



OPENING THE WORLD THROUGH WORDS

# Literacy Matters

A Quarterly Newsletter Presented by

Oakland Literacy Council

Winter 2014/2015

## Thirty Ways the Oakland Literacy Council Says "Happy Holidays!"

This is the time of year for celebrating and enjoying seasonal festivities. At the Oakland Literacy Council, we meet and greet people from all over the world.

**French:** Joyeuses Fêtes!

**Spanish:** Felices Fiestas!

**Vietnamese:** Hạnh phúc ngày lễ

**Chinese:** 節日快樂

**Filipino:** Masaya pista opisyal

**Irish:** Laethanta saoire sona

**Portuguese:** Boas Festas!

**Romanian:** Sarbatori Fericitel!

**Slovenian:** Vesele Praznike

**Croatian:** Sretni praznici!

**Greek:** ΚΑΛΕΣ ΓΙΟΡΤΕΣ(kales diakopes)

**Albanian:** Gëzuar Festat

**Catalan:** Bones Festes!

**Latin:** Felix feriarum

**Japanese:** 幸せな休日

**Hebrew:** חג שמח

**Italian:** Buone Feste!

**Hawaiian:** Hau'oli Lanui

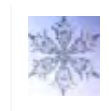
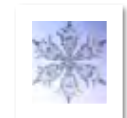
**South African (Xhose):** Ii holidel eximnandi

**German:** Forhe Feiertage

**Dutch:** Prettige feestdagen

**Gaelic:** Beannachtaí na Féile

The Oakland Literacy office will be closed the weeks of December 22 and 29



## A few words...



Dear Reader,

As 2014 comes to an end, we must also close the chapter on our phenomenal 30th anniversary year. May I be the first to applaud and thank all of you who participated in our 30th anniversary activities, who became new students and tutors, who continue to give the very best to your students, who helped in countless ways in our office and at our many special events, who told us we were doing a terrific job, who served on our board, who gave a financial donation, and to the two women-Julie Hoensheid and Shari Barrick who continue to work tirelessly to best serve Oakland Literacy Council. You are all part of the fabric of the OLC and each one of you makes a difference.

At this time of the year I always take out my "Life's Little Instructions" and read it through if for no other reason then to center myself. I'd like to take this time to give you a few of my favorites....never refuse homemade brownies, compliment three people every day, think big thoughts, but relish small pleasures, rekindle old friendships, look people in the eye, wave at kids on a school bus, always accept an outstretched hand and be the first to say "hello".

Finally join me in praising the work of MaryAnne Thorndycraft and Pat Ojala for their years of service to the OLC. Both are leaving their posts (MaryAnne as a 25 year board member and Pat as a co-tutor trainer for 11 years) to spend more time with their families and to pursue other endeavors. They both promise not to be strangers and will gladly give their advice when asked. They will be missed but we wish them well.

Now I am off to enjoy a piping cup of hot chocolate, but want to take this opportunity to wish you all the best in 2015.

*Judy Lindstrom*

## Celebrate Literacy!

Search up, down, forward, backward, and on the diagonal to find the hidden words.

Y I S D C S G H W O N E D S D  
 B C K T L R O I R R S P L T R  
 D O A R H L A N F U I K O U E  
 U O A R I G A N A T Q T C D A  
 I T S D E M I L B X S H I E M  
 S N A I E T P L R E A D I N G  
 S Y A N K P I N E W R H C T G  
 N V T U A M W L B R G R Y P T  
 O S M A G I C W M I A T I U N  
 W S E L D N A C E L N E T E K  
 F D A K R A P L C E D O Y G S  
 L N F I Z Z S I E S R Q L S A  
 A G Q C B U J C D N R F G G I  
 K S Y A D I L O H I G U E G R  
 E A B V H E T T X T M R Q M N

APPLAUSE  
 CANDLES  
 COLD  
 CRANBERRIES  
 DECEMBER  
 DREAM  
 GIFTS  
 HOLIDAY  
 HOLIDAYS  
 LIGHTS  
 LITERACY  
 MAGIC  
 NEW  
 ORNAMENTS  
 PARKA  
 READING  
 SLEIGH  
 SNOWFLAKE  
 STAR  
 STUDENT  
 TINSEL  
 TUTOR  
 WRITING  
 YEAR

## Country Spotlight: Bulgaria

Country:	Bulgaria
Location:	Europe
Capital:	Sofia
Population:	7 million (just under)
Size:	42,811 (slightly larger than Tennessee)
Primary Language:	Bulgarian
Climate:	The climate is similar to the U.S. Midwest, with cold, snowy winters and hot, dry summers. Northern regions tend to be colder than southern regions, and snowfall is heavy in the mountains. Weather on the coast, however, is quite mild. The average annual temperature is 51 degrees (11 Celsius) in the north and 56 degrees (13 Celsius) in the South.
Greetings:	When meeting, Bulgarians usually shake hands which might be accompanied in formal situations by <i>Kak ste?</i> (How are you?) or <i>Zdraveite</i> (Hello). Friends, relatives, and colleagues use the informal terms for these greetings: <i>Kak si?</i> and <i>Zdrasti</i> or <i>Zdravei</i> . Bulgarians use first names in informal settings but otherwise address others by title and family name. When in a group, it is polite to greet each person individually, beginning with the women or the elderly.
Gestures	Among older Bulgarians, “yes” is often indicated by shaking the head from side to side, and “no” is expressed with one or two nods. One might shake the index finger from side to side to emphasize the “no” and even add a “tsk” sound for displeasure. In conversation, people generally do not use hand gestures, but they often touch each other. Pointing with the index finger is rude. It is impolite for men to cross an ankle over the knee or for anyone to put feet on furniture.
Eating:	In addition to three meals a day, Bulgarians might have a midmorning snack and afternoon coffee. Traditionally, the largest meal was eaten at midday. Today, most Bulgarians have a light lunch during their work hours and eat their main family meal after 7 p.m.  Continental style of eating is most common, with the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right. An empty plate and glass will usually be refilled. It is polite for guests to accept 2nd helpings. A small amount of food left on the plate (usually after 2nd helpings) indicates that one is full. Conversation is expected, and everyone waits for all to finish before leaving the table.
Holidays:	Public holidays include New Year's Day (Jan 1), <i>Baba Marta</i> Day (Mar 1), National Day of Freedom and Independence (Mar 3), Easter, the Day of Bulgarian Culture and Science (May 24), and Christmas Day (Dec 25). On name days ( <i>immen den</i> ), Bulgarians commemorate the saint after whom they are named by having a special meal with their families; they are also visited by friends and relatives, who bring presents.



Student **Rumen Kozhuharov** shared some Bulgarian trivia: 1) Bulgarian yogurt is very popular around the world. And the Balkans are considered homeland of yogurt. (Greek yoghurt is not Greek but Bulgarian.) 2) Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook founder, has a Bulgarian origin and is named after his Bulgarian maternal grandfather – Marko. 3) The famous Bulgarian rose oil is used for making some of the world's most popular and expensive perfumes. One gram of rose oil is made out of 1000 rose blossoms.

Student **Gyurga Kozhuharov** misses her friends, family and students at her school. She says Bulgarians are very hard working and friendly people. Their cuisine is a mixture of Bulgarian, middle eastern, Greek and Turkish.

Student **Hristian Kolchakov** shares that Bulgaria is a nice country with very good nature especially the Black Sea. Like Rumen, Hristian says the yogurt is delicious. He misses his family and wants them to come to the United States.

Our cookbook, ***Sharing our Best*** includes a Bulgarian recipe Challah bread, It makes a wonderful gift. Pick up your copy today!

# Holiday Exchange

On Thursday, December 11, more than 30 tutors spent the afternoon at the Oakland Literacy Council office. The session commonly referred to as the Breakfast Club offered nothing in the way of an elegant brunch or omelets made to order but was ripe with lively conversation and sharing among the tutors and OLC staff. In the tradition of holiday giving, presents of information were the gifts exchanged at this event.



This forum was an opportunity for tutors to learn tips and successes from their peers. The tutors who attended were both new and seasoned. While the seasoned tutors shared specific OLC student tips, the new tutors often offered tips based upon their experiences from other activities i.e., work place, school and family. During the session, the OLC staff provided additional information on testing and hour requirements for the OLC program and state funding.

Tutor Trainers Julie Hoensheid and Pat Ojala lead the group as tutors submitted questions via index cards. The facilitators read through the questions while the tutors talked amongst themselves about their students. Many questions arose about monthly tutor reports. Julie explained the requirements and reinforced that monthly reminders are sent with the requirements.



The session was very interactive and everyone left with their informational gifts to advance their learning as well as their students.

The next Breakfast Club is scheduled for February 10, from 10:00 – 12:00 at the OLC office.



## From the Water Cooler



**My ESL student brings her electronic English translator to our tutoring sessions. At times, she seems so fixated on the meaning of a word that our tutoring sessions get off track. Using the translator takes up a lot of time and we are getting bogged down on single words rather than content.**

The translator can be an effective tool for your student to use in the right settings. However, it can also become a crutch. When a student focuses so intently on word definitions that it interrupts the flow of conversation or reading, she can lose the overall meaning and comprehension is lost.

For the tutoring session, you and your student should set the parameters for use of the translator. Since time spent with a tutor is valuable, use of the translator takes away from that quality time. She can use the translator when needed for translation outside of tutoring.

If your student comes to a word she does not understand, teach her to look or listen for context clues that will help her get the meaning. Very often a person can figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word by using the words around it. (The surrounding sentences are known as the context.) If she still does not understand, simply explain it to her and write it down for later study.

You can use those words that she has had difficulty with in the Word Study portion of your lesson. For specific strategies, see Chapter 7: *Word Study* in your *LitStart* book. This chapter consists of activities involving phonics, vocabulary, word recognition and spelling.

As your student increases her ability to decipher unfamiliar words, she will become more confident and independent. Ultimately, this is the goal.

## Tutor Tips

**Barbara Klarman** requires her student to call her the morning of the tutoring session to confirm the appointment. This is a practice exercise for the student in speaking English, gaining confidence in speaking on the telephone and makes sure the tutor's time is valued. She asks the student to repeat themselves on the phone if she cannot understand them thus reinforcing the concept of understanding.

**Pat Peck** likes to use puzzles to reinforce and review vocabulary with her student. She records a list of words that her student struggles with each week, it could be a word he has trouble pronouncing or is unsure of the meaning. Then she goes to [puzzlemaker.com](http://puzzlemaker.com) and selects the "criss cross puzzle." Separately, she makes a list of the words with a brief definition. She tries to use words they have used before in the definitions. When the puzzle is complete, she prints it. She then hand-prints the list of words (all mixed up, not in order they come out in the puzzle), along the side. This way her student is not overwhelmed by the task. He loves the puzzles!

**Frances Simmons** student is improving her English vocabulary by reading the book, *Stone Soup*. Frances tells us that the sentences in the book contain words which are very descriptive, which provide opportunities for her student to learn many new words. They write down the definitions, review them, play a matching game, use new words in our own sentences, then her student re-reads the story with more comprehension.

*"The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains.*

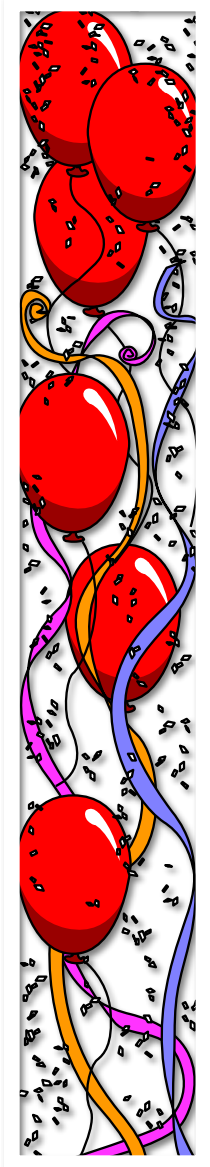
*The superior teacher demonstrates.*

*The great teacher inspires."*

William Arthur Ward

# Oakland Literacy Council

## Student Goal Achievements - 2014



August 2014	CD GRADUATED from OLC
August 2014	YL GRADUATED from OLC
August 2014	BF GRADUATED from OLC
August 2014	KS GRADUATED from OLC
August 2014	BC GRADUATED from OLC
August 2014	SK GRADUATED from OLC
August 2014	SC GRADUATED from OLC
August 2014	YY conversed over the phone with her tutor.
August 2014	MK learned how and successfully mailed packages to her family in South Korea.
August 2014	LZ completed a flood insurance claim form.
August 2014	AC got a part-time job working in the clothing department at Meijer.
September 2014	MO GRADUATED from OLC
September 2014	AD GRADUATED from OLC
September 2014	JR GRADUATED from OLC
September 2014	MH GRADUATED from OLC
September 2014	AD GRADUATED from OLC
September 2014	LP GRADUATED from OLC
September 2014	KH GRADUATED from OLC
September 2014	AV GRADUATED from OLC
September 2014	KC completed her resume and applied for a job.
September 2014	GK Completed a trip to Joann's Fabric Store.
September 2014	JL was able to communicate with her son's teacher.
September 2014	HK turned off the subtitles on watching Netflix shows because she could understand the shows without them.
September 2014	DW was admitted to North Dakota University after improving his TOEFL test (he was initially turned down).
September 2014	SK passed the Citizenship test.
September 2014	WG got her first Smartphone and started texting which requires her to spell.
October 2014	SH wrote a composition on "What Constitutes Friendship."
October 2014	VM went to a job fair, interview and was hired.
October 2014	DM finished reading his fifth novel "The Gates of November."
October 2014	RP read a Bible passage aloud to his church.
October 2014	AH learned how to order at restaurants with correct pronunciation.
October 2014	YY completed and submitted benefit forms for her parents.
October 2014	HK wrote out a recipe for fried rice in English and explained how to prepare it in English. She then prepared the dish for her tutor to take home!
October 2014	MN has used her English skills for the real estate process while buying a home. She made an offer on a home this month.
October 2014	KC completed her resume and applied for a job.
October 2014	CD attended her doctor's appointment alone and she understood the doctor and he understood her.
October 2014	CS learned how to use the voting ballot for the November election.
October 2014	YP learned about coupons and used one to buy pizza for her family.

# FIELD WORK

Field trips are fun, effective ways to enhance student learning. These mini adventures can offer opportunities for students to practice reading, speaking and listening in public places outside the comfort of a routine setting. While most tutors are familiar with what Metro Detroit has to offer, here are some field trip examples or reminders:

- ❖ Cranbrook Institute of Science, Bloomfield Hills
- ❖ Cranbrook House & Gardens, Bloomfield Hills
- ❖ Detroit Institute of the Arts, Detroit
- ❖ Detroit Zoo, Royal Oak
- ❖ Eastern Market, Detroit
- ❖ Farmers Market, Royal Oak
- ❖ Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village, Dearborn
- ❖ Kensington Metro Park, Milford
- ❖ Meadowbrook Hall, Rochester
- ❖ Oakland County Market, Waterford Township
- ❖ Troy Historical Museum, Troy



Most places will have signs, directions and other items to read during the course of the trip to use as practice. These provide opportunities for dialogue, comprehension and reading. If you have other suggestions please email the office and we will add them to our resource list for tutors.



# ABSENCE MAKES THE LEARNING GO FURTHER

Many of our students and tutors aren't able to meet as often over the holidays. For some, it might be due to an extended trip across the country, or even the globe! For others, it might be a calendar packed with visits from family and friends. However, this doesn't mean that learning should stop.

In fact, it is very important that it continues.

Students experience learning losses when they don't engage in educational activities during breaks. Research shows that students typically score lower on standardized tests at the end of vacation than they do on the same tests at the beginning of vacation. In order to keep their skills sharp, students need to continue to practice each and every day.

Below are some ideas to keep the learning going. Students can complete these assignments on their own then share and review them with their tutors when they reunite.

It is sure to generate some exciting and interesting conversation!

- Find and collect words from newspapers and magazines. Depending on your student's level, these could be words that start with a different sound each day, vocabulary words you've studied together, or words they don't understand.
- Write a journal entry each day. Encourage "temporary spelling."
- Do crossword and word search puzzles. Use vocabulary words, holiday words or vacation words...anything you think your student would enjoy.
- Reread a story that the two of you have read together in the past.
- Listen to an audio book.
- Spend some time on some of the English practice websites. See "Resources for Students" on the Oakland Literacy Council website.
- Complete workbook exercises.
- Copy words, sentences or a paragraph.
- Make a list- of daily activities, groceries, people you see, favorite holiday traditions...
- Send a postcard or write a letter to your tutor.
- Label a map (of their neighborhood, village, city, country, etc.).

And here are a few you can do together:

- Email with each other.
- Plan short phone calls to practice conversation.
- Use Skype or Face Time.

*\* The student should keep track of the number of hours spent practicing for review with the tutor. This time should then be included in the tutor's monthly report.*