



Orton-Gillingham Private Tutoring Student Policies & Procedures

Who are we? Literacy Nassau is a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit organization that has been assisting individuals with low literacy skills for over 50 years. Thanks to a one million dollar grant, we have developed the infrastructure to bridge the gap between teacher training and student success for children with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities. Our private learning center offers traditional tutoring as well as donation-based tutoring, which sets us apart from other Orton-Gillingham practitioners because it eliminates the financial barrier that creates the cycle of poverty for those who cannot afford access to services like ours. We believe everybody has the right to learn how to read. To that end, we provide 1:1, personalized, multi-sensory instruction for children, delivered by professionals who are either certified by-or in the process of becoming certified by-the Orton Gillingham Academy (OGA). The instruction can work for any child, but it is particularly effective for children with dyslexia and other language-based learning disabilities.

What is Orton-Gillingham (OG)? OG is a multi-sensory approach that engages multiple pathways in the brain to help students learn to read and write. This means we use sight, hearing, touch, and movement to help students connect language with letters and words. Orton-Gillingham, developed by Samuel Orton (neuropsychologist) and Anna Gillingham (educator and psychologist), has been helping children with dyslexia for almost a century.

OG is highly structured and breaks reading and spelling down into smaller skills involving letters and sounds. These skills build over time. There is a strong emphasis on understanding the *how* and *why* behind reading. The English language can seem complicated, but it is almost 90% phonetically regular. This means that once we explicitly teach students the rules and patterns, they are able to decode words more successfully.

Why isn't OG offered in schools? For years, most New York public schools have been denying students proper treatment by failing to identify them with dyslexia, which is often not recognized until at least third grade. Until recently, in New York, the term "dyslexia" was not even allowed to be included on a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Now, New York State law requires schools to recognize dyslexia, and other similar challenges, on students' IEPs. Teachers need effective training and a proven approach to guide their instruction. Unfortunately, state law does not mandate this training, taxes are already high enough, and school budgets are tight, so often, districts look for the least expensive alternative possible. As a result, many schools use Wilson or other reading programs.

By contrast, Orton-Gillingham is a scientific, research-based *approach*, not a program. A program, like Wilson, is curriculum-based. Students can only move through the program once they have demonstrated mastery of a given level. Many commercial reading programs are derived from the Orton-Gillingham approach, but they do not offer the student flexibility. In real OG instruction, each lesson is thoughtfully crafted based on the student's errors from the previous lesson. No two students will take the same path. Previously learned material is reviewed as new concepts are introduced in a diagnostic and prescriptive manner.

What type of training do the tutors receive? Our OG trainees volunteer their time to work with our students in a supervised practicum setting, through which they strive to achieve their Associate level of certification from the Orton Gillingham Academy. The trainee practicum is supervised by Laurie J. Cousseau/OG Fellow, with assistance from Karen Micciche/Executive Director and Kate Quijano/Senior Program Director at LN. Both are OG Fellows in Training.

The chart below illustrates the levels of certification:

Academy of Orton-Gillingham Levels of Training	Coursework Required	Practicum Requirements	Achieve Certification
Associate Level Trainees <i>Literacy Nassau trains a new cohort of trainees every school year.</i>	Accrue 60 hours of coursework and must complete 10 supervised lesson observations.	Complete a 100-hour practicum with one student.	At the end of the practicum, the tutor must apply to the Academy with a student profile and accompanying lesson plans. They must meet criteria outlined by the Academy's rubric to receive OGA certification.
Associate Level Practitioners <i>Literacy Nassau has trained and certified over 50 Associate level practitioners.</i>	Must attain 10 contact hours of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for professional development each year.	A minimum of one year of an Academy supervised practicum. To maintain Associate certification, tutor must be working under the supervision of a Fellow.	Once this level is achieved, the tutor may opt to stay here or go on to Certified. Either way, certification must be renewed annually.
Certified Level Practitioners <i>Literacy Nassau has 2 staff members who are currently training for the Certified level.</i>	Accrue 100 additional hours of coursework and complete 10 supervised lesson observations.	These independent practitioners complete a total of 300 practicum hours with at least 3 different students over a minimum of 3 years.	Apply to the Academy with a student profiles and accompanying lesson plans, which must meet criteria outlined by the Academy's rubric to receive OGA certification. Must renew certification annually.
Fellow Level (highest level) <i>Literacy Nassau has 2 staff members who are training for the Fellow level.</i>	Accrue an additional 150 hours of coursework and supervise trainees.	Complete a total of 600 practicum hours over a minimum of 6 years and participate in 3 Associate and Certified level trainings. Must also conduct research-based presentations at the regional/national level.	Apply to the Academy and receive certification based on the criteria outlined by the Academy's rubric. Must renew certification annually in order to train/supervise other literacy professionals.

How does the tutoring work? At your child's intake appointment, the Senior Program Director, Kate Quijano, will administer a screening that will test your child's phonological awareness, letter/sound recognition, reading and spelling. At the conclusion of the test, results will be shared with the parent. *This is not a diagnosis as we are not a medical practice.* However, the results of this assessment can be used to inform instruction and to determine which tutoring option is best for the student.

What are Literacy Nassau’s tutoring options?

There are two tutoring strands that we offer (please refer to the chart below). Options are based on tutor availability and student candidacy. Requirements for students who are working with trainees are set by the OGA. Not all applicants will qualify to work with a trainee (donation-based); some may be better suited to work with a certified staff member in our fee-based option. We have a limited number of partial scholarships available to offset the cost of fee-based tutoring for families in need. Once you begin fee-based tutoring you **CANNOT** switch to donation-based tutoring.

	Donation-based Tutoring	Fee-based Tutoring
Commitment	Contract for one year (3x a week from September through June; 100 hours total).	No contract is required. Parent and tutor determine number of sessions per week.
Pricing	\$250 refundable deposit is required once accepted into the program. Parent decides the cost per tutoring session at contract signing. Donations are then automatically billed to the credit card on file and cannot be changed after submitting the contract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No deposit is required. • Payments of \$150 per session will be automatically billed weekly with the credit card on file. • We have a financial aid program for fee-based services available only for families who qualify. To request an application for aid, please contact Anne-Marie at apoliviou@literacynassau.org.
Cancellations	Make-ups are required if a session is canceled by either the tutor or the student.	If you cancel a session (or do not show up) with less than 2 hours’ notice, you will be charged an inconvenience fee of \$75.
Location	Tutoring sessions are held in Wantagh at Literacy Nassau’s Tutoring Center. A minimal number of virtual sessions may take place if needed based on current COVID guidelines.	Lessons may be held in our tutoring center in Wantagh or they can be conducted virtually. It is up to the parent to decide. For insurance reasons, we do not provide in-home tutoring.
Tutors	Tutors are trainees who are completing their Associate-level practicum.	Tutors are certified at the Associate level or higher by the Orton-Gillingham Academy.
Testing/ Requirements	<p>Formal cognitive testing is required for acceptance. An IEP or a neuropsychological evaluation lists the formal, cognitive assessments performed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IQ over 90 • Trouble decoding words, phrases, and sentences • Trouble with spelling • Ability to sit and maintain focus for 45-60 minutes • Ability to follow directions and exhibit respect for instructor • Child’s primary difficulty should be reading. Students with multiple diagnoses or a primary diagnosis other than reading may not be accepted. 	Formal testing is not required but is very beneficial to planning an individualized lesson for your child.
Availability	There may be a waiting list since new students are typically accepted in the fall. Only available for new students . Students will be screened in the Spring. Acceptance letters will be sent by mid-June for the following school year.	Wait times are likely to be shorter and students are accepted on a rolling basis.

There is no set cost for the Orton-Gillingham donation-based tutoring. Parents determine the price based on what they are financially able to donate. Typically, private tutors (who may or may not be properly credentialed Orton-Gillingham Academy members) charge up to \$200 per lesson. Our suggested donation is \$50 per lesson, which is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Due to credit card processing fees, the minimum donation is \$10 per lesson. Upon acceptance into the donation-based program, you will be required to submit a \$250 refundable deposit. You will receive the \$250 deposit back once your child achieves 100 sessions of instruction. ***100 sessions is the benchmark because that is the number needed to satisfy the Associate-level practicum requirement.***

If we do not have any availability in our donation-based tutoring program, or if your child does not meet the requirement set by the OGA for students working with trainees we have a select number of OGA certified staff members who are available for tutoring. (Please refer to the blue chart on page 2 of this document.) Please keep in mind that we have limited staff who provide this highly specialized service. Our fee-based tutoring is offered at a rate of \$150 for each 40-60-minute session. Lessons are held at our tutoring center in Wantagh (or virtually). Fee-based tutoring services help offset the cost of sustaining Literacy Nassau's donation-based tutoring program.

Can my child's participation in the program be terminated? Please understand that we have a long waiting list for our donation-based program. You must be able to commit to 100 sessions of instruction, which is equivalent to three (40-60 minute) tutoring sessions per week, over the course of the school year. If your child does not complete the 100 hours of instruction, you will forfeit your deposit.

Once accepted, we reserve the right to terminate your child's participation in the program. More than five cancellations without a doctor's note can result in termination of the program. If you need to cancel, please kindly give your child's tutor 24-hour notice whenever possible. Cancellations disrupt instruction and negatively impact the tutor's requirements.

One of the requirements of the OG tutor's practicum is that there will be 10 supervised video observations. These observations serve to provide valuable, constructive feedback to the tutor. These lesson observations will either be done in-person or recorded on video to submit to our OG Fellow (the tutor's supervisor). After the first or second observation lesson, there might be an instance when our OG Fellow feels that a student is not a strong candidate for the Associate-level practicum. This is rare, but if it should occur, your child may switch to our fee-based program if you choose. Also, if the OG Fellow feels that your child would be better suited with a different tutor a switch might occur.

If your child is matched with a tutor and the tutor withdraws from the program, we may not have another tutor readily available. In this case, your child will be added to our waiting list. Literacy Nassau will do everything in our power to ensure that this does not occur but sometimes circumstances are beyond our control.

If your child's behavior impacts the tutor's ability to successfully complete his/her lessons and progress in his/her training, your child may be asked to leave the program. Please remember that the purpose of the practicum is twofold. It is for your child to learn how to become a more proficient reader and writer, but it is also for the tutor to cultivate a skill set as an OG practitioner. We want the lessons to be successful for everyone.

What is expected of me as a parent? Literacy Nassau will host a parent orientation in the fall for our donation-based program. We expect parents to be involved in the process of remediating your child's reading and writing skills and expect the same commitment from you that our tutors deliver.

We expect that you will take your child's tutoring seriously and prioritize it above other non-essential after school activities, cancelling only if absolutely necessary and treating this service with the same reverence that you would have for a private tutor coming to your home.

What can I expect at each lesson? Each lesson is approximately 40-60 minutes and is customized for your child's individual learning needs. All materials and lessons are created by the tutor. All lessons will be held after-school, evenings, and/or on Saturdays. Donation-based lessons will be conducted three times a week for a minimum of 100 sessions to fulfill the requirements of the tutor's OG practicum. Fee-based tutoring offers a flexible schedule.

Does Literacy Nassau provide in-school services? Literacy Nassau contracts our certified OG practitioners to school districts to provide 1:1 OG services in school; contingent on approval at the child's Committee on Special Education (CSE) meeting and at the school district's board meeting.

Where does the tutoring take place? For insurance reasons, we cannot send tutors out for home visits. Donation-based tutoring takes place in-person (with limited virtual instruction as a possible back up). Fee-based can take place either in-person or virtual, as decided by the parent and the tutor. In-person tutoring will take place at our tutoring center and virtual instruction will be done via Zoom.

For holidays and inclement weather, please refer to the Wantagh School District's website. If the schools are closed, then so are we.

What about COVID? OG is intended to be in-person but due to COVID we have had instances where instruction has moved online for the health and safety of all involved. Since COVID is an ever-evolving, dynamic situation, additional requirements may be mandated. Any health-related protocol will serve to ensure the well-being of our tutors and students, as this remains paramount to our organization.

What are the technology requirements for virtual instruction? A touchscreen is required for an engaging multisensory lesson. We recommend that the student uses an iPad with the Zoom application downloaded. The child needs to sit at a desk or table in a quiet area of the home so that he/she is free from distractions. It is recommended that a parent or guardian be nearby to offer tech support, if needed.

Questions? Contact Kate Quijano at (516) 867-3580 or at kquijano@literacynassau.org.



ORTON-GILLINGHAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Name of child: _____

I have read and understand the tutoring policies and procedures packet.

_____ *Parent/Guardian Signature* *Date:* _____