

Reading. For Life.



LITERACY NASSAU

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

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THE IMPORTANCE OF SUMMER READING

(by Karen Micciche, Executive Director)

We all hear the phrase “summer reading,” but how many of us make the time for it? Perhaps the benefits reading provides will motivate you to pick up that book!

First and foremost, reading improves **Brain Function & Memory**. Regular reading improves your brain power and memory function by giving your brain a workout. The brain reads by constructing a mental image of the text based on the placement of the page in the book and the word on the page. This “mental map” helps us process words we are reading and aids in knowledge recall and memory. To exercise the brain most effectively from reading and promote memory strength, the tactile experience of a book is very important. Reading is a cognitively demanding process that can strengthen memory and concentration.

Exercising the brain regularly will help with **Cognitive Decline**. Cognition includes the ability to learn, remember, and make judgments. Attention and memory are the two aspects of cognitive functioning most likely to be affected by age. Scientists believe reading can reduce age-related cognitive decline and protect cognitive function. While

reduction in cognitive decline is one benefit of reading, *Psychology Today* also reports that bibliotherapy, or the therapeutic use of select reading materials, can alleviate many different mental health challenges. It can improve one’s social cognition and ability to empathize with others. Individuals who want to live longer and reduce their risk of cognitive decline can turn to books. Reading every day can support positive health outcomes.

As we spend more and more time in front of screens it is important to disconnect and relax. Reading a book can signal to your body that it’s time for **Sleep and Relaxation**. Just 30 minutes can reduce the physical and emotional signs of stress. When the brain is fully focused on a single task, like reading, the reader gets to benefit from meditative qualities that reduce stress levels. Take a few moments at night to decompress and use the time to improve your communication skills by learning new words or escape on an adventure by reading about lands you’d love to travel to or cultures you want to learn more about. See our staff book picks featured on our Instagram and Facebook pages.

FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone!

Seeing as how it's my first summer as an author, I thought I'd share how things are going.

First of all, I've met some amazing people, such as Kristan Higgins, (NYT Bestselling author of 23 books). I've also met and befriended newer authors, Kristyn J. Miller, Jenny L. Howe, and Hannah McKinnon. It's been so cool to hear about what inspires them to write, what their processes look like, and what they love to read. Kristan even brought my book with her to NBC Boston and recommended it to all the viewers watching. Unreal!

It's also been a new level of stress. I'm juggling two full time jobs. My time management skills are at a whole new level. Anyone who knows me knows I enjoy a good challenge, but I'd be lying if I said this has been easy. Currently, I'm editing my next book, drafting a whole new book, going to various events, managing a social media presence, and booking tour dates for the fall. It's a lot.

What I've learned: We are capable of more than we give ourselves credit for. It's a lesson that I think should resonate with our adult learners, many of whom have put themselves and their families through the impossible: moving to a new country to start a new life. To me, that's the ultimate in bravery. (Really, by comparison, all I'm doing is working a second job.)



Karen 😊

ESL POTLUCK LUNCH

(submitted by Cristina Morales, Program Assistant)

We are thrilled to share the exciting highlights from our recent ESL Potluck held on Sunday, June 4th at Literacy Nassau. This heartwarming event was a true testament to the power of community and cultural exchange. We would also like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Iris Grover, Board Member, whose generous donation significantly contributed to the success of this gathering.

The ESL Potluck was a vibrant celebration of diversity, bringing together ESL learners, volunteers, and community members in a delightful culinary and cultural experience. Participants were invited to bring a dish that represented their cultural heritage, resulting in a mouthwatering assortment of flavors from around the world. Students each shared their recipe, and all of the recipes were compiled to create a recipe book that was distributed to all of the participants.

From fragrant Indian curries to delectable Dominican Pasteles, each dish had a story to tell, showcasing the rich tapestry of traditions and customs within our community. As attendees savored these culinary delights, conversations flowed freely, breaking language barriers and fostering cross-cultural connections.

The ESL Potluck not only provided a platform for ESL learners to showcase their language skills but also served as a safe and welcoming space for them to practice and gain confidence. It was heartwarming to witness the friendships forming and the genuine curiosity and respect that attendees had for one another's cultures and backgrounds.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the participants who joined us at the potluck. Your enthusiasm, willingness to share your stories, and embrace cultural diversity made this event truly special. As we reflect on the success of the ESL Potluck, we look forward to more opportunities to celebrate diversity, promote language learning, and strengthen the bonds within our community.



Warm JULY Birthday Wishes to our Tutors!

- Denise Abraham – Barbara Alster – Janet Baram
- George Bleckman – Eric Bonge – Shelly Brennan – Joanne Brun
- Sid Burgreen – David Caines – Janis Caravello
- Carol Ann Ceraldi – Andrew Corsi – Erin Daly – Aisha Deljanin
- Helene Doleyres – Susan Fitzgerald – Ed Friedman
- Gloria Glick – Brian Grady – Audrey Green – George Kane
- Elise Knauer – Carmen Lloyd – Patricia Magalee
- Helene Marcus – Christine Martin – Mimi Mazzarella
- Roseann Michelson – Phyllis Modiano – Camille Mowatt
- Nancy Reedy – Mary Jane Regan – Patricia Regan
- Susan Risberg – Kevin Ryan – Dianne Saccone
- Richard Sanders – Jane Schwartz – Susan (Peedee) Shaw
- Susan Woodward – Anne Zajac – Nathalie Zephirin

Warm AUGUST Birthday Wishes to our Tutors!

- Amina Ahmed – Alison Auerbach – Eleanor Blackman
- Elinor Brown – Evelyn Chevalier-Richards – Michael Chiappardi
- Miriam Cobian – Andrew Cohen – Stephanie Coons
- Maryann Deveau – Eileen Eder – Judy Elfenbein
- Barbara Entes – Jerry Fitzgerald – Marcie Granick
- Anita Greenman – Maureen Gunderson – Patricia Hanlon
- Harriet Klein – Amy Langer – Debbie Levine – Robin Lillyreed
- Angela Milora – Jazmin Mooney – Mike Moran
- Linda Napoli – Janet O’Keefe – Amita Patel – Victoria Perrone
- Nancy Reibling – Patricia Rossi – Esther Salorio
- Ann Scavetta – Claudia Stern – Elizabeth Tilton
- Reed Toscano – Eleanor Turino – Suzanne Valls
- Glenda Vieites – Bridget Ward

OUR NEWEST U.S. CITIZENS!

(submitted by Laura Garcia, Citizenship Tutor)



On June 23rd Dariusz Brachowski became a citizen of the United States. It was a wonderful day for him and his family. Dariusz is grateful to Literacy Nassau for the help he received in his citizenship classes. Dariusz emigrated from Poland in 2017 and now lives on Long Island with his wife and family. He is working as a civil engineer for a local firm.



I am proud to also share that I have another student who passed the Citizenship exam. She is very special because although she hurt her knee and had to use crutches she never stopped coming to class.

Valeria Faustino immigrated to the United States, from Brazil, in October 2014, where she worked as a Dental Hygienist. She has been attending my class and on January 4th, Valeria became a proud citizen of the United States. She currently lives and works in Queens. She expressed her gratitude for the help she received through Literacy Nassau.



MEET IZABELLA KATZ, AGAIN.

We would like to welcome Izzy into a new role as our Program Manager. She has been working with us as an Orton-Gillingham tutor for the past year and we are excited to have her in this new role. She will continue to provide OG services for children, while also managing some of our adult programming. She will attend registrations, post-tests, and case management visits and will handle data management for our grants. A few words from her:



"After completing my OG training and practicum at Literacy Nassau, I started the 2022-2023 school year full-time going into a school district and meeting with students for OG sessions. It was a fantastic experience getting to meet new students and learn a variation of ways to create a successful OG lesson. I embraced the mix of personalities and how they each learn differently. Seeing the increase in confidence and comfortability in reading for each student is magnificent. The best part was getting to see one of the students have a light bulb moment of a concept finally becoming comprehensible for them.

Additionally, I had the pleasure of participating in the OG summer intensive program. It is an OG based program that runs for two sessions, where students are exposed to the OG approach. The students get to participate with a group of peers for an OG lesson, arts and crafts, and a sports activity that incorporates the concept being taught in the lesson. It is wonderful to see the connections the students make with one another.

Aside from OG, I am so excited to see what comes next as I join the other side of Literacy Nassau's programs. It is a great opportunity to acquire new skills at LN while also becoming well versed in the other programs offered. I look forward to getting to know all of the volunteer tutors and adult students and supporting everyone as they work to meet their English and reading goals."

TESTIMONIALS

From student Victoria: "I was busy last week because I had an US citizenship's interview and I had to prepare thank you for your lessons and speaking American language and it helped me a lot in the interview and I passed it easily."

Bob shared this about his student Bertha: She has made great strides in her pronunciation and in overcoming her shyness to speak English in public. She has developed a solid command of grammar and her vocabulary has expanded. Her progress is especially impressive as it occurred during a time of personal tragedy.

Mimi shared, "This was my first year with Literacy Nassau and it's been beyond wonderful. I love the way the program is run as well as the students. As a retired high school English teacher, I am so grateful to be able to once again do what I love. In return, I've received an incredible amount of joy, appreciation, and kindness from the adult students. So fulfilling! In addition, the staff never fail to express their recognition to the volunteers. It is both a pleasure and a privilege to be a part of this wonderful organization!"



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