



Academynews

Summer/Fall 2011



Academy of
Orton-Gillingham
Practitioners
and Educators

Academy Accredited Training Programs

In this issue of the Academy News, we are beginning a series of articles which will introduce and inform our membership about the Academy Accredited Training Programs as well as Academy Courses and Practicum provided by individual Fellows in the United States, Bermuda, Canada, and Asia.

This is an opportunity for Academy members to develop enhanced dialogue and communication on the aspects of Orton-Gillingham practitioner training programs in the way curricula is developed and in the ways that Fellows and Fellows-in-Training present materials to their trainees. In these discussions, we hope that professional peers can assist each other in finding and creating new materials, books, and research, which can enhance all of the training programs, along with individual Fellows who present Academy courses when Academy Accredited Training Programs are not located in the vicinity. In addition, we hope that those training programs that reach out to surrounding public schools districts can describe how Orton-Gillingham can be integrated into required mainstream curriculum.

The Reading Center/Dyslexia Institute of Minnesota - Academy Accredited Training Program

The Reading Center/Dyslexia Institute of Minnesota, founded by Paula Rome and Jean Osman, is celebrating 60 years of teaching struggling readers. Over the years, the Reading Center has tested and tutored over 7,000 students and trained over 1,200 educators and parents in the Orton-Gillingham approach. For the past four years, the Reading Center has partnered with the Rochester Public School District by offering training for district teachers in a classroom application of the Orton-Gillingham approach.


Two things converged to bring this classroom teacher training to fruition. First, the Reading Center staff realized that they were only reaching about 5% of the dyslexic population in Rochester, MN with the one-on-one tutoring model, and they wanted to improve that reach. Second, an elementary school teacher from the school district took the Reading Center's Basic Training course, and when she realized how effective the approach was with her own dyslexic son, as well as students in her classroom, she started working to bring OG training to the entire teaching staff.

Barbara Zelinske, Director of Teacher Training, had 20 years of classroom

experience and was uniquely qualified to create an OG training that was customized for the classroom teacher. She took the Scott Foresman curriculum that the school district recently adopted and created materials and activities to infuse the Orton-Gillingham approach with the existing curriculum.

The focus of the training is language structure, specific techniques, and practical suggestions for the classroom.

"Once they incorporate it, they always find it works wonderfully."

"The key to effectiveness of the Infusion Training is our insistence on going beyond lecture and observation. We go into each teacher's classroom four times over the course of the nine month training and observe the teacher as he or she demonstrates a use of the approach with the entire classroom. We take a "mentoring" approach and provide immediate feedback at the end of the session with gentle suggestions for ways to improve, along with praise for elements done well," said Barbara Zelinske. "The individualized mentoring requires the trainee to incorporate the OG approach. Once they incorporate it, they always find it works wonderfully." 

The Academy - Unique and Special

By Helaine Schupack, and John Howell, Fellows/AOGPE

In the summer of 1990, the Orton Dyslexia Society (ODS), now the International Dyslexia Association (IDA), held a meeting of teacher trainers. It had organized a teacher-training initiative to unite all the different Orton-based programs into one group under ODS leadership. ODS called it the "umbrella concept," and it hoped to form an organization of multisensory teacher trainers for purposes of lobbying in Congress, raising money, and speaking publicly about dyslexia. It was an exciting group and an exciting time because traditionally the Orton-derived programs were often at odds with each other.

Late in that same summer, the president of ODS, C. Wilson Anderson, spoke to Paula Rome at the Minnesota Institute of Dyslexia about forming an Orton-Gillingham Institute. Paula, who studied under her uncle Paul Dozier and worked with Dr. Orton, contacted independent Orton-Gillingham teacher trainers all over the country and invited them to meet in Washington, D.C. during the forthcoming annual ODS national conference. Her letter stated: *All of the other programs ODS has invited to participate in their umbrella concept have their own institutes. There is the Slingerland Institute and the Spalding Institute. Wilson has its own group as do the Alphabetic Phonics teachers. But Orton-Gillingham is scattered over the country in many different sites. So that we can be represented as equals with the other programs in ODS's umbrella, let's meet and talk about uniting and forming an OG institute.*

A number of persons contacted by Paula Rome did come together at the 1990 ODS national conference. What was unique and special about this meeting? It marked the beginning of sustained and focused discussions by

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Academy of
Orton-Gillingham
Practitioners
and Educators

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The purpose of the Academy is to establish and maintain the highest professional standards for practice of the Orton-Gillingham Approach. We certify practitioners and accredit practitioner training programs and student instructional programs that use the Approach to address the language-based learning difficulties associated with dyslexia. The Academy is also active in professional development and public awareness.

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President's message



Over the past three years, as President of the Board of Trustees of the Academy, I have had the privilege of working with many incredible people. In this President's letter, I would like to say "thank you" to many of them.

I would like to give a special thanks to our conference chair who has made outreach a priority. Our most recent conference in Charleston, South Carolina was a tremendous success. The speakers did an outstanding job, and it was also an enjoyable time to reconnect with friends and colleagues. Our Fellows seminar in Hartford this October and our spring conference in 2012 in Indianapolis in conjunction with The Hutson School will provide continued, excellent professional development opportunities.

Our board of trustees is composed of distinguished and accomplished Fellows, many of whom are working full time jobs every day, helping individuals with dyslexia. For many years prior to my involvement with the Academy, I had admired these Fellows for their untiring work and dedication. I continue to learn from them and am very grateful for their commitment and their support. Thank you!

Further, I would like to thank all of our working committee members, especially those who serve on our Accreditation Committee and our Certifying Committee. These committees support what the Academy was incorporated to do in establishing and maintaining professional and ethical standards for practitioners and educators of the OG approach; in certifying individuals who have demonstrated competence as practitioners and educators of the OG approach; in accrediting programs that provide OG training for practitioners and educators; and in accrediting OG instructional programs in schools, clinics, and camps that meet Academy standards. These committee members' responsibilities are enormous, and they spend many, many hours reading applications, traveling to schools, clinics and camps, and attending committee meetings to accomplish this essential work of the Academy.

I also want to thank our individual Academy members and our member organizations who are in the trenches teaching, training, leading, and promoting awareness of the needs of children and adults with dyslexia. You are transforming lives every day with the very important work that you do.

Finally, I give special thanks to both Alicia and Margaret for the hard work they do in the Academy office. They are our face to the world, and they handle all of the requests and inquiries with enthusiasm and professionalism. Their work directly supports our conference and workshops, our board, our committees, our members, and the public. We could not accomplish the work we all do without them! Together we form a vibrant organization whose mission is helping individuals with dyslexia.

Warmest Regards,

Rosalie Davis

Rosalie Davis, President

Commonwealth Learning Center - Needham, Massachusetts

An Academy Accredited Training Program

Commonwealth Learning Center (CLC), an Academy accredited training site and clinic, has offered Associate Level Orton-Gillingham training for over twelve years and will launch its first Certified Level program in fall 2011. Mary Briggs, F/AOGPE, and Lisa Brooks, Fellow-in-Training, supervise CLC's training program.

CLC caters to public school teachers, offering its training on weekends and in the summer. CLC offers a 45-hour Associate Level course and 15 hours of seminar that trainees attend once they have begun working individually with a student. CLC's model has always incorporated a seminar program, even before the Academy required 60 hours of coursework. Trainees may complete their practicum experience after school at the CLC clinic, or in their school setting during the school day. Commonwealth Learning Center has provided O-G training and practicum supervision for several large public school districts over the past two years. This has allowed us to supervise trainees working with students with varying profiles, including English language learners and those with emotional challenges.

This fall, CLC will begin its Certified Level program with a cohort of eight trainees. The training program will entail 100 hours of coursework offered on weekends and in the evening. Trainees will continue to teach under Fellow supervision in their school settings. 

Looking Back at My First Year at Claremont School: A Principal's Perspective

By Evelyn Reiss, Fellow/AOGPE

After many years of teaching students with dyslexia, I decided to start a school. Using the Orton-Gillingham Approach, I had succeeded in teaching dyslexic students of all ages to read, and my writing programs enabled students to write. As these two issues are often the most challenging for dyslexic students, it seemed I had the tools to address the major barriers facing this group of students. The concept seemed simple enough: Use multisensory language to provide foundational literacy skills and enrich areas of strength. As language is the common thread that runs through almost all the curriculum, remediation in this area should enable knowledge acquisition in all subjects. That is where I started, and looking back on my first year as principal and teacher at Claremont School—a school designed only for students with dyslexia—I realize how much more complex the issues are when designing curriculum for our students. Here is a snapshot of my learning curve.

If you create a sense of reassurance and confidence in your students, they will self-advocate and ask questions. Unexpectedly, the most common questions in the first few weeks were “What?” “What did you say?” “What did he say?” “Can you repeat that?” It was not that the students did not understand, it was that they did not hear what was being said—and this in a small class of six students with a teacher standing only a few feet away. When you tutor a student, you sit very close in a quiet room, but in a classroom sound dissipates and the teacher needs to speak clearly and slow the normal rate of speech, which can reach 180 words/minute or 3 words/second. Our students cannot “hear” all the words in a stream of speech delivered at that rate. I learned to clip my sentences, enunciate, and always to make sure my students could see my lips move when I spoke. Now the question is not “What?” but “Why?”

Routines are very important for students with learning disabilities. It helps make their life predictable and cuts teacher talk. Everyone knows what they have to do next—the day and the lessons flow smoothly. Every day we worked on a predictable sequence in language: sound-symbol association, fluency, spelling strategies, sentence memory, and a daily writing task. Every day we worked on a predictable

Unique and Special - Cont. from Pg. 1

a group of distinguished Orton-Gillingham educators from the North and South, East, Midwest, and Far West that spanned a period of five years and led to the establishment of the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators.

It was a demanding and arduous process. Participants met regularly at their own expense. They tacked on an extra day to the “umbrella” meetings. They met the Sunday after ODA conferences, and they met independently in regional groups. There were differences among members that needed ironing out. An Organizing Committee was established and increased attention given to matters of standards, certifying, accreditation, ethics, philosophy, etc. In addressing standards, the Committee rejected the idea of accepting the lowest common denominator of training. It opted instead for the highest possible educational and ethical standards. Such standards viewed one-day, two-day, or even two-week workshops as inadequate for training Orton-Gillingham practitioners. Rather, it called for clearly defined and extensive training provided by instructors who themselves had met the highest standards. A demanding curriculum to cover all the material set forth by the founders of Orton-Gillingham demanded years, not days or weeks of training. Dyslexic students, the public, and the profession deserved that.

Along the way as the Committee hammered out its certifying and accrediting standards, it began to rethink its mission. Some of its members belonged to ASHA. It had input from the American Psychological Association and the National Association of Social Workers. It considered incorporation options similar to these organizations. The most common route followed by most organizations was incorporation under laws pertaining to conventional profit and non-profit organizations. The Academy took a different route, and this made it unique and special. It decided to submit itself to the scrutiny of a governmental educational agency of the highest order. The Committee submitted an application and the necessary documentation to the Education Department of the State of New York. It sought authorization to incorporate under the New York State Education Law that would allow it to set standards for Orton-Gillingham practice and training and to certify persons and accredit training programs that meet these standards. The Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York, for and on the behalf of the Department, granted a Certificate of Incorporation and authorization to carry out these functions in February, 1995. Throughout all the Committee's deliberations, the group continued in the ongoing discussions

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sequence in math: fact drill, mental math, algorithm instruction, practice and application. Students were handed a list of tasks to complete every day, which they handed in after they checked off each task. Thus self-checking and accountability became another routine. I subjected all my assignments to task analysis so that lengthy assignments could be completed in small approachable segments.

The delights of teaching students with dyslexia cannot be understated. We have students who are destined for success in drama, art, sport, writing, science, math and design. This means that we have enormous creativity at our disposal for comedy, narrative writing, debating, soccer and experimentation. Our students wrote their own musical, which they performed to an audience of over 100. They created their own Sherlock Holmes murder mystery, ran a Vintage Movie Night, made a 1950's video, and kept the staff laughing throughout the year. I look forward to my second year, and I know that we will be learning much more from these wonderful boys and girls. 🎵

The Orton-Gillingham Approach: Working In the Public Schools

By Ann Edwards, Fellow / AOGPE

For approximately the past 75 years, the work of Dr. Samuel Orton has been considered the gold standard of remediation for people with language based learning disabilities. Dr. Orton's extensive research into the circuitry of the brain, along with Anna Gillingham's intensive study into the patterns of English language, combined to form the Orton-Gillingham Approach, which has become the basis for virtually every remedial program on the market today.

Another phenomenon has also been occurring over the past 20 to 30 years, and that is the vast and ever growing ELL (English Language Learners) population filling our schools. While we have always been a nation of immigrants, never have there been so many non-English speaking students in our classrooms nationwide. In New York City, where I practice, there are school districts where there are as many as 30 different languages spoken, and different dialects within these groups.

In keeping with the mission of the Academy, which in part is to train teachers and raise professional standards, I have had the opportunity to train teachers in the NYC public schools in the Orton-Gillingham Approach. This training was first initiated to help Special Education teachers work with their low performing students. It then expanded to the regular classroom (25 to 32 students,) to give them the strong base of language that is needed to succeed, as well as to catch those students who might otherwise fail.

Orton-Gillingham Approach



OG Classroom Word Wall

The schools that began this course of study saw marked gains in their students' decoding, spelling and fluency skills and also started to notice unexpected gains in their ELL population.

In order to take a closer look at these results, one of the principals, Ms. Jayne Capetanakis from PS 69 in Brooklyn NY, who was selected to the Cahn Fellow Program for Distinguished New York City

Principals, took on a four-month inquiry using 50 beginner level and newcomers who were non-English speaking students:

conducted by the ODS concerning its umbrella concept.

In a sense, today the Academy is over 20 years old. Its beginning was in 1990, its incorporation in 1995. In 2011 it continues to grow and serve. From its inception to the present time, *the Academy has been unique and special*. It is:

- the only organization committed totally to the single teaching intervention - the Orton-Gillingham Approach.
- the only organization whose raison d'être is to set standards for Orton-Gillingham practice and training and to certify persons and accredit training programs that meet those standards.
- the only organization incorporated under the Education Department of the State of New York, thus deriving national recognition for meeting the demanding standards prescribed by that governmental agency.
- the only organization whose certification of individual members affirms to the public and to the profession that those certified have met the high professional standards set by the one organization formally vested with this authority.
- the only organization whose accreditation of school and training programs affirms to the public and to the profession that those accredited have met the high professional standards set by the one organization formally vested with this authority.
- the only organization that provides members with a program of continuing education and a national conference that expressly focuses upon the use of the Orton-Gillingham Approach with children and adults with dyslexia.
- the only organization whose focus insures a means of conveying, to members, other professionals, and the public, the perspectives and value of the Orton-Gillingham Approach.
- the only organization that provides members with an exclusive avenue and forum for representing the Orton-Gillingham Approach both nationally and internationally.

The Academy recognizes and honors the seminal ideas of Samuel T. Orton, June Lyday Orton, Anna Gillingham, Bessie Stillman, and

The Cahn Challenge Question

How can we support beginner ELL's and newcomers by utilizing direct instruction in phonics to develop early language acquisition and reading readiness skills?

To help close the language level and age level gap, they needed to develop a plan to allow for:

- Differentiation based on language levels
- Academic vocabulary instruction
- Grammar Usage
- Basic phonetic lessons for those lacking English language skills

The evolving challenge to improve fluency focused on:

- Phonemic awareness
- Phonics
- Decoding
- Vocabulary
- Comprehension

PS 69's Plan for Success

- Teachers trained by an OG specialist
- Continued in-classroom support
- Drill cards
- Evidence of vowels differentiated from consonants
- Word Walls
- Rule charts for spelling patterns
- Wall of un-phonetic sight words
- Examining Data
- Small groups strategy and intervention
- Read Alouds
- Academic vocabulary
- Integrating technology
- Reaching for Common Core Standards

The students were tested, and then their progress was recorded over a period of four months, when they were tested again. It is important to note that these students were tested using TC (Teachers College Assessments,) that does not follow the scope and sequence of the Orton Approach.

After four months, the results were as follows:

Kindergarten - 78% of the students showed improvement in spelling and 38% of the students showed improvement in reading. (Kindergarten OG training included basic alphabetic sounds, the CVC, CCVC, CVCC patterns, as well as digraphs. The TC Assessment used, included many concepts that had not been covered in the OG training. For this reason, spelling reflected higher gains than reading.)

First Grade - 89% of the students improved in spelling and 100% of the students improved in reading. (At this point in first grade, the concepts necessary to read material covered in TC assessments had been covered.)

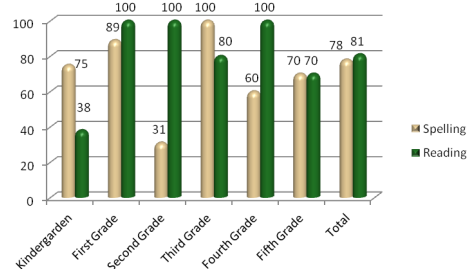
Second Grade - 71% of the students improved in spelling and 100% of the students improved in reading.

Third Grade - 100% of the students improved in spelling and 80% of the students improved in reading.

Fourth Grade - 60% of the students improved in spelling and 100% of the students improved in reading.

Fifth Grade - 70% of the students improved in spelling and 70% of the students improved in reading.

Overall Data collected from November 2010 – March 2011 showed: 78% of the students improved in spelling and 81% of the students improved in reading.




Another benefit was improved comprehension skills, which was a product of the gains students made in decoding.

Ms. Capetanakis also noted that during the four month inquiry, "While the students made gains, they did not reach the benchmark level for their grade. They still have a way to go, but we believe this is a vital piece in giving them a boost toward reading success."

"When teachers know, students improve!"

The importance of these findings, coupled with work of many other Fellows across the country and in Asia, illustrates the versatility,

effectiveness, and fiscally sound investment schools make when they train their teachers in the OG Approach. The data shows the remarkable effect well trained teachers can have on all their students, whether they are in a regular classroom, in small groups with language disabilities, or ELL learners.

When teachers know, students improve! 

Awards and Scholarships

Harris Travel Award Recipients

- Angela Patton
- Michelle Trotter

R. Yoshimoto Scholarship Recipients

- Mary Holmes
- Brenda Mackaness
- Erin Newbury
- Catherine Vericella

Characteristics that Make OG Unique and Effective:

Why OG in the 21st Century?

By Ronald Yoshimoto, Fellow /AOGPE

OG is multisensory – simultaneously – visual/auditory/kinesthetic/tactile. This is the characteristic that distinguishes OG from phonics programs as well as some of the OG-based programs. Every part of the OG lesson utilizes multisensory procedures for inputting and reinforcing or reviewing information – card drill, decoding words, spelling, introduction of concepts, dictation of sentences, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. All of these procedures are also neurologically sound.

OG is phonetic/alphabetic/morphemic/syntactic/semantic. Most of the basal reading programs cover components of phonics but differ in the way they address the syllabic, morphemic, syntactic and semantic levels. Additionally, the emphasis of these programs is on reading and not on spelling. If they do address spelling, their scope and sequence causes more confusion. Overall, programs are not structured and sequential.

OG is linguistically sound. This is a broader view of the complexity of OG and how it differs from other programs. It looks at the grammatical, phonological, and the morphological components of language. As such, OG is ideal for teaching ELL children and adults (and general education students) and represents a more comprehensive and multimodal way of addressing the reading and spelling needs of dyslexic students.

OG is neurologically sound. Multisensory techniques are derived from an understanding of the neurological basis of learning, and more specifically, reading and spelling.

OG is based on best teaching practices or principles. OG differentiates for learners and their styles of learning. OG provides a structured and sequential format, moving from concrete to abstract, and from simple to complex. There is sufficient repetition until a certain level of automaticity

is demonstrated. OG has built-in scaffolding techniques throughout the instructional process. Because of this characteristic, OG is applicable for ALL students. Teachers can also use the principles of OG to teach science, math, social studies, etc.

OG is not a program but an approach. This is a critical difference between OG and other phonics programs or OG-based kits. A program is not geared to the needs of an individual student. It tends not to be diagnostic/prescriptive (and, hence, it is not clinical). There are very few multisensory procedures incorporated into most other {phonics} programs. The flexibility of OG practices/instruction/techniques/etc. is also not evidenced in these programs.

OG is flexible. OG is inherently flexible, as it must be, when one considers the needs of the dyslexic student. It can be used in one-on-one settings, small group settings

and whole classrooms. As a result, it is an excellent approach for the RTI model. It should be used in Tier One for all children. If some students evidence problems, OG in small groups can provide additional help in Tier Two. At times, a few students need more intensive help which OG will provide in Tier Three.

OG is emotionally and socially sound. As the students achieve success in learning, not only does their self-esteem improve, but also their way of interacting with peers and adults. They begin to look at themselves differently. OG helps students to identify their areas of strengths, and helps students develop compensatory strategies which give them a sense of empowerment. In other words, every part of the OG framework is geared to the enhancement of self-esteem – multisensory procedures, correction procedures, teacher verbalizations during instruction, structured and sequential progression, and integration with other areas of reading/spelling and writing.

OG is structured, sequential, cumulative and repetitive. OG is different from other phonics programs because it provides structured and sequential learning experiences. There is also sufficient repetition to enhance automaticity, and the practice is provided in many different formats to prevent boredom.

OG is clinical. OG is diagnostic/prescriptive. OG trained teachers are somewhat analogous to doctors who must assess the symptoms, plan a treatment program and then implement the treatment program. The treatment program may change based on

“As the students achieve success in learning, not only does their self-esteem improve, but also their way of interacting with peers and adults. They begin to look at themselves differently.”

how the patient has responded to the treatment. OG requires that practitioners assess, plan a lesson based on this assessment, then implement the lesson while noting issues/concerns, and revise the lesson and lesson implementation based on what has happened previously. Also, a new lesson plan is developed based on what happened in the preceding lesson.


OG is a vehicle for integrating thinking skills, vocabulary development, writing skills, and content subjects. OG can be used to enhance thinking and writing skills, as well as reinforce concepts in math, science, and social studies.

OG is efficient. From one activity, such as decoding words in isolation, a teacher can differentiate, teach tracking skills, nurture vocabulary development, reinforce grammar skills, and promote development of analogical skills. From the learned word section of the lesson, a teacher can teach far/near point copying and help students to identify the unfamiliar parts of the words. Dictation provides an opportunity not only to reinforce spelling skills in the sentence level, but also to teach punctuation, capitalization, grammar, sentence structures, paragraphing skills, and creative writing.

OG makes connections between reading, spelling, writing and oral language. This is not the case for many of the other

phonics or basal programs. The basal programs may impact decoding skills, but are not structured well for spelling. For many basal and phonics programs, the focus is on reading and not spelling. OG sees the connections between reading and spelling. There is little recognition that spelling is dependent on reading for building visual memory. By the same token, spelling instruction reinforces reading skills.

OG is a powerful instructional approach for teaching reading and spelling. It is the grandfather of all other multisensory structured language programs, and has been proven to be effective for over 80 years. Because of the above characteristics, it empowers both students and teachers. For the students, immediate progress is seen in language arts, thereby enhancing self-esteem. It does not just teach a series of strategies or discrete skills, but helps the students to look at learning and themselves in an integrated and holistic manner. For the teachers and tutors, OG provides a comprehensive, multi-modal, systematic, and multisensory framework and philosophy for teaching reading and spelling to ALL students.

OG is financially or fiscally sound. Schools do not need to spend so much money on basal programs or other multisensory structured language program kits. With the exception of teacher training expenses, the cost of the OG reading and spelling instructional approach is very reasonable. It is important for schools to invest in OG teacher training and provide support to the teachers. 

Ronald Yoshimoto is a Resource Teacher, for the Department of Education, State of Hawaii. Mr. Yoshimoto is the Director, MSL Centre, Singapore; and the Director, OG Centre, Hong Kong.

NEW

Starting with this issue of the Academy News, we are inviting members of the Academy to share their experiences as they continue their studies and strive to achieve membership at a higher level of professional competency in the Academy. We hope that these shared experiences will encourage and motivate other Academy trainees as they continue their own professional development.

Fellow member, Ronald Yoshimoto has kindly established an Academy scholarship fund to allow two public school teachers to attend the Annual Conference. Scholarship recipient, Brenda Mackaness has graciously offered to write about her experiences in her Academy coursework and practicum.

My Journey

By Brenda Mackaness, Certified/AOGPE

Looking back to the year of 1997, when I became employed at Trident Academy, I realize that the seed of passion for the Orton-Gillingham approach to educating students with dyslexia was planted in the classrooms of that school. Trident Academy's administrator insisted that all

of its faculty members be trained in the Orton-Gillingham methodology. I taught for six years at Trident Academy (Mount Pleasant, SC), immersed in their LEAD program. This is a setting consisting of one-to-one and/or small group instruction with OG instruction as its backbone. I was guided, inspired and encouraged by the Fellows Susan McConoughey and Joannie Gerken to attain my Subscriber and Associate levels of training by 2001.

Interested in pursuing an opportunity to teach older students, I followed Fellow Susan McConoughey to a university setting (Johnson & Wales University). I found that I could generalize my OG training to any academic subject, and apply it with students of any age. Using the OG principles, I was able to assist many students to overcome reading and writing issues in their language, science, and math requirements that were hampering their goals for graduation. When Johnson & Wales University relocated its campus to North Carolina, I, unable to follow the move with them, pursued opportunities to teach in the public school system in Charleston, South Carolina. I continued employing my OG skills when I became a teacher at a public middle school, although I was sternly encouraged not to do so! I was "let go" at that school because of my "inappropriate approach to teaching." Luckily, I was given the opportunity to use my OG skills when I became employed by an innovative principal at James Island Charter High School. I realized that this new responsibility required the obligation for me to receive more OG training. I located a Fellow who was willing to train me for the requirements of the Certified level of instruction and competence. I travelled from Charleston, South Carolina to Rhode Island three to four times a year, for three years, working under the Fellow Andrea Greer Sylvia. She flew to Charleston twice during that three year period and observed and critiqued my tutoring sessions with students at the charter high school as well as with my students at the Outreach Program at Trident Academy in Mount Pleasant. I achieved "Certified" level of competency in October of 2010. With encouragement from Fellow, Andrea Sylvia, and an offer of mentorship from Fellow, Sheila Costello, I started the process of fulfilling my Fellow-in-training requirements shortly after receiving my Certified Level certificate.

Since I have begun my FIT, I have been twice publicly acknowledged by my principal at the charter high school for the significant progress that my students have achieved. He has been sufficiently impressed with improved student academic test scores and consistent positive parental and faculty feedback, that he made the unprecedented decision to allow me to exclusively teach OG based support classes for students who are significantly challenged with reading and writing. As far as I know, this is the only school in Charleston, SC who has a full time, FIT faculty member using OG therapy with students at the high school level. These students come from diverse cultures, and those students struggling with the challenges, restrictions and lack of academic support that often evolve from low, socioeconomic family situations. The challenges are many, but the rewards are huge. These students, once trust has been established, flourish and thrive with the individualized instruction and attention. Every student that I have been able to work with broadens my experience and knowledge with not only specific OG skills, but they offer opportunities to

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Academy Holds Annual Conference in South Carolina

On April 29 – 30, 2011, the Academy held its annual spring conference at the Trident Academy in Charleston, South Carolina. The conference, titled Bridging the Gap: Orton-Gillingham in the Low Country, attracted over 200 participants, along with presenters from Canada, the United States, and Singapore. The Trident Academy, an Academy Accredited Instructional Program, hosted the conference on its campus where over 100 students are instructed using the Orton-Gillingham Approach. The Trident Academy was



Beautiful Sculpture at the Trident Academy Gardens

assisted in hosting the conference by the South Carolina Branch of the International Dyslexia Association. Other assisting organizations and donors included The Schenck School, the Kildonan School, the Greenhills School, the Key Learning Center, Camp Spring Creek, the Learning House, and the Commonwealth Learning Center. At the opening of the conference, the Academy President, Rosalie Davis, also recognized the hard work of the local arrangements chairperson, Shelia Costello, and the Headmaster of Trident Academy, Mr. Joseph Ferber.

The Keynote Speaker was Dr. Drake Duane, a noted behavioral neurologist, who has written 19 book chapters and has published over 140 papers and abstracts in prominent journals including the New England Journal of Medicine and the Journal of Child Neurology. Dr. Duane established the Institute for Developmental Behavioral Neurology.



Dr. Drake Duane & President Rosalie Davis

Dr. Duane is past chairman of the National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, and serves on the board of directors of the National Center of Learning Disabilities in New York City.

In the Keynote Address, Dr. Duane reviewed concepts and information on Dyslexia Neurobiology and Behavioral Associations, as learned through recent studies. Dr. Duane reviewed the association between decoding and comprehension, as seen through new studies using MRI technology. He reviewed the anatomy of the brain along with the psychological aspects that can impair the use of language. Dr. Duane also looked at the genetic links of language along with the psychiatric elements of

depression, anxiety, and OCD, that can inhibit language growth. Dr. Duane also discussed the comorbidity of speech/language, with elements of inattention and hyperactivity. He discussed the aspects of positive Rx effects in the medical aspects of helping in the remediation of reading disorders.

This year's conference had the goal of focusing on "bridging the gap" by helping students with dyslexia gain more access to Orton-Gillingham across the curriculum.

These are just some of the sessions that were presented at the conference: Ann Edwards demonstrated procedures and techniques for applying OG strategies in a public school setting. Dawn Nieman presented a variety of OG based games and manipulatives in language based programs. Mary M. Silgals focused on the new electronic tools and software that provide additional remediation in areas of curriculum including reading, writing, math, and organizational / study skills. C. Wilson Anderson presented a two tier workshop




Ron Yoshimoto and Scholarship winner Catherine Vericella

on the strategies that teachers can utilize during presentation of curriculum that includes study guides, testing, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Marilyn Wardrop presented hands – on math strategies designed to allow students to use multisensory learning to achieve mastery of basic mathematics, and strategies to extend out to multiplication and division, using a structured and cumulative approach. Kay Howell focused on the importance of grammar in the development of language, and how to use the OG Approach to teach grammar to students with dyslexia. Karen Leopold discussed the importance of morphology to assist students in the spelling, decoding, and most importantly, in the comprehension of new words.

Ronald Yoshimoto presented the ways OG can be effective in meeting the needs of younger children, in intervention programs from both private and public schools. There were also sessions devoted to psychological assessment of dyslexia, fluency development in reading, handwriting, written expression, the law and how it applies to OG instruction, and using music as a multisensory teaching tool.

The Academy was happy to welcome participants to the conference through the Ruth Harris Travel Award and the Ronald Yoshimoto Scholarship for Public Teachers. The Harris Award is open to Academy members who would otherwise be financially unable to attend. The Yoshimoto Award is for public school teachers who work with students in schools where dyslexia is not recognized, or who work with parents who are unable to afford the costs of private tutoring.

Next Spring, the conference will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana, on March 16th and 17th. The Hutson School has graciously offered to host the Academy. 

Newmembers

The Academy congratulates the following new members:

Certified

Lucy Bradley, Weston, MA
Catherine Franken, Portland, OR
Carrie Malloy, Winston-Salem, NC
Rebecca McCabe, Dedham, MA
Kerri McDonald-Schaub, Wenham, MA
Christine Smith, Greer, SC

Associate

Diane Babcock, Quincy, MA
Anna Brennecke, Columbia, SC
Denise Carloni, North Weymouth, MA
Laura Carter-Velazquez, Dartmouth, MA
Paula Casale-Alves, Providence, RI
Toni Ceaser, Long Island City, NY
Karen Conneely, Quincy, MA
Renee Crump, Columbia, SC
Cynthia Davis, Midlothian, VA
Trudy DeFelice, Chapin, SC
Elizabeth Donahue, Forestdale, MA
Laura Emerick, Marietta, GA
Sandra Epstein, Atlanta, GA
Elaine Fellows, Lecanto, FL
Brenda Fitzgerald, Marietta, GA
Emily Gangi, Waltham, MA
Joan Gapper, Waxhaw, NC
Denise Gerstmyer, Concord, MA
Lisa Glickman, Marietta, GA
Vicki Grodsky, Roslindale, MA
Noreen Groom, Burlington, MA
Muniza Shehzeen, Haq, Boston, MA
Lori, Higgins, West Roxbury, MA
Yu Huei Huei, Singapore,
Patricia Janas, Welland, Ontario
Parker Anne Kelly, Winston-Salem, NC
Melissa King, Midlothian, VA
Cynthia Krehbiel, Richmond, VA
Jeraldine See Suat Lay, Singapore,
Irene Lee, Brooklyn, NY
Lisa Leone-Blackbird, Seekonk, MA
Kitashia McGonigle, Rumford, RI
Anne Morin, Milford, MA
Shari Most, Needham, MA
Raquel Ner, Singapore,
Susan Nyman, Mt. Pleasant, SC
Judith Packhem, North Kingstown, RI
Erin Perkins, Quincy, MA
Bianca, Rivera, Greenville, RI
Lisa Selby, Canton, MA
Amy Smith, Hamilton, Bermuda
Janice Steever, Davidson, NC
William Strauss, Brooklyn, NY
Dena Sturisky, Dunwoody, GA
Joanne Taber, Salisbury, CT
Lisa Tweed, Madison, CT
Martha Vaananen, Wayland, MA
Nicole Zaloumis-O'Reilly, Saunderson, RI


Subscriber

Victoria Albritton, Lakeland, FL
Shelley Allen, Inver Grove Heights, MN
Sandra Allen, Gainesboro, TN
Diana Andrews, Hilton Head Island, SC
Sandra Anthony, DPO, AE
Celeste Antonucci, Sarasota, FL
Lori Arnett, Lynchburg, TN
Janet Atha, Huntsville, AL
Suzy Barnett, Irvington, NY
Margaret Beach, Rockaway, NY
Theresa Beauchamp, Aberdeen, NC
Joan Bednarek, Pisgah Forest, NC
Jennifer Bedry Selden, NY
Amanda Blanch, Greer, SC
Lisa Boone, Westport, CT
Kris Bowerman, Delta, BC
Rebecca Brown, Simpsonville, SC
Deborah Browne, Carbondale, IL
Sherri Busk, Huntsville, AL
Megan Byers, Carbondale, IL
Jeannine Cagliuso, Rockville Centre, NY
Maria Castellano, Belle Harbor, NY
Cecelia Clark, Asheville, NC
Lisa Clark, Huntsville, AL
Joran Clements, Lexington, SC
April Coggins, Southport, NC
Donna Collins, Carbondale, IL
Jennifer Conwell-Barnes, Murphysboro, IL
Cindy Cotton, Huntsville, AL
Stephanie Crandell, Golden, MS
Leslie Davis, Greenville, SC
Terri Douglas, Murphysboro, IL
Meagan Downey, Yorktown Heights, NY
Jan Filitti, Asheville, NC
Cindy Floyd, Columbia, SC
Sherri Fowler, Huntsville, AL
Catherine Franch, Simpsonville, SC
Monica Goforth, Campobello, SC
Erin Golob, West Frankfort, IL
Tambia Goodson, West Palm Beach, FL
Elizabeth Graff, Goreville, IL
Alison Hambleton, Kingston, Ontario, Canada
Bethany Hill, Somerville, AL
Misty Howse, Cullman, AL
Stephen Isacoff, Hudson, MA
Mary Ann Jaben, Waynesville, NC
Sharon Jermain, North Attleboro, MA
Margaret Krause, Lakeland, FL
Ann LaBeau, Mountain Lakes, NJ
Tarie Lewis, Modena, NY
Christy MacKenzie, Huntsville, AL
Gail Martin, Riverside, CT
Amanda Maxwell, Homewood, AL
Lauren McCarthy, Ridgewood, NJ
Michelle McNabb, Owens Cross Rds, AL
Alison McNamar, Kelowna, Canada
Joanna Miller, Bluffton, SC

Donna Misyko, Asheville, NC
Libby Morgan, Brownsboro, AL
Stacy Morrell, Madison, AL
Shannon Nelson, Atlanta, GA
Dorothy Nicholson, Greenville, SC
Brian O'Shea, Auckland, New Zealand
Tamara Ogilvie, Silver City, NM
Erin Patterson, Atlanta, GA
Angela Patton, Lawrenceville, GA
Lee Payne, Louisville, KY
Kim Petty, Salisbury, NC
Jennifer Plourde, Greer, SC
Stephanie Pullon, Hilton Head Island, SC
Jennie Renna, Maynard, MA
Terry Robertson, Acton, MA
Rachael Rohan, Madison, AL
Rachel Rohrer, Richmond, VA
Ruth Schroeter, Westchester, IL
Candice Sellers, Arden, NC
Virginia Sevilla, Richmond, BC Canada
Christa Sims, Rainsville, AL
Beth Smith, Athens, AL
Janet Snapp, Lakeland, FL
Susan Spinks, Crestline, CA
Maureen Steltman, Vancouver, BC
Canada
Jennylyn Sterling, Fairfield, CT
Heather Stone, Greenville, SC
Lawrence Strohacker, Indianapolis, IN
Christine Strusz, Carbondale, IL
Shelia Sumpter, Waynesville, NC
Jane Swearengin, Decatur, AL
Margaret Sweatman, Huntsville, AL
Jacqueline Tricker, Wareham, MA
Michelle Trotter, Suwanee, GA
Cheryl Urbanczyk, Mississauga, Ontario
Canada
Mary Jo van Dalen, Mills River, NC
Diane Villano, Nesconset, NY
Alan Waibel, Carrboro, NC
Shannon Wall, Asheville, NC
Patricia Warvi, Huntsville, AL
Anita Weaver, Fairplay, SC
Giselle Weekes, Greenville, SC
Lisa White, Granby, MA
Lance Williams, Murphysboro, IL
Heather Williams, Greer, SC
Chau Oi Yi, Kwun Tong, Hong Kong
Molly Yoder, Greensboro, NC

enhance the intangible factors that make my teaching more efficient, effective, and supportive. These students are not obliged to attend sessions with me; there is no tangible reward in terms of grades or credits. I am able to engage these students because I consistently and tenaciously adhere to the principles of the OG approach. My reward is witnessing their self-confidence and academic skills grow, as well as their graduation from high school as proof of their competence.

I have also begun the first steps to become an independent OG clinician. Using the skills I have attained as an official Certified member of the Academy, I help students who have been referred to me because of their language struggles in various academic settings. Meeting at libraries following my “day job” at the charter high school, I offer academic therapy to one or two students every day of the school week. I have had many successes with these “younger” first, second and third grade students. They have all made significant academic gains at their perspective schools and have achieved grade competency in their state formal assessments. Parents are pleased with their children’s successes and are willing to drive significant distances two to three times a week to have their children work with me. Parents also appreciate the consistent feedback and communication that I maintain, which helps them support the skills their children are learning, as well as advocate more effectively for their children at school.

With my experience of applying the Orton-Gillingham Approach to students of all ages, with strong cultural diversities and extreme academic deficits, my goal is to continue to try to positively affect all of my students. I am also presently assisting, with Fellow mentorship, some trainees working toward the Associate level of certification. I continue to enjoy all the diverse opportunities to enhance my learning and teaching skills. I feel that I have been extremely fortunate to have been given the opportunities to share my OG knowledge with students at all grade levels; elementary, middle, high school, university and now adult trainees. Becoming an Academy of Orton-Gillingham member has significantly and positively forever affected my life, and I am very grateful for all the members of the Academy who have unselfishly assisted and supported my 16 years of involvement with them. 

Paula Rome. On matters of what to teach and how to teach, contributions from founders have met the test of time. Recent research has validated these contributions and serves as a reminder of the power of the Orton-Gillingham Approach in the hands of a well-trained practitioner.

The Academy considers Orton-Gillingham an *approach*, not a method, program, or technique. It provides the experienced instructor with a powerful tool of exceptional breadth, depth, and flexibility. While it is structured, phonetic, and multisensory, the scope and the sequence are flexible, teaching the language as it is to the student as he or she is. It is diagnostic, prescriptive, and comprehensive – including not only reading, writing, and spelling, but also grammar and usage. The Academy recognizes that the Orton-Gillingham approach is not proprietary or scripted, nor does it prescribe a rigid sequence or mandate a specific set of materials. Finally, it is analytic and synthetic, teaching dyslexic students to take apart sounds, words, sentences, and paragraphs and put them together properly.

All this makes the Academy unique and special.

Upcoming events

Fellow Seminar 2011
October 14th & 15th
Sheraton Hartford Hotel
Bradley Airport
Windsor Locks, Connecticut

62nd Annual IDA Conference
November 9 – 12
Chicago, Illinois
Visit the Academy Booth: #714
Academy Sponsored Reception
Thursday, November 10th from 6:30 to 8:30pm

AOGPE Annual Conference 2012
March 16th & 17th
Indianapolis, Indiana
Hosted by the Hutson School
Conference and Accommodations:
Sheraton Indianapolis City Centre

Welcome From the Hutson School

An Academy Accredited Instructional Program

The Hutson School is a non-profit day school providing specialized instruction for students from 1st to 12th grade with language based learning differences.

This fall marks the 10th anniversary of The Hutson School. “Hutson has much to celebrate,” says Janet George, Founder, Principal, and Head of School. “True to our mission to empower children with language based learning differences to succeed and become confident and competent lifelong learners, we have grown from an initial enrollment of six (in 2002) to sixty plus students, being taught by some of Indiana’s top educators.” As of 2010, we brought the only three academy accredited Fellows in Indiana back together – all working at The Hutson School. With their combined understanding and specializations in administration, psychology, and one-on-one instruction, we are able to serve our families on an exemplary level.

As one of only ten schools in the country accredited by the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators, we are excited in our anniversary year to be hosting the March, 2012 OG Conference in Indianapolis. Visitors will see firsthand the hallmarks of a Hutson education including: specialized, multi-sensory, Orton-Gillingham instruction, in a 6:1 student/teacher setting, enhanced with extracurricular activities such as drama, music, athletics and art instruction. 