



LITERACY MATTERS

OCTOBER 2020



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

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ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY WEEK 2020

(submitted by Karen Micciche)

At the end of September, Literacy Nassau joined forces with Literacy New York and NYACCE (New York Association for Continuing and Community Education) to educate our local legislators about the critical services we provide to adults on Long Island. Literacy New York worked diligently to set up Zoom meetings for us with State Senator John Brooks, Assemblyman John Mikulin, Assemblyman Michael Montesano, and Assemblywoman Michaelle Solages. At least once a year, Executive Directors from literacy volunteer organizations (like ours) make a pilgrimage to Albany to meet with legislators and advocate for ALE (Adult Literacy Education) funding in the state budget. Due to the pandemic, this year the appointments were made on Zoom.

This year's conversations were especially dire because our state funding has been on hold since April 2020. Yet, we have had to continue providing new and enhanced services via a virtual platform, keeping our volunteers and students engaged in language learning during this vital time. Many children are still learning remotely, and parents have seen first-hand the struggles their kids face daily. However, without the language skills to be able to converse with

teachers, they cannot advocate for their children's education. They need our help now more than ever.

Our call to action was for legislators to champion our work in Albany, sharing with the Governor how important it is to move money along so we can continue serving populations who need it the most across New York State. Assemblywoman Solages related to the plight of immigrant families navigating unemployment, childcare and healthcare during COVID. Senator Brooks spoke about his passion for serving adults and children with dyslexia. Montesano and Mikulin took the opportunity to become more educated about our work. Overall, it was a great week filled with meaningful discussion and action items for our local officials. Thank you to Literacy New York for making it possible!



It was great to speak about issues facing the adult literacy community with influential legislators, such as Senator John Brooks, pictured in the Zoom above.

THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

As you know, I spent this summer working with my daughter Julie on her reading skills in preparation for her journey into first grade. Studies show the brain reaches the developmental stage for reading at age 6, and Julie has been excited to learn to read for years! We spent time this summer playing on Zoom (from one room to the next!), and she learned many important phonological skills, including how to decode closed and open syllables, how to use Y as a vowel, the spelling rules for C, K, and CK, and the FLOSS spelling rule. She is now starting to work on fluency with connected text and is so excited to dive into books!

Since October is Dyslexia Awareness Month, I invite you to engage the young children in your life in reading and phonemic awareness activities. Word games, reading challenges, and bookmark-making are all fun ways to raise awareness and appreciation for the gift reading offers all of us. And enjoy yourself! Reading is one of the most pleasurable activities out there!



Summer may be over, but we are still trying to sneak in our reading lessons outdoors as often as possible! Above, Julie, Haley and I make the most of a fall beach day in CT.

Karen 😊



OCTOBER IS DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH

(submitted by Kim Nau)

October is my favorite time of year. I love carving pumpkins and taking a stroll to admire the beautiful fall leaves. It is also the month where we get to celebrate those who have dyslexia.

In a nutshell, dyslexia is an unexpected difficulty with reading and writing. Since 2016, Literacy Nassau has been working tirelessly to change the landscape of dyslexia education on Long Island. One of the ways we do this is by hosting informative PTA meetings, sharing information on social media, and reaching out to community members to build awareness about dyslexia. Here are some things that you can do for Dyslexia Awareness Month.

Change Your Social Media Profile

You can change your social media profile picture to a dyslexia logo and encourage your friends to follow suit. The dyslexia symbol was created to empower the dyslexic community and it is formed with the letters p q b d to show how they process information differently. You can visit this website to purchase jewelry and other merchandise with this unique logo www.pqbd.org. Mention Literacy Nassau when you place your order and they will donate some of the proceeds of your purchase.



Share the Facts

You can print and share dyslexia fact sheets from the International Dyslexia Association. Share them with your local library, teachers, and school administrators to inform them of this misunderstood learning difference. Knowledge is power. <https://dyslexiaida.org/fact-sheets/>



Start a Conversation

Simply start a conversation. Be a change maker or just speak to one. Discuss dyslexia with family, friends, and co-workers. Dyslexia is genetic and very common (1 in 5 people) so you might be surprised to learn that someone else you know also struggles with dyslexia.

Wear Red

Wear red on October 15th to show the world your support for dyslexia. Encourage your child's school to collaborate and show their support for dyslexia awareness.

Adapted from: <https://learningally.org/Blog/7-ways-to-raise-dyslexia-awareness>



ORTON-GILLINGHAM (OG) IS THE GOLD STANDARD OF INSTRUCTION FOR CHILDREN WITH DYSLEXIA.

Contact Literacy Nassau to learn more about our tutoring options:
516-867-3580 / knau@LiteracyNassau.org.
www.LiteracyNassau.org

	Donation-based Tutoring	Fee-based Tutoring
Commitment	One-year contract (September to June) equivalent to 100 hours of tutoring. Student and tutor meet 3x a week.	No contract is required. Student and tutor can meet 1x to 5x a week.
Pricing	Refundable deposit required once child is accepted into the program. Parent sets the donation amount.	No deposit is required. Set fee is paid for each session.
Location	Tutoring sessions are held at Literacy Nassau's tutoring center in Wantagh.	Lessons may be held at our tutoring center or can be conducted virtually. We do not provide in-home tutoring.
Tutors	Tutors are Orton-Gillingham trainees who are paired with a student to complete their Associate-level teaching practicum.	Tutors are experienced and Academy of Orton-Gillingham (AOG) certified at the Associate-level or above.
Availability	There may be a waiting list since students are only accepted once a year. This option is only available to new Literacy Nassau students.	Wait times are likely to be shorter. Students are accepted on a rolling basis.

NEXT CHAPTER BOOK CLUB ONLINE PLATFORM

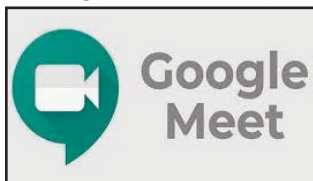
(submitted by Jessica D'Aprile)

COVID-19 has presented many different challenges over the past few months. Our lifestyles have been completely altered and we have all had to learn new tricks of the trade - one major one being virtual meetings. Many of our volunteers and students have gone above and beyond to keep their classes and clubs running during this time. I am excited to spotlight a few of our Next Chapter Book Clubs (NCBCs) who have continuing their meetings through Zoom.

One Club that has continued meeting virtually is Rachel Dicker's Great Neck NCBC. They decided to continue meeting after the shutdown began last spring. I had the pleasure of meeting with Rachel online to discuss her experience of hosting the club through Zoom. For Rachel, the decision was an easy one: "I thought, why am I not doing this, and then just about everyone was on board." She proactively reached out to her members, asked if they would like to give it a try, and got many positive responses. Rachel took the initiative to host practice runs on Zoom with the club members, making the process of getting everyone online easier.

Many members of the book clubs lived with very busy schedules before COVID-19, so the lifestyle change has been tough. As Rachel explained, "I have one member who said because of COVID-19, I only have this book club and one other activity". Sadly, this is not the exception, many book club members have been struggling without meaningful activities to fill their days. Rachel's club members were excited to start back up, and resumed reading where they left off before COVID-19. First they finished up the book *Wonder*, then jumped into *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. Rachel got the idea to try *Harry Potter* and asked her club members to obtain a copy for their meetings. They are currently 39 pages in!

Because Long Island spent much of the summer creating reopening plans and everyone is working on easing back into a routine, Rachel decided to move the meetings in person at a park. Sitting more than six feet away from each other, club meetings almost feel normal for them. This is a welcome change, giving everyone the chance to resume social activities in a public space. It is our hope that there will be a transition back to a public setting, like this group has made, but with the uncertainty of COVID-19, keeping an open mind to remote learning platforms is important.



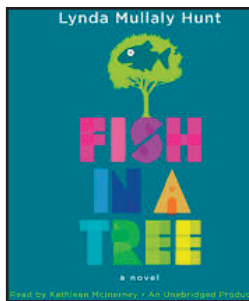
Google Meet is a free video conference site that is also great to consider when starting clubs back up. Free to use, this video conference site allows up to 100 participants to meet for an hour. The

only caveat is that the participants of the meeting must have Google accounts to join, but it's free to sign up for Google. If you are a facilitator considering starting your NCBC back up, this would be a great site to use. If members cannot make Gmail accounts, Zoom is also a great option for meeting, but the time is limited to 40 minutes. If you are thinking of starting your club back up using one of these sites and need assistance, feel free to e-mail me at jdaprile@literacynassau.com and I will help you through the process and answer any questions you may have.

FISH IN A TREE

(submitted by Kate Quijano)

About a year ago, one of my OG families mentioned that they were reading *Fish in a Tree* together. They talked about the



similarities between their experiences and the character who struggles with undiagnosed dyslexia for much of the story, while trying to hide her struggles from her teachers and friends. I thought, "I should read that when I get a chance," and then promptly forgot about it until another OG student mentioned reading it a few months ago. I checked Kindle Unlimited and it was not offered, so I thought, "Next time I get to the library."

Now that libraries are closed and I've pretty much read everything of interest to me on Kindle Unlimited, I finally researched how to borrow ebooks from the public library system- it was very easy...I don't know why I never did it before! So, I finally e-borrowed *Fish in a Tree*. I would have to agree with both families who recommended it to me. It is an excellent book that really lets you see the struggles of students and the impact that a sympathetic and knowledgeable teacher can make in their lives.

It impressed upon me the importance of the work we do with children in our OG tutoring as well as the work we do with adults who may not have had the opportunity for a teacher to really help them with literacy before. Literacy Nassau's volunteers serve such an important role for learners of all ages. I would definitely recommend this book for teachers/tutors as well as students who would enjoy it as a read aloud or audio-book. It helps to know they are not alone and that they CAN learn to read with the appropriate instruction.



Warm Birthday Wishes to our Tutors!

Mary-Joan Albiston – Catherine Antioco – Patricia Boilerman
 Angella Broderick – Judy Casella – Helen Chang – Ann Cullen
 Joanne DePaula – Alanna Devine – Joshua Diamond
 Sheryll Dorf – Judy Douenias – Rhonnie Fischman
 Darleen Fleming – Cindy Florman – Alison Frankel
 Lori Freeman – Rosemary Fuchs – Marsha Herman
 Sakina Husain – Linda Ivans – Sarah Jairam – Carol Keating
 Jeff Konzet – Maya Leibfreid – Laura Longo – Ada Marcus
 Judy McClusky – Karen Moore – Louise Nachshen
 Antoinette Nardo – Rebecca (Vicky) Popiolek
 Gwynn Riordan – Gene Sanders – Olga Scileppi – Philip Scotto
 Scott Shelofsky – Andrea Snyder – Irma Souveroff
 Diane Tully – Eileen Weissman – Donna White
 Richard Wieder – Thomas A. Williams



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Cancelled & Postponed Events

Due to ongoing concerns with COVID-19, our **Dyslexia Dash** and **(un)Scrabble** events have been rescheduled for 2021. We will be in touch once we secure new dates for them in the Spring.

Please Stay Healthy!



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