

# Reading Revelations

Volume 1, Issue 6

April 2009

The Roberts Center for Learning and Literacy

Florida Southern and Verizon DREAM Literacy Grant Begins!

## Special points of interest:

- DREAM literacy project a go....
- Roberts Center Reading Clinic off to a great start....
- National Panel adds another area to Reading focus.....
- Orton-Gillingham phonics training offered Summer 2009....



The DREAM literacy project at Crystal Lake Elementary, funded through a grant from Verizon, began on February 18th.

Linda Newman, Reading Coach for Polk County, was chosen as the site manager and tutor for the program. Three other teachers were also chosen to provide small group instruction for students in third grade facing the state test for Florida, the FCAT.

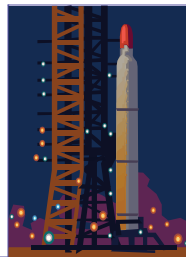
Third grade students in need of additional help in reading were invited and encouraged to attend. The program, which is held three afternoons per week, will run for 12 weeks.

Twenty-two students began the intense and focused literacy sessions.

Utilizing testing data from KAPLAN, a program that provides baseline data for FCAT skills, the students were grouped according to skill needs. Tutors use materials from the KAPLAN lesson plan

bank to target weak areas and provide focused FCAT skill instruction for the upcoming FCAT on March 10th.

Learning gains will be measured at the end of the program by using the KAPLAN baseline 3 assessment.



Over 50% of NASA employees are dyslexic. They are deliberately sought after because they have superb problem solving skills and excellent 3D and spatial awareness.

Following the FCAT, students will be instructed on reading skills using AlphaSmart Neo's, SRA materials, Orton-Gillingham lessons and other manipulatives and activities.

The Verizon grant of \$20,000 is provided for implementation of the DREAM literacy project in the Spring and a replication in the Fall for two Polk County Public Schools. Crystal Lake was the recipient of the Spring project. The fall site is to be determined.

Monies from Verizon provided Professional Development opportunities through the Robert's Center, Program Specialist, Lou Ann Bigsby. She shared information about dyslexia, struggling readers and the Orton-Gillingham method of teaching. Participants were able to make and take activities to use in the tutoring sessions.

Thank you Verizon and Florida Southern College for this opportunity to improve reading.

## Roberts Center Reading Clinic Now Open!

On March 1, 2009 the Roberts Center Reading Clinic opened its doors to tutor student's identified as struggling readers. Students may or may not have a diagnosis of dyslexia but do have an established problem with reading.

Susan Kearns, Jolene Ahschwede, Kristi Peace, Julie Damiano and Sherry Jenkins McGuire have been hired to deliver individualized reading instruction to students from 5-16 years

of age. All tutors hold a Bachelors Degrees or higher and Certification in Education and specialization areas. They are experienced in tutoring struggling readers.

Tutors will use **The Barton Reading and Spelling Program**, an Orton-Gillingham based program designed for use with struggling readers and those diagnosed with dyslexia. Other techniques and strategies targeting the

6 areas of reading identified by the National Reading Panel will be addressed. Oral Language, Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension will be the focus, delivered through multisensory approaches to learning.

If you know of a struggling student in need of tutoring. Send them our way!

It is estimated that more than \$2 billion is spent each year on students who repeat a grade because they have reading problems. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

© - Approximately 50 percent of the nation's unemployed youth age 16-21 are functional illiterate, with virtually no prospects of obtaining good jobs. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Florida is one of only 8 states that pays for its tenth graders to take the PSAT. Florida began this program in 2001 to encourage more students to consider going to college.

A great teaching and parent resource!

<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/983.html>

**Summer 2009 Opportunity for Polk County Public School and Private School teachers**

What: Orton-Gillingham Level 1 Training  
When: June 15th-19th  
Where: Florida Southern College, Edge Hall  
Sponsored by: The Roberts Center for Learning and Literacy and Verizon DREAM Literacy Grant  
Cost: \$25.00 materials fee, balance of cost provided through grant funds. (\$2,500 value!)  
How do you participate?  
April 1st- check the Roberts Center Web site listed below for application details. Chosen by lottery drawing, twenty-five lucky educators will get the training of a lifetime!  
<http://www.flsouthern.edu/robertscenter/>



43% of people with the lowest literacy skills live in poverty.  
17% of people with the lowest literacy skills receive food stamps  
70% of people with the lowest literacy skills have no full or part time job.  
Workers who lack a high school diploma earn a mean monthly income of \$452 compared to \$1,829 for those with a college degree.

**What are the 6 areas of reading??? And what exactly do they do?**

Recently, the National Reading Panel added Oral Language Development to the 5 established reading areas. In order to better understand these concepts, some explanation may be in order.  
**Oral language**, the complex system that relates sounds to meanings, is made up of three components: phonological, semantic, and syntactic (Lindfors, 1987). Phonological involves the rules for combining sounds, semantic is made up of morphemes, the smallest units of meaning that may be combined with each other to make up words and

sentences. (Brown, 1973). Syntactic consists of the rules that enable us to combine morphemes into sentences.  
**Phonemic Awareness** (P.A.) is the ability to recognize that a spoken word is composed of a sequence of individual sounds (phonemes). Children who are unaware that words consist of individual sounds will have difficulty in decoding.  
**Phonics** is a way of teaching reading and spelling that stresses symbol-sound

relationships, used especially in beginning instruction (Harris & Hodges, p. 186).  
**Reading fluency** is the ability to read text accurately and quickly. Fluency bridges word decoding and comprehension. Fluency is a set of skills that allows readers to rapidly decode text while maintaining high comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2001).  
**Vocabulary** is simply the words a learner owns.  
**Comprehension**, however, is understanding the text, a more complex process.  
The six areas all joined together make a strong reader.