

Reading. For Life.



LITERACY N A S S A U

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

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2024 FELLOW-IN-TRAINING REFLECTIONS

(by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)

This time last year, I was working on finishing up all the required readings in my study to become an Orton-Gillingham Fellow and beginning to think about how I would start creating curriculum for my trainees. I spent every spare moment from February through June planning for the initial week of training that I would deliver in August. My laptop even joined me on my family vacation to Arizona as six hours each way on a plane was far more uninterrupted planning time than I was ever able to manage during the work day. Then I spent the summer preparing materials, creating a training binder, and setting up for training.

August came and went and we now have another great cohort of trainees who are pursuing their Associate level certification from the Orton-Gillingham Academy (OGA). It was a pleasure to teach this dedicated group of future OG practitioners. Moving from mentoring and supporting in the background, as I have done in the past, to actually leading the cohort and being responsible for the planning, scheduling, teaching, and follow-up has been a big transition and addition to my existing responsibilities.

The past couple of months have been focused on supporting the trainees in their

practicum, observing them tutoring their students, and providing feedback for them. Each trainee has received two observations so far and it is wonderful to see them becoming more comfortable with the routines of OG. I am equally happy to see the rapport they have built with their students as an important principle of OG is creating an emotionally sound environment where kids experience success at every session.

Now I am gearing up to do more curriculum development. Beginning this month, I will conduct a Saturday training for the cohort once a month until they take their final in April. I am reviewing my notes from their observations, looking at the OGA standards for Associate level curriculum, thinking about the ability level of each of their practicum students, and deciding what is most important for them to learn next.

Their next big undertaking is to write a student profile, so I am preparing a training for them on formal testing, IQ scores, academic testing, and red flags for dyslexia. I will teach them how to write each section of the profile, provide some redacted models written by trainees in previous cohorts, and give them some time to start working on their own.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone!

For the first time in my entire life, I'm skipping the holidays. Instead of decorating the house and trimming the tree, we're opting to hop aboard an Amtrak auto train and head down to Disneyworld! Lots of people have an opinion on this decision. "Karen," they've admonished me, "Don't you believe in tradition?" The truth is, I do believe in tradition - but I also think that every now and again, you've got to let loose. This is the first time we've ever had two whole weeks off at holiday time, and the girls are the perfect age to be able to withstand long lines or stay up late enough to enjoy a fireworks show. I think we'll be forming a core memory for them, and I'm super excited about it. The holidays are meant to be spent with family, and once our girls are all grown up, our family will involve spouses and kids and in-laws and all sorts of new additions. But right now, for this brief moment, it can just be the four of us, which is exactly what my soul is craving this year.

From my family to yours, happy holidays!

Karen 😊



Haley and Julie are 12 and 11 now, and while they're still young enough to enjoy being kids, we are opting to give them a Disney trip for Christmas!

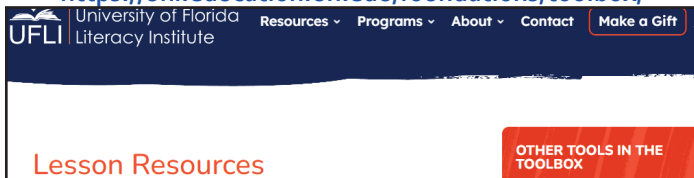
RESOURCES FROM OUR BASIC LITERACY TUTORS

(by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)

The dedicated volunteers in our Basic Literacy program work with English speaking adult learners who struggle with reading and writing. We are extremely grateful for their continued support towards improving the literacy skills of our BL students to help them become more independent in their communities. Basic Literacy tutor Sheila provided the following resources:

1. The University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) has free resources for word lists, word chains, sentences, passages. The words are sorted by phoneme and the passages can be modified as needed.

<https://ufl.edu/education/ufl.edu/foundations/toolbox/>



2. PhonicBooks - After students are taught vowel teams, these materials are great review and practice, grouped by phoneme. There are free worksheets with word lists and passages, and decodable books.

<https://www.phonicbooks.com>



3. SRSD (thinkSRSD) is a strongly evidence-based writing framework that can be incorporated into the writing section of an OG lesson. Even while students are still learning to encode and handwrite dictated sentences, it's important that their writing skills progress, too. Using verbal and multi-sensory activities to start, OG students can learn to form sentences and paragraphs. Students can manipulate phrases to learn that every sentence has a subject (who or what) and predicate (does what). After reading a decodable passage, students can learn to verbally say a one-sentence main idea using a subject and predicate to help them decode to comprehend, and become writers too!

Visit [YouTube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search Science of Writing: think SRSD's (self-regulated strategy development) Evidence-Based Instruction

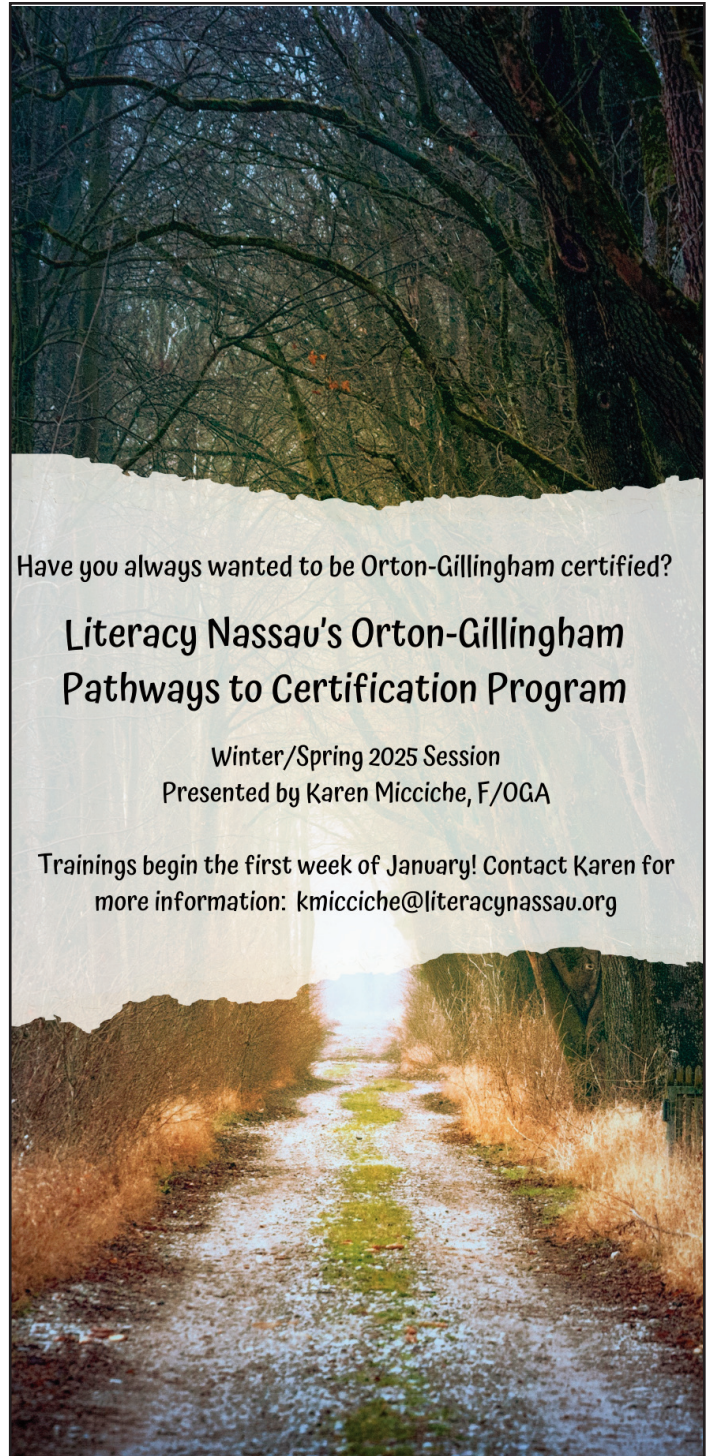


Bob G., another long time Basic Literacy tutor, provided the following resources that have proven helpful with his students. In addition to the *ABC's of OG*, he uses *ABC English Phonics*. To help a student with reading comprehension he uses the series *Laubach Way of Reading*. He asked his students what they thought about their lessons and their achievements. Their replies were:

"Yes, the tutor helped me learn to read, and helped me to pronounce the words."

"The lessons are good. I'm happy. It's helping me push through."

Recently, we held an In-Service Training for our BL tutors. Look for more dates in the new year.



Have you always wanted to be Orton-Gillingham certified?

Literacy Nassau's Orton-Gillingham Pathways to Certification Program

Winter/Spring 2025 Session
Presented by Karen Micciche, F/OGA

Trainings begin the first week of January! Contact Karen for more information: kmicciche@literacynassau.org

FELLOW-IN-TRAINING REFLECTIONS (CONTINUED)

(by Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director)

So for 2025, expect to find me researching, planning, and creating curriculum during every pause in our day to day work. I look forward to congratulating another cohort of Associate level OG practitioners once they complete their practicum and submit their applications to the OGA over the summer.

If you or anyone you know is interested in joining a future OG cohort and gaining certification through the OGA, please visit our website for more information:

www.literacynassau.org

REFLECTIONS FROM OUR NEWEST STAFF MEMBER

(by Steven Unter, ESL Teacher)

I worked as an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher at an elementary school in Queens, NY for more than thirty years. I also taught adults at Kingsborough Community College for a few years. I recently retired from my job and I applied for this position with Literacy Nassau because I had always enjoyed working with adults. They are very appreciative of the help that they receive.

My students range in age from the upper teens to senior citizens. My students are from all over the world, but the majority come from China and countries in South America. In our beginning English classes, students have been taught grammar to speak and write about greeting people, identifying classroom objects, talking about rooms in the house and places in the community.

One activity that we did was centered around the rooms of a house. We looked at photos of rooms that were featured in magazines and described them. The students were very engaged in the activity. We looked at pictures of houses with beautiful rooms.

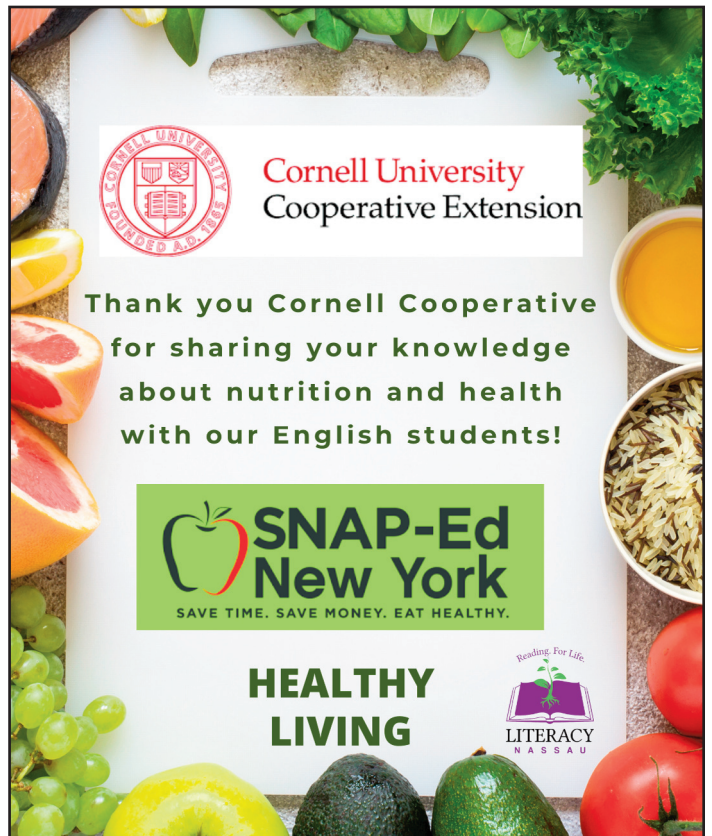
I am able to build a strong relationship with my students because I truly enjoy coming in and working with the students. The students expect to have class and are prepared to learn. Students know that language learning involves taking risks and they have learned that making a mistake in class is a way to improve their English. I like that when a student makes a mistake there is someone to correct the error in a helpful and respectful way. They are motivated to come to class and learn English for their own reasons; but I can see that the students enjoy the class and the friendships that they have made with each other.

Some students entered class not knowing another person. Over time, I think this has changed. Everyone has another person that they feel comfortable participating in class with. This strong sense of community helps students want to come to class each week and maintains good attendance.



Warm Birthday Wishes To Our Tutors Celebrating In December!

Anita Achkhanian – Zainab Ansari – Linda Bernstein
Laura Blanca de Silva - Anita Bloom
Mercedes Carbonell-Scudero – Marie Catalano-Gruen
Judy Cohen – Fran Dowling – Lauri Englert-Sacco
Johanna Esposito – Helene Fleisig
Fran Fox – Peter Genet – Patricia Goldberg – Julie Goldstein
Kathleen Gyves – Georgine Hartenfels
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Maureen Lomangino – Janice Mazzari – Bridget McFadden
Andrea McLaughlin – Susan Molinelli – Neil Moran
Salvatore Morici – Kathie Novak
Robert Palleschi – Sharon Parker – John Pizzo – Sue Rachell
Timothy Reedy – Shivani Devi Singh – Lucy Smorto
Barbara Spun – Harshini Suresh





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Happy Holidays

FROM LITERACY NASSAU

The office will be closed from December 23
through January 5. We will be back on Monday,
January 6.

Have a Happy New Year!



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