

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

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BECOMING A FELLOW: KAREN'S JOURNEY

For 7 years, I've been studying the OG approach and climbing a certification ladder towards becoming an Academy Fellow. I'm entering my final year of study this year, which means everything I do is essentially part of a huge, cumulative final exam.

While my daughter was in horse camp, I spent my summer in the basement of a Cape Cod library, writing a curriculum for a 5-day, 30-hour training. The training is the first half of a 60-hour, year-long Associate course that we run every year, which I am solely responsible for this year. What I write will become Literacy Nassau's course guide to becoming an Associate-level OG practitioner - a course which can - in the future - be delivered to teachers in school districts.

In 2016, when I met with John and Janet Kornreich about my idea to introduce tutoring services for children with dyslexia, I knew the road to creating a sustainable model would be long. This is why they made an 8-year investment in our organization. 7 years in, I can say with great pride that what we are building will change the education landscape for Long Island kids in a tremendous way for many years to come. There is dyslexia legislation being developed as I write this that will one day make it's way to school administrations all over NY in the form of mandates

from the NYS Education Department. One day, schools will have to provide proper, science-of-reading-based interventions to children with dyslexia, and the first step will be to train their teachers.

And when that happens, Literacy Nassau will be ready to help.

It's amazing how much I've learned, and continue to learn, on this journey. This is the first time writing a whole curriculum, and it fascinates me. It took me six weeks to develop five days of workshops, through which I am teaching our new OG cohort of trainees everything you could ever dream of knowing about the English language. It's intense and scary, but I love it. And this is only the beginning! This year, I'll be observing them as they teach, I'll be helping guide them toward their own applications, and I'll be creating and delivering professional development workshops for them to help them grow as they move through the school year. When they apply (and pass, thus becoming Associate level OG therapists), it will be because of me.

Imagine that - but for any school district on LI. Imagine the number of kids those lives will change as a result of this work. It's staggering, and I am so proud to be at the helm of this monumental moment.

FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone!

Can you believe the summer went by so quickly? This time of year is always super hard for my family because of the change in schedule around going back to school. This year, it's been particularly hard for my daughter, Julie, because she had the most amazing summer of her life attending a horse camp in Cape Cod.

As you all know, Julie has dyslexia and it's been a rough road of remediation. She struggles academically, so my husband and I wanted to find ways to give her experiences of success over the summer to boost her self esteem. She loves animals and has taken some horseback riding lessons before, so I found her a horse camp. She excelled - I can honestly say I've never seen her shine so brightly. She eagerly cleaned horse stalls, groomed the horses and ponies, and learned some higher level riding skills. It brought her so much joy, which as a mom made me overwhelmingly happy.

Students with learning differences need to have experiences of success to remind them that we all have our strengths. Now, this year, we're planning weekly horse lessons for Julie so she can consistently be reminded of how it feels to be good at something. Remember that when you work with your student! Happy fall!



Horseback riding is where Julie excels. Focus on your student's strengths to remind them of all they are capable of!

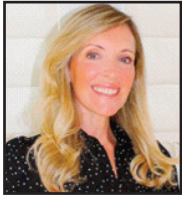
Karen 😊

OUR 2023-24 ORTON-GILLINGHAM COHORT

We asked our new cohort of OG tutor trainees to tell us why they want to be trained in OG. Here is what they said:



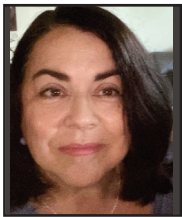
Shamika: I am a Special Education teacher with the Dept of Education. I have been teaching for 8 years. I am beyond excited to obtain my OG Associate Level Certification. I love teaching students how to read and then witnessing the joy and confidence it gives them.



Rosemary: I am happy to join Literacy Nassau for the Associate Level Orton Gillingham training program. As a special education teacher and mother of four, I am eager to put my new skills into practice with both my students and my own children.



Rebecca: I am currently a Reading Teacher for grades 3-5, and previously received reading intervention as an elementary school student. I can personally relate to the frustration of struggling with learning to read. I am so looking forward helping to empower students to find success and enjoyment in reading!



Terri: I'm a newly retired reading teacher who has enjoyed sharing my love of books with my students. It's a thrill to be part of the new OG cohort who are so passionate about literacy. I am grateful for the opportunity to learn a new set of skills that will enable me to continue to bring the joy of reading to students.



Jacqueline: I have been an educator for almost 30 years and I am a mother of children with learning differences. A multi sensory approach to teaching has been a core principal of mine. Learning OG will add to my skill set so I can assist all children with learning differences.



Susanna: I have been teaching elementary education for more than 15 years. It is my goal to help all children love to read. I am excited to learn OG because it will help me become a better teacher. My daughter is dyslexic and I would like to help her reach her full potential.



Gayle: I am a pediatric occupational therapist and the mother of a dyslexic college student. I know how important effective and timely reading instruction is for the lifelong success of the dyslexic learner. I am looking forward to impacting the lives of students with OG.



Gina: I look forward to training with Literacy Nassau so I can advance my knowledge of dyslexia and the Orton-Gillingham program. As a dedicated and experienced educator of over 20 years, I am confident that this journey will enhance my ability to help my students excel in reading.



Neil: I am a dedicated educator with three decades of experience, and I am excited to join Literacy Nassau. Drawing inspiration from my journey as a parent to a son with dyslexia, I am committed to empowering fellow learners with special needs on their educational path.

OG SUMMER INTENSIVE PROGRAM REFLECTIONS

(submitted by Kate Quijano, Program Director)

We just completed the third year of our OG Summer Intensive Program. It was such a pleasure to work with both new and returning students. Our program is tailored to each student's ability level and needs. Even though students meet in small groups during the summer, work is differentiated to meet each student's needs.

Mary and Rich's group focused on closed syllables, open syllables, digraphs, welds, and magic e syllables. Students improved in their ability to recognize vowel sounds and to blend words. I shared a group with Izzy. Our group focused on magic e, bossy r, and vowel team syllables, syllable division, and soft c and g. Students improved in their ability to read multisyllabic words and to read with fluency.

At the end of each session, each student completed a short assessment which covered all the skills taught during that session so parents could see their progress and we can continue to individualize instruction for students who will continue with us in the fall. If you have not yet applied for fall tutoring and would like to please email me at kquijano@literacynassau.org. Thank you for another great summer!



STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: XITING

(submitted by Fran Fox, Tutor)

Our class started out last fall at the West Hempstead Library but with the onset of winter we moved to the Lakeview Library. The move and the arrival of several new students brought laughter and learning to our class! The students seamlessly melded together and made our time together extremely rewarding. It was a pleasure watching them improve their command of the English language.

One particular student that has made extraordinary progress since January is Xiting Yan. Xiting has been living in America for 13 years. (Please note my use of the PRESENT PERFECT TENSE which we have been working on for months!) She began taking ESL classes with Literacy Nassau at Level 2 in the fall session. Xiting was tested this spring and has now moved up to Level 4!

Xiting has demonstrated a determination to succeed and a desire to learn. She has shown up for each class on time and completed all of her assignments. Xiting's responsible attitude has also had a positive effect on our classroom environment. While her fellow students admired Xiting's absorption of the material, she also took the time to support others who were not working as quickly. Her tremendous advancement is something to be recognized!

I would like to thank Kate and Anne-Marie for all of their continued support. I would also like to thank two fellow tutors, Marjorie and Adrienne, who were kind enough to provide me with teaching strategies and moral support over the past year! Having just retired from teaching with a heavy heart, working with these particular ESL students has created a new teaching goal in my life. They have taught me so much more than I have taught them.

We would like to thank you Fran and all of our tutors who really love teaching English to their students, are eager to help them with their goals and always go above and beyond!



Warm Birthday Wishes to our Tutors!

Maria Acosta – Lisa Adams – Sam Antar – Jessica Askoy
Lillian Baum – Michelle Berman – Toni Cangialosi
Lisa Chieco – Janice Collins – Carol Cook – Janice Donoghue
Rhea Epstein – Leslie Feinberg – Kelly Filippone
Nancy Friedman – Laura Garcia – Ann Gordon – Freya Grice
Elinor Haber – Donald Hayde – Jean Heinz – Amy Karofsky
Cynthia Katz – Linda Klein – Joy Kurtz – Margaret Latronica
Tim Leask – Kathy Leibowitz – Maxene Liverpool
Mary Ellen LoConte – Jenny Marcotrigiano – Alison Marooney
Marie Marsac – Michaela McElhatton – Lois Miceli
Paul Nelson – Karla Padawer Solomon – Denise Phillips
Linda Pierce – Bettye Rainwater – Rona Rappe
Marcy Ruggiero – Rebekah Santos – Irwin Scharf
Stan Schickler – Arlyne Skolnik – Ana Stanley
Jenn Starzynski – Jeanmarie Tener – Lois Thomas
Blanche Tyrkko – Maria Vivona – Janine Washinger
Loretta White – Colleen Woodell

TUTOR REFLECTIONS

Bob S./Level 3/4 tutor shared with us the following: I felt that the students enjoyed watching and discussing We Speak NYC. The students enjoyed watching the story and discussing it. The series is excellent. The stories are realistic and show lives of immigrant families in realistic settings. The actors speak slowly so it is easy to follow, and they speak English with accents which is good for them as role models because they do speak with no errors and are easily understood. The show stimulated discussion, which was something this group enjoyed doing.



Marjorie (2nd from the right) and her class enjoying an end of class term celebration at Fanatico. Best students in and out of the classroom!



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Congratulations!

TO OUR NEW ASSOCIATE LEVEL OG TUTORS AND THEIR ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ACADEMY!

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