs. The first is a \$9,500 grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation for the expansion of our adult Basic Literacy Program. This will allow us to take on more Adult Basic Literacy Students, extending our services to different libraries in Nassau County. This is an exciting development because it is our goal to help as many Adult Basic Literacy Learners as we can throughout Long Island.

The other grant that we have been awarded is for REMAP NYS 2020. The purpose of this \$10,000 grant is to help advocate for voting participation in New York State. As a non-profit organization focusing on Nassau County, this will also be where we will target our voting advocacy efforts.

REMAP NYS is a ten year civic engagement plan with a vision to equitably remap the power, the electorate, and the districts of New York. REMAP NYS stands for Register, Educate, Mobilize, Advocate, and Protect New York State. The goal of this program is to increase voting participation

across typically hard to reach populations, including communities of color, low propensity voters, low-income communities, and new voters. To do this, we are actively training volunteers to participate in non-partisan activities and outreach.

This volunteer assignment began in the middle of June with a focus on engaging folks through the primaries - but will continue through the general election in November. The grant's activities predominantly focus on reaching out to potential voters via telephone and text message, educating them about the voting process (ex. how to apply for an absentee ballot, etc.), and encouraging their voices to be heard at the polls. Literacy Nassau is very excited to be part of this project (which is being hosted by the New York Immigration Coalition) because ever since the Office for New Americans reallocated its funds to work with only legal service providers, we have been limited in our capacity for deep civic engagement, which has always been one of our strengths. We are happy to be able to work on voter engagement during such an important time in our country's history.

Both of these grants will be extremely beneficial for expanding our organization's outreach and helping communities that are in need.

THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

The one thing I have told my kids over and over again since the start of COVID-19 is, "Be careful; we don't want to get hurt and have to go to the hospital!" Sure enough, like a self-fulfilling prophecy, Julie ended up breaking her forearm during a family game of tennis.

In addition to my COVID-exposure fears, I was terrified that her arm wouldn't heal properly. I have (knock on wood) never broken a bone, so I don't know what the process feels like. But her doctor reassured me that when little ones break bones, often the bones heal back stronger than they were before. That got me thinking. Our world is so broken right now. Fractures and fissures across cultural, ethnic, and political lines have frayed our sense of community, leaving many with little or no pride in our country. I wonder if maybe this time in our history will serve us in the long run, causing our society to reflect on its mistakes and heal back stronger. I sure hope so. That would certainly offer a welcome silver lining during this dark time.

Karen 😊



When Julie broke her arm this month, I immediately feared the worst. Then the doctor reminded me that broken bones often become stronger after they heal.





VIRTUAL TUTORING HASN'T "FLATTENED" MY CREATIVITY

(submitted by Kim Nau)

In this time of virtual tutoring, it has been a struggle trying to create engaging online activities for my Orton-Gillingham students who struggle with dyslexia. Reading and writing can be so mentally taxing on students so I wanted to do something fun for them to work on at home. With my younger students, I decided to try the Flat Teacher Project. This is a take on the popular children's book, "Flat Stanley." Here is a synopsis of the original book:

The book recounts the Stanley's adventures after surviving being squashed flat. He makes the best of being flat and learns all of the advantages. He enters locked rooms by sliding under the door and he goes out to the park to play with his younger brother by being used as a kite. One special advantage is that Flat Stanley can now visit his friends around the country after being mailed in an envelope. Eventually, Stanley gets tired of his flatness and his brother restores his proper shape with a bicycle pump.



With this in mind, I mailed my first and second grade students a flat version of myself. Flat Kim was sent to students along with a letter and a set of task cards. The premise of the new project was that I am so tired of sitting in front of my computer typing lessons. I would like to go on some fun, educational adventures with my students. In the envelope, I also included Orton Gillingham-based activity cards asking students to go on adventure hunts around their house and in their backyards.

Here are some of the tasks they were asked to complete with Flat Kim by their side:

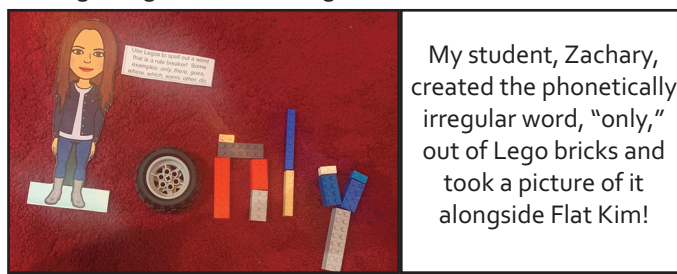
- Eat something that is a magic e word (example: grape).
- Find items around your home that are closed syllables and share them with Flat Kim (examples: trucks and socks).
- Flat Kim loves sweets!

Bake something with your mom or dad. Write your name in cursive in the batter and take a photo of Flat Kim with your freshly-baked dessert.

- Use a stick to practice writing your cursive letters in the dirt and take a photo of Flat Kim next to some of your dirt writing. Be careful she doesn't get too dirty!

- Use sidewalk chalk to write some words that don't play fair like: of, again, does, should, love, are, who, says, often, who, what, and their. Take a photo with Flat Kim on the sidewalk when you're done (just don't step on her).

Parents shared photos of their children engaging in these activities and it got students, and their families, involved in the learning process while encouraging them to share something at the beginning of each tutoring session.



OG STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: TYLER

(submitted by Kate Quijano)

Tyler is a second grade student in our OG program. He just celebrated his 8th birthday. I began working with Tyler in January and we developed the routine of cooking or baking together as part of the tactile aspect of our session. He learned cursive writing by practicing in chocolate pudding, whipped cream, cookie dough, ketchup, etc.



Unfortunately, when we had to switch to virtual sessions, his much beloved baking routine ended. I was so impressed with how hard he worked to continue improving his reading even though he lost his favorite part of our sessions together. We have worked to incorporate more games to keep the sessions exciting. He loves playing Go Fish with learned words (words that are non-phonetic). He also loves playing a modified Uno game where he has to match words by color or syllable type.

Virtual sessions have given us a chance to do some "show and tell." Favorite toys are often with us through the session, and he even got to "meet" my pet ferret when we learned the concept of schwa (which is in the word "ferret.") He also likes to show me his collection of sports cards and quiz me on famous sports players. Then he laughs as I fail miserably every time. I conducted a virtual interview to help you get to know Tyler.

Q: How did you find out about Literacy Nassau?

A: I don't know; my Mom knew about it and Hunter too. [Hunter is his older brother who I began working with last year.]

Q: What kind of activities do you do at Literacy Nassau?

A: Baking! But not anymore, we just play games now.

Q: What are some things you like to do?

A: I play sports, X-Box, and watch my new TV that I got for my birthday. I also watch my favorite You-Tuber- Nasher. He goes on the X-Box.

Q: What was the hardest thing you've learned here?

A: Everything.

Q: How is what you do at LN different from school?

A: The suffixes and the FLOSS rule. We have them, but we call them different things. We call the FLOSS rule "bonus letters" and we mark up the words differently. [Tyler uses Foundations in school, which has similar principles to OG, but some differences in procedures so he always compares the two approaches.]

Q: Tell us something about yourself?

A: I like hockey and baseball. I play them both. I also play basketball, soccer, and baseball on the X-Box.

Q: How do you feel about virtual lessons?

A: Bad, because I want to bake.

Q: What do you think we should bake when we are able to return to Literacy Nassau's Tutoring Center?

A: We should bake a ginormous cookie. It should look like a hockey puck. Maybe a cake would be better. Let's bake a cake in a pan like a hockey puck, then make it brown, but not with chocolate frosting, only vanilla. Then we could make another cake in the shape of a skate so we could have skates and pucks.





CONTINUING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE CLASSES ONLINE

(submitted by Kelly Siry)

Helping our students to continue their English studies while keeping them and our volunteer teachers safe during the pandemic is of the utmost importance to us. When all non-essential businesses closed, we made the decision to bring our ESL classes for adults online. We spent the last half of March developing an online program using Zoom and thinking of ways to implement our existing curriculum online. The current volunteer teachers who stepped up to the challenge of teaching online were superstars as they navigated blindly through this new world of online teaching. I spent these months having weekly meetings with the teachers as well as observations of their classes. I feel like it gave me the opportunity to get to know the students and see the curriculum in action.

We have decided to continue online ESL classes through the summer. I have trained several new volunteer teachers and will be conducting registration for new students June 29-July 9. I am confident that our summer online ESL program will be an incredible experience for both the students and the volunteer teachers! But don't take my word for it; below, you'll find their testimonials.



Tutor Karen (top left) with her Level 1 students

"Well I am very lucky to study with you, where I have learned and reviewed my English studies. I have lost the fear in speaking in public, I hope to continue with you for a long time with these online courses. I recommend these courses to new participants, it is a great experience. the zoom technology allows to be on time at the beginning and end of each class. and from the comfort of the houses."

-Angel a level 2 student from Venezuela

"Personally, and as immigrants, we thank Literacy Nassau. Their solidarity towards the different immigrant communities is very valuable. The teachers dedicate their time teaching the classes. The experience is very good, previously face-to-face and for now online due to the pandemic, the teachers is excellent, the platform and the participation of all is very good. Learning English is essential as immigrants, it helps us integrate into the community, take advantage of job opportunities, participation in our children's schools, medical visits, new studies, etc. In this program we are going step by step in learning English."

-Francisco a level 3 student from Honduras

"Hi, I am Alexa, I am learning English online at the intermediate level, my experience learning English online version is quite good, over time it has even become comfortable. I am very happy because due to the situation we are in because of the covid-19 we can learn from our homes and not let time pass, we can learn English without worrying about precautions. Meanwhile, I would like to continue all the upcoming classes online, I learn English each class in a comfortable, fun, familiar way with the teacher and classmates. I am very grateful to Kelly the organizer who has made me able to be here, thanks!"

-Ai Yuan (Alexa) a level 3 student from China

"My experience learning English online is very satisfactory since I have a very friendly teacher with a good teaching methodology, patience and she works hard so that we learn every day that we have the class. Some days it is difficult for me since my son he is taking classes online and I need to help him with his school. My learning English helps me to help my son. I thank the Nassau Literacy Program, Kelly Siry, because their support is essential so that each student has a teacher based on the schedule they need. Now that we are about to finish this online course I feel that I am improving in English learning."

-Martha a level 2 student from Honduras



Warm Birthday Wishes to our Tutors!

Barbara Alster – Janet Baram – George Bleckman
 Eric Bonge – Sid Burgreen – David Caines – Janis Caravello
 Deborah Cavaliere-Arden – Carol Ann Ceraldi – Andrew Corsi
 Aisha Deljanim – Maria DiCroce – Helene Doleyres
 Nancy Falciano – Susan Fitzgerald – Ed Friedman
 Gloria Glick – Audrey Green – Anna Maria Iannetta
 Elise Knauer – Carmen Lloyd – Helene Marcus
 Christine Martin – Roseann Michelson – Phyllis Modiano
 Camille Mowatt – Lynn Newman – Nancy Reedy
 Mary Jane Regan – Patricia Regan – Susan Risberg
 Kevin Ryan – Dianne Saccone – Karen Santoro
 Susan (Peedee) Shaw – Cynthia Spiletic – Trish Szendrey
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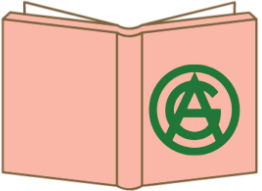



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**ORTON-GILLINGHAM TRAINING
ASSOCIATE-LEVEL COURSE**

Limited space available for Literacy Nassau's grant-funded teacher-training program for children with dyslexia. Course begins in August and the practicum runs through the upcoming school year. Apply today!

Contact Kim Nau
knau@literacynassau.org

