

Literacy of NNY

June 2020 Newsletter

Updates about Covid 19 Pause and How LNNY is Affected

According to the state Education Department, we can resume in-person classes and one-to-one tutoring when the North Country enters Phase 4 of the Covid-19 shutdown. We are currently in Phase 3. Students and tutors will be required to wear masks and maintain social distancing while in our classes and when visiting the literacy office.



The Office is Open

Cecilia is working in the Watertown office. Deborah is currently working from home until we enter Phase 4 of the Covid-19 shutdown. The building we are in (Key Bank) in Watertown is now unlocked and open to the public, although if you want to do some banking, you still have to use the drive through.

Everyone who enters the building and our office must wear a face mask and keep socially distant from others. If you need tutoring materials, please call ahead of time and make arrangements with Cecilia.

Across New York State, adult education programs have seen a decline in enrollment since the Covid-19 Pause began and remote learning started. The decline can be attributed to children being home, a lack of technology resources, limited phone minutes or data plans, and students returning to work.

New Materials for Reading/Math Students

Literacy of Northern New York has received \$1,468 worth of books from ProLiteracy's National Book Fund®! The NBF awards grants to adult literacy programs for high-quality educational materials for students and tutors. The resources available through the NBF are from ProLiteracy's publishing division, New Readers Press.

The new materials we received includes the **Journey to Success** reading series, which teaches reading fundamentals to non-readers up through the sixth grade level. The series contains research-based principles for phonics instruction, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and fluency practice. Levels 1 and 2 contain four themed units with easy-to-follow lessons that feature phonics and word work as well as a variety of nonfiction and fiction reading passages.

Levels 3–6 are built around the essential components of reading and help prepare students for pre-High School Equivalency level work. Each book follows four themed units: Work and Life Skills, Social Studies, Science, and Literature.

We also received the **Core Skills** series of books in Math, Reading/Writing, Science, and Social Studies. These are pre-high school equivalency level books for students who are at the sixth-eighth grade reading level. This series is great for intermediate students who want to pass the high school equivalency exam.

In addition, we received Pre-High School Equivalency booklets in reading comprehension, writing, social studies, and science. These comprehensive booklets are also for intermediate students who want to pass the high school equivalency test.

If you would like to come into the office to review the new materials, please call ahead of time and make an appointment to do so. Cecilia is not in the office on Mondays.

News for You Online— Literacy of Northern NY now has a subscription to News for You Online and we are encouraging tutors and students to use this wonderful resource. This is a weekly publication for adult learners that uses current event articles and human interest stories to engage learners' interest while building skills in reading, comprehension, and vocabulary. Each story comes with a teacher's guide containing comprehension questions and vocabulary development activities. Students can access this site by themselves or with a tutor, and read stories, listen to them, or click on an unknown word and have it read to them. To access News For You Online, go to <https://www.newreaderspress.com/news-for-you-online>. The password to log in is: 499596.

News for You Online includes a [Tips for Teachers](#) section where instructors can find the video *How to Use News for You Online* and other helpful resources. Let us know if you like this resource!

Tutoring When You Cannot Meet Your Student in Person

As you know, our classes and tutoring have been forced into using some form of technology since the pandemic started. For staff, it has been an intense and fast introduction into learning about all the available technologies so we can continue to help our students. Some of the tutors are working remotely and report positive results. We have found that we need to keep in touch with our students during this time and try to keep them engaged. At the same time, we want to keep our tutors motivated even if they are not working with a student.



Proliteracy has put out a series of webinars called “**Distance Learning, Ideas from the Field.**” We do not expect tutors to watch all of them but we have gleaned some excellent ideas for using technology to teach and tutor. The series is available on You Tube. Each video is listed on

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a calendar date. If you click on the date, the link to the video appears:

<https://www.proliteracy.org/health>

Here is the playlist on You Tube.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLlqX0SRtnkrvCmqRtFJQle2KVq2P4iWv7>

For many of our tutors, **keeping it simple is the best option.** That means, Zoom is not for everyone. Some students do not have reliable internet or a tablet or laptop. To help everyone, we would like to share some ideas.

Literacy New York's Online Tutor Training Model for Distance Learning

Literacy NY has designed a very short module to help tutors with the transition to Distance Learning. If you would like to register, contact Deborah.

Lisa Trembley, LNNY Reading/Math tutor, has this to say about the Distance Learning module - "I found the online tutoring training to be helpful. It familiarized me with the platforms and methods of engaging for an online platform. I think it would be helpful for all tutors to check it out!"

Distance Learning Options for Working with your Student



Zoom Platform:

Is it necessary to use Zoom? No, not at all. However, Zoom is the de facto platform for instruction delivery world-wide these days. It works well for classes and individual sessions. There are some great webinars that walk people through the learning curve and discuss all the options available on Zoom. It contains a white board so tutors can write math problems, or type in review work on it. Here is a link to a webinar from the

series mentioned above: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C0Q1u-SgePc&list=PLlqX0SRtnkrvCmqRtFJQle2KVq2P4iWv7&index=9&t=0s>

WhatsApp Phone App:

The majority of students have a smart phone with at least some data on their plan. Moreover, many students use WhatsApp daily and it is possible to do lessons using WhatsApp. Here is a link that shows how this can be done easily. Cue to the 21:33 spot.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifPRP7DuoYM&feature=youtu.be>



WhatsApp has a desktop version, an Android version, and an iPhone version. There is not a direct version for an iPad. Everything is free with WhatsApp. It can be downloaded from the **App store**. Here is the link to download the web version for Mac or Windows. Texting and Phone calls are free and use the phone's data or WIFI.

<https://www.whatsapp.com/download>

Here are some straightforward and familiar options for implementing distance learning. Staff can mail resources or tutors can pick them up from the office.

Email:

A tutor can assign reading or other work to a student and include some comprehension questions and other activities. The student can email the assignments to the tutor when they are done.

Phone:

A tutor can have a set plan to assign work to the student. Tutor and student can have "phone conferences" to go over the work.

Text:

Texting is another option for distance learning. The tutor can send links and questions, and the student can respond.

Face Time or other Video Chat Apps:

Some tutors have been using Face Time and have had great success. Of course, using an iPad or tablet can work better than using a smart phone because of the larger screen size. The tutor can teach, review, go over work in an atmosphere somewhat similar to being in person.

Free Conference Call

This is another option. Signup is quick and easy. It works well if you want to meet with more than one person at a time, otherwise, a direct call works just as well. Here is the link to get Free Conference Call: <https://www.freeconferencecall.com/>

From the Proliteracy website, here are some other Distance Learning options.

Backchannel Chat

<http://backchannelchat.com> is a free, online, text-based class discussion tool that is designed to support instructors. Backchannels are great for facilitating participation in classroom discussions.

Google Hangouts

Google Hangouts is an easy-to-join way to conduct video calls between instructors and learners. Google is now rolling out free access to the advanced Hangouts video-conference capabilities for education customers until July 1.