



Love Letters to Literacy

*An Inspirational Collection of Letters,
Stories, Photos and Poems
from across Ontario*



Compiled and Edited by Community Literacy of Ontario



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An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario



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Introduction to Love Letters to Literacy

In October 2014 Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) celebrates its 20th anniversary. We believe that the best way to celebrate this anniversary is to honour the power, passion and impact of community-based literacy in Ontario.

In the spirit of celebrating literacy, Community Literacy of Ontario initiated our "Love Letters to Literacy" campaign.

In this campaign we asked students, staff, volunteers and anyone with a passion for literacy to create a "Love Letter to Literacy" which shared:

- Why does literacy matter to you?
- How has literacy impacted your life?
- What are your hopes for literacy in the future?

In response, Community Literacy of Ontario received letters, postcards, pictures, drawings, videos and poems from across Ontario.

Thanks to sponsorship funding from Honda Canada, CLO was able to compile these submissions and create this digital book called "*Love Letters to Literacy: An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario.*"

This digital book is freely available online at www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/love-letters/



HONDA

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

These incredible "Love Letters to Literacy" celebrate what CLO and community-based literacy organizations in our province have always believed in: the stories, voices, faces and people whose lives have been touched by literacy. We hope that this collection will help to showcase the importance of literacy to our province and to our nation.

Community Literacy of Ontario is very grateful to all those who shared their stories and their love for literacy.

Love Letters to Literacy

In honour of Community Literacy of Ontario's 20th anniversary, we are inviting YOU to join us in our "Love Letters to Literacy" campaign!



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We are asking everyone with a passion for literacy to create a "Love Letter to Literacy" which shares:

- 1 Why does literacy matter to you?
- 2 How has literacy impacted your life?
- 3 What are your hopes for literacy in the future?

Your "Love Letter to Literacy" can be a letter, story, poem, photo, drawing or video. Community Literacy of Ontario will compile these letters and share them online.

"Love Letters to Literacy" will celebrate the stories, voices, faces and people whose lives have been touched by literacy.

Share your "Love Letter to Literacy" at

loveletters2literacy@gmail.com

or at

www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/love-letters/

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

I did not know how to use a computer before I came to the North Bay Literacy Council.

Now, I am very confident in using the computer. I am on the Laubach Literacy Ontario Board as a student representative.

I use the computer every day. I have organized my day with the computer. I make a to-do list for each day. I have a calendar to keep track of my appointments with my student, doctor's appointments. I work out my schedule so I can plan activities. I am to organize my time more efficiently.

I hope that literacy councils will be able to continue to offer computer programs for their clients. I am very confident and have recently got a job at Wendy's. I had the confidence to go for the interview.

Annie Aultman



Paige Turner, Community Ambassador for Literacy Council York-Simcoe and staff are pleased to introduce a selection of love letters to literacy written by learners at LCYS. They are delighted to support the "Love Letters to Literacy" campaign because they know that learning for life begins with literacy.



Representative Speech for Trades and Technology

Good afternoon: faculty, staff, administration, fellow classmates, high schools from across the region, visitors, and our guest speaker; who is not only an inspiration to some, but a hero to others (particularly me), Mr. Mike Holmes. (Who is not in this gym at the moment, but I am sure he is somewhere in this college).

As female students readying ourselves for our future careers, now more than ever, we are surrounded by professional women working in trades and technology. In contrast to the days when our grandmothers and great-grandmothers studied in educational institutions, more and more we are hearing of and seeing female students graduating in the fields of civil, electrical, mechanical, mining, and so on. One reason is that promoting the diversity of female students in trades and technology has grown. We hear of female family members or friends establishing careers in these professions, and it can inspire us to pursue our own careers of choice. For some of us, our inspiration and passion is derived from seeing women who are working in different trades and technology being portrayed in popular media.

For myself, when I was a little girl I would sit in the sandbox constructing houses out of sand. In high school, I enrolled in construction, welding and drafting classes. With the help of my guidance counsellor, I was working toward my dream of studying in the field of architecture. However, unforeseen circumstances led to me dropping out of high school and working for a living, serving in bars and restaurants. These were positions that required minimal education and that provided me with enough income to pay for food and rent. At the time, I never looked back on those long forgotten dreams. I eventually married the love of my life, gave birth to three wonderful children, and purchased my first house.

After moving in however, those dreams resurfaced. I began watching Mike Holmes and his crew on television which brought back the passion I once had. With the help and support of my husband, I obtained my diploma in Interior Design, and a couple of years later we renovated and sold our home. We bought our second house in Iroquois Falls and that was to be my next project. By this time the economy took a turn for the worse and times got tough. The renovations had been put on hold as hard decisions were made and our lifestyle changed. However, I was not going to lose my passion this time. I began volunteering my time with the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #70, where I met a number of local contractors, which led to me working for one of them doing construction. I soon realized that if I wanted to pursue my dreams then going back to school was a must.

I registered at the Adult Learning Centre in Iroquois Falls in order to receive the educational upgrading needed to attend Northern College's Porcupine campus for their Carpentry Apprenticeship program. While upgrading, I attended an Open House here in the fall of 2011 to learn more about the Carpentry Apprenticeship program, and I couldn't resist looking into the Architect program at the Georgian College booth. After reminiscing on my dreams, and realizing that relocating my family to Barrie was out of the question, I had found an alternative literally by turning around. There, at a booth directly behind me, were Tina Thibault-Lambert and Pierre Bergeron from Northern College's Civil Engineering Technology program. Pierre enlightened me to the career opportunities the program offered and presented a comparison between its design aspect and that of being an architect. It was also intriguing to learn from Tina about the amount of math required of a Civil Engineer, which happens to be my favourite subject. I went back to the Adult Learning Centre with my newfound information and readied myself for my future years as a college student in Civil Engineering Technology.

Once I was accepted and registered in college, I still knew I wouldn't be able to afford tuition without help. I had applied for OSAP, but was denied because of past decisions that had affected my credit rating. Then I remembered one of the people who had restored my passion – someone who has a foundation which promotes helping students who demonstrate a commitment to a career in residential construction or renovation with bursaries and scholarships. It was a chance that I was willing to take. To my surprise, after obtaining references, answering essay questions, and sending out an application demonstrating my need for assistance, in August of 2012, I was awarded with a Make It Right Bursary. While the bursary would go a long way to help pay for part of my tuition and books, I still had to acquire more funding. I was able to work as a part-time bartender at the Legion as I started my studies, and not long after everything came together as my appeal for OSAP was approved.

I am now studying as a first year student in Civil Engineering Technology – soon to be entering my second and final year. I hope that my story inspires you and reminds you that you should always follow your dreams, no matter what life throws your way. With a little dedication, determination, and motivation, you will be able to achieve your dreams and follow your passions. Also, never stop believing in yourself; there are people out there who are willing to assist you on your journey toward a career of your choice, no matter what your age, gender or nationality. It's even possible that that person is one of your biggest inspirations.

Thank you

Melisa Blais





literacy matters to me because it's allowed
me to actually grasp math.

Since starting literacy I don't see a dramatic
improvement in my math skills, I was only able to
do basic arithmetic prior to starting my tutoring
but I have learned algebra, which I never thought
I'd be able to wrap my head around and I actually
enjoy doing math now.

My hopes for the future is to graduate from
Fanshawe College's Culinary management and Culinary
arts courses with the end goal of starting my
own tapas and wine bar.

3/2/14



Antony Caminas

Dear Community Literacy

As going through the trials to reach my goal of being a business owner I showed up at the door step of Literacy London. They gave me a better direction on how to achieve my goals. At the same time giving me more confidence in myself by learning to read better. Reading for me has become more meaningful and interesting. Literacy London has put me on the right track, now the rest is up to me to show and tell the people how much Literacy London can help you.

Congratulations on your 20th Anniversary!



Blue

Brandy Lee Cohen





My Love Letter to Literacy

Without literacy, I don't know where I would be. It all started for me when my mom would read novels to my brother and I at bedtime every night. I always looked forward to finding out what was going to happen next! Eventually, I learned how to read myself and finally, I could read novels start to finish. My mom certainly inspired me to read.

I also started to journal at a very young age. This was a great way for me to express myself and my feelings without fear of judgement (I had a lock on my diary of course). Looking back, some of the topics written about from my youth seemed trivial but in those moments, I was accomplishing something... I was expressing myself, releasing my emotions, and exercising my mind.

Nowadays, I just love to read and do word puzzles. I find it cathartic to let go of the stresses of day to day life and allow my mind to travel elsewhere.

As an activity coordinator in a retirement home, the role that literacy plays in the lives and satisfaction of my residents is huge. We have a book club, we play word games like wheel of fortune and taboo, and we surf the internet together. The importance of literacy to a generation of people who often could only communicate via letters due to war, travel, and other various reasons is very moving and highlights the value of and need for literacy.

All in all, literacy has been a necessity for my education, my career, and my personal life. I could go on forever with a million examples but I won't subject you to that!

Sincerely,

Amanda Cooper

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

"I love learning new things. Literacy is not just spelling, reading or math. There is so much more! I wake up every day and wonder, what new things will I learn today."

An adult student in their "Love Letter to Literacy"

MOMENTS to/from Community Literacy of Ontario

Here, there: NO school bad
Literacy is three R's
Lit. London FOUND me.

School changed my whole life
With awesome volunteers' help
I write thoughts better.

With stroke, aphasia
Re-learn vowels, consonants
Hard but I'm reaching.

Hope to write letters
Love to be a volunteer.
Now I'm learning more.

by Pam
Cottingham

Greetings, Dear Literacy Lovers and Livers!

Over 22 years ago, I had the great privilege and honour to be providing literacy training to several new learners at the Literacy Council of South Temiskaming, while also heavily pregnant with my youngest son.

There are some experiences in life that seep into the soul and change you forever and those few months before my maternity leave touched me to the core. Being a writer and someone who has lived with and loved the written word, I felt so blessed to be able to recognize and deeply appreciate the gifts that were present as a teacher of adult learners. Highlights of our time together follow:

- Being able to watch these new learners come to life with each new lesson they learned.
- Learning something new when I listened to them share their own unique skills with each other when they facilitated a class in an area of their expertise.
- Celebrating their successes and tears when they read and wrote their own personal notes at home, communicating with their families for the first time in writing.
- Watching their worlds expand as they drank in information that was either previously unavailable to them or too scary to understand.
- Addressing issues such as shame, guilt and fear and how all of the unkind comments they heard about themselves growing up (eg. 'you're stupid' or 'you're slow,' etc) were not true.
- Helping them realize that they could not do what they did not know. Like handing someone who is not a surgeon a scalpel and expecting him or her to operate, there is no way the surgery would be successful. With the right tools and knowledge, success is not only possible but guaranteed. Literacy gives people the tools to succeed and it was miraculous to witness!
- Being privy to the testament of the human spirit, it is life-altering to watch and support perseverance, persistence, determination, trust, acceptance, willingness, celebration, encouragement, discipline, cooperation, learning, laughter, tears, freedom, excitement, accomplishment and yes, love. Love entered into those moments when someone was feeling like giving up the class or when there were conflicts and personal challenges.



I would like to also offer my deepest thanks to my former boss Vicki Trottier, my co-worker Deb Flynn and a member of the Board of Directors, Joanne Kaattari (who has become a dear friend), for their amazing knowledge, support, kindness and love while I completed my contract and moved into another phase of my life after my son Gregory was born.

It is dedicated and highly skilled people like these who make our world a better place, offering innovative ways to bring literacy to life and learners to living with greater freedom and autonomy.

Loving each other as we all burst out of old ways of thinking and being provides the greatest impetus to growing, learning and changing: ourselves, each other and our world.

I am profoundly grateful for this opportunity and experience that helped shape who I am today: a writer

working on completing a series of books on Love Letters (for feelings, about relationships and the spiritual life), an Employment Counsellor who works full-time with social assistance recipients and a fellow human being who loves to share what I learned while I was working in the literacy field.

Love to all Literacy supporters, teachers, lovers and learners,

Paulette Dahl

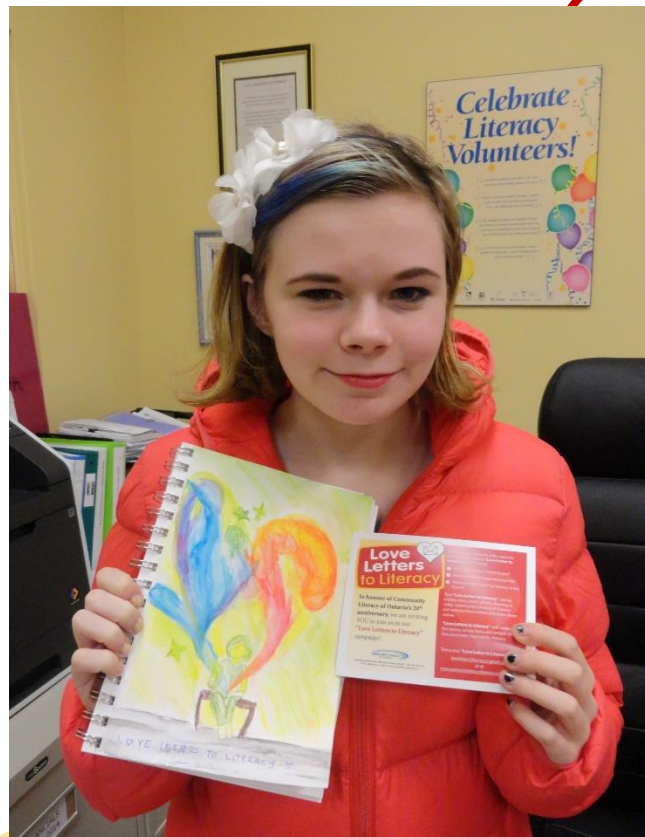


I have for many years been a volunteer tutor at The Literacy Group in Kitchener. Our clients are people whose literacy skills are so severely compromised that they cannot enter the High School completion programs offered by the School Board, and thus are essentially debarred from even looking for employment. It is our job to raise their skill level so they can go on to more training. Needless to say, this can be challenging; both for tutors, and particularly for students, many of whom have debilitating issues in their daily lives (poverty, illness, loneliness, and negative self-image, for example).

Some students fall by the wayside, but I find it uplifting to remember those who slowly gain so much confidence in their ability to master the literacy skills that have long stymied them that they are ready to embark on the training needed, or, in some cases, directly enter the workforce. The satisfaction of these people is palpable; indeed they frequently update the Literacy Group on their progress even though they have long achieved alumni status.

It is my hope that the needs of these very basic learners not be forgotten. If they are they will remain locked in a cycle of depression and failure.

John Dale



Love Letters to Literacy

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It is what it is

It's about seeing words on a page and

Not being afraid

Not being intimidated

Not feeling like you don't belong

It's about being able to ask questions and find information

About your health

About your finances

About your family

It's about trying and learning new things

Without feeling sick

Without feeling embarrassed

Without feeling anxious

It's about expressing yourself and sharing opinions

To politicians

To educators

To employers

It's about having opportunities

In your community

In the workplace

In your home

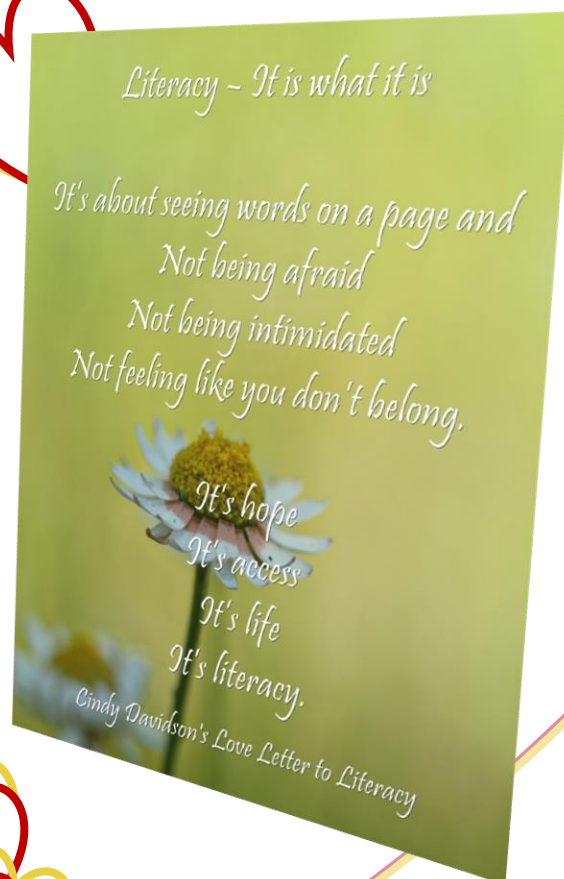
It's hope

It's access

It's life

It's literacy.

Cindy Davidson



Love Letters to Literacy

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Love letter to Literacy

Literacy
Offers
Various
Educational
Learning styles.
Everyone
That
Takes
Either
Reading, writing or language;
To them, it is about making a "real difference" to the lives
Of others, through
Learning
Information and
Through
Education.
Reading together,
And growing together,
Creating together and coming together to reach
Your literacy world.

Marlene Dickson

At work, I often have to write things – emails or papers – and by writing, I can influence people to do good things. In some small way, I think that helps make the world a bit better

- Anonymous





It matters to me because Feb 3/14
it helps me to read, write & spell
It impacts my life very well
Very Good. It helps me to think before
I speak and learn say no instead
of saying yes.
I am hoping to read, write and
spell on my own so I don't have to
look for help from anybody else.
That's my goal!

D. D.



Donna Diggs



One of the greatest legacies that I received from
my Mother was the gift and love of reading.
Throughout my life, reading has sustained me on so
many levels.

It humbles and saddens me to think that all
Canadians have not been blessed in the same way.

I extend my thanks and best wishes to all literacy
providers who strive to unlock the joy of the
written word to their learners.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Duncalfe

I credit my father with my love of literacy - which he instilled in me at an early age.

Growing up in a small town in central Ontario, our local library was ruled with an iron fist by one particular librarian, who insisted that children should only be allowed to borrow books she deemed appropriate for their age and grade level. My brother, sister and I all read above our grade level, and my father was outraged that the librarian would not bend on this. He took a rather inordinate amount of time in ~~on~~ working around her. He took out books for my older sister, she took out books for me, and I took them out for my little brother!

Louise Edwards



Recently, I had the good fortune to speak to my literacy colleagues in the Literacy Network Northeast region. It was the Network's 15th Anniversary and I was asked to give the keynote. My Love Letter to Literacy is part of that keynote. It is about the impact three people had on my literacy life.



"...I want to stop now and ask you to think of one person you have helped in all your years of service.

Can you stop at one, I very much doubt it. I have a person that comes first to my mind when I think of the people I have served. I met her on my first day of work, in 1991 when I started working at the Literacy Council of South Temiskaming, I will call her Karen. She stopped in to see Vicki (Trottier) that day and brought her some baking. Vicki introduced us, but she was shy...as I remember she was about the age I am now, she didn't read but wanted to. She had some challenges and Vicki encouraged her to talk to me as I was going to partner her with a volunteer tutor. I only worked part-time when I first started and the next morning I was at home, thinking about the sweets Sue had brought into the office. Doing my favourite June Cleaver impersonation, I decided to bake cookies for my children to have when they got home from school. When I looked down at the recipe book an emotion welled inside of me that I feel every time I recall that day. Sue didn't bake the way I did, she couldn't read recipes. She used her other intelligences to create the sweets she brought that day. As I looked down at my recipe book, I was humbled, I couldn't bake without reading.

Then there was the cowboy, Fern...ran his own farm, worked on the pipeline, could find his way to the Royal Ontario Fair in Toronto every year and one day he sat on the stoop in front of our office, looked across the street and said, "Deb, does that say Colour your World?" "Yes, it does." I replied. Larry said, "I always knew it was a paint store, that's the first time I read that sign." Again, I was humbled, he accomplished so much without reading.

(Continued next page)

The other person I think of is Joshua, he is not with us anymore, but when I worked for Sheila (Marshall) at the Timmins Learning Centre, Lynn Hickey saw a challenge in Canadian Living to walk the distance across Canada. Teams signed up from every city and hamlet across our fair land. Everyone at the Centre jumped on board, we had learners mapping their walking routes to the centre, figuring how many kilometres they travelled on foot each day. There was the competition between the learners, volunteers and practitioners, who would walk the farthest each week and be crowned the weekly winner. We logged our distance online with Canadian Living and we tracked the distance on a map of Canada in the classroom. Back to Joshua, he was tall and lanky, his legs must have been 6 feet long, and it would take 3 or 4 of my steps to his one. There is a trail around Gilles Lake, here in Timmins and in the evening, we would run into each other on it, racking up miles to beat out the other competitors. Joshua would be there...and he would lap us, and I don't feel bad as he would lap Sheila too and she is a speed demon when she walks. Joshua ended up walking the fastest from St. Johns to Vancouver and winning our competition. As, I said he is no longer with us. But when he was, he had the best time, he was healthy, he was learning and he was sharing his wonderful personality with us.

All three of these people leave me with overwhelming humility. They taught me so much more than I taught them. They lived their lives without reading and then when they decided to change they took it on with enthusiasm and accepted the support my colleagues and I gave them. Like me, I am sure there is not just one student that stands out in your mind, there can't be, as each one that comes into our classes has so much to give us. They show us what success really means..."

The best thing about working in the field of literacy, is that glint you see in the eyes of the people you help...the glint of success, accomplishment and self-worth.

This is a wonderful field to work in.

Debera Flynn

I feel it is a privilege to live in a country where we are encouraged to get an education and not in a country where we would not even be allowed to learn to read and write. I am an avid reader and have been since I first learned to read.

- Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy

Literacy is the best. It helps to make people feel good. People need to work at it to make it a better world.

Carlos Greaves



"This is Jackie. I am learning. I
have literacy people & others
help me. I need help for now but
one day, I can do it on my own.
Do not give up on us! "

- Jackie's Love Letter to Literacy

"A good head and good heart are always a formidable combination. But when you add to that a literate tongue or pen, then you have something very special."

Nelson Mandela

My Love Letter to Literacy:

Literacy matters to me because so many rights and freedoms are dependent upon it. Without literacy, there can be no equality of opportunity. Without literacy, there is no freedom of choice. Without literacy, democracy is an empty concept. Society as a whole suffers when literacy levels are low. Of course, I also believe that literacy has an intrinsic value of its own. Life is greatly enriched by the beauty of poetry, drama, and literature. Without these creative expressions, humanity would be greatly diminished.

Literacy has impacted my life in many ways. I have always been an avid reader. As a child, I spent much of my time happily reading. I always had a book on the go. Paddington Bear, The Lord of the Rings, Arthur C. Clarke's short stories; you name it. I loved disappearing into the worlds these books created. It was more than entertainment to me. It was about perceiving life in new and different ways. My mind expanded figuratively and, as scientists are now suggesting, literally.

As an adult, I gained work in the literacy field. While there, I learned that my enriched literate life was not shared by a large portion of the population. I worked with people who had never been introduced to the joys of literacy. I met others who were passionate about writing short stories, blogs, and even news stories, but they lacked the skills to pursue their dreams. It was an honour to work with these brave souls who returned to school as adults to take on the enormous challenge of improving their literacy skills. I can honestly say that I learned at least as much from them as they did from me. Working in the literacy field expanded my worldview, my social conscience, and my heart.

My hope for literacy in the future is, of course, that everyone in the world will be literate. Without that, social justice will always be restricted. As for Canada, we are in the midst of an immense revolution in communications technology. This could lead to innovative ways of teaching literacy learners. Or, without proper support, these learners could fall behind faster than ever. Therefore, it is vital that literacy agencies receive more funding and resources so they can rise to the challenge of accelerated technological change.

Finally, my vision of literacy's future includes the continued success of Community Literacy of Ontario. Congratulations on 20 years of unbeatable compassion, creativity, and professionalism. I can't wait to see what you do next!

Keith Harford

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Literacy matters to me is keeping I love doing courses it means a lot to me.

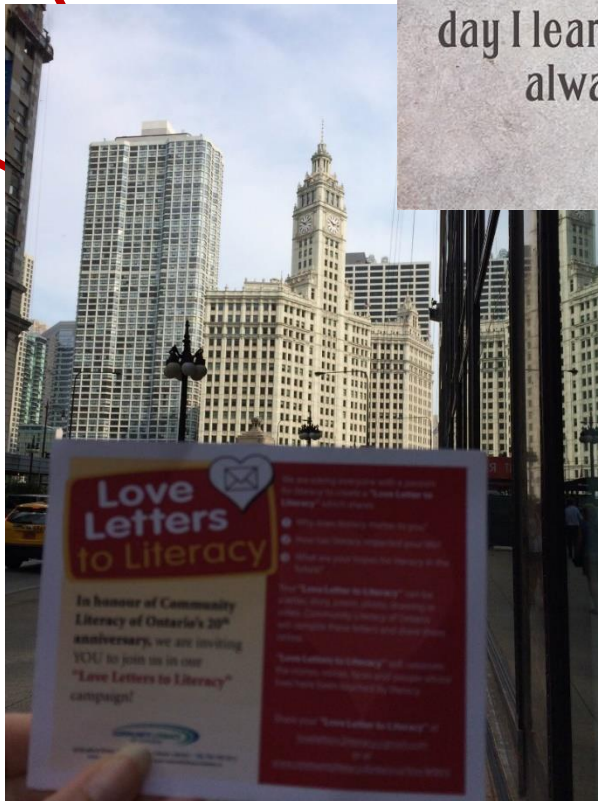
Literacy has giving me a lot of inpected I love Literacy I have a lot of pride in it

my Hopes for Literacy is to keep at it I love if so much I like to learn new Things

written by Ida

I love learning new things. People ask me all of the time how much longer before I'm done school. I tell them I don't know, because every day I learn something new, and I'm always hungry for more.

- Anonymous



Dear Love Letters

When I first started in 2010 at Prince Edward Learning Centre I was having a lot of trouble with spelling, grammar, math, and writing assignments. Later I wanted to remember all of the studies I took way back in 2011.

I still have trouble with barriers but I have learned skills to get around them and learned to work at all the problem solving without giving up.

My instructors are wonderful like Keith and Linda, and Kathy, Lori, Christine, Sharron, Jennifer, Nicki, and Ellen and Robin, Vicki, Joanne, and Ollie the owl. You have to learn to get along with other students as well.

I have learned positive ideas from a lot of other people from the Bean Counter and from our radio station manager and our newspaper editor.

As a student representative and chair of the student council I learned a lot from the Board of Directors. When I have a lot of ideas in my head I write down my thoughts using a circle chart, taking points I learned from Keith, and Linda. If I don't write, it gets all mixed up in my head and it works when written down better.

When my instructor helps they show you different ways of writing skills, and how to do essays, business letters and emails too. Articles to the newspaper as well.

My rough drafts are not very good because I try to remember everything. I still do run on sentences. My instructors teach us by showing us on the black board or trivial games like math, English, spelling, history, science, geography, entertainment. There are learning tools that helps us learn better.

Being on teams you learn to write down on easel paper skills such as building and leadership. We learned positive accomplishments doing everyday activities such as how to bowl and golf. When we went golfing the first time was fun. We went back and tried it again and it was harder and more challenging.

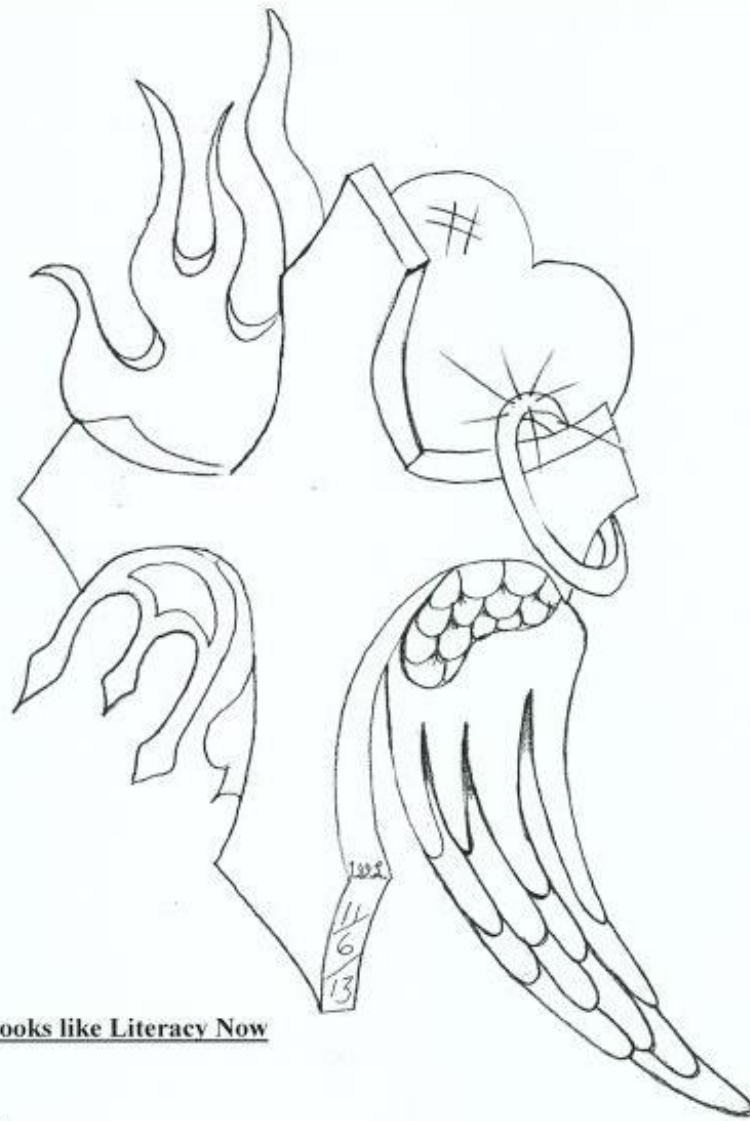
Another person and I volunteered with M.S. selling raffle tickets for our local chapter. We are go-getters because it's a worthy cause. Sometimes we were going to stop but, I couldn't because I knew that people wanted to buy raffle tickets which were \$2.00.

Learning how to work the computer was hard. Culminating tasks I learned individually how to do. I have learned how to do a lot of things on my own like shopping, budgeting making change; checking prices on flyers and seeing which is cheaper.

We need to keep literacy going. It's very important because there are students out there that have problems learning. We need schools open not closed. People do not understand that some people have disabilities with learning so we need instructors that are wonderful, and they work very hard with us. There is an expression that I want everyone to remember there is no such word as "can't", its "yes you can"! If I can learn you can learn too so get out there and do it!

Sincerely,

Angela Jane Reed Hopf



Letersy then Looks like Literacy Now

A class to go to
where you're not judged.
An Inspiring teacher that
Helps with a nudge.
Literacy is a gift,
I'm happy I've seen through
A diploma to show all
That You Can Too!

Bryce Ivins

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

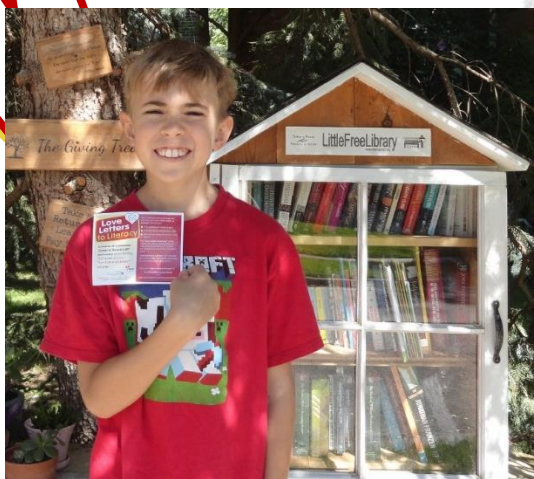
Dear Literacy London,
I would like to say thank-you for all your help and support. This program has become very important to me and my future being. I would like to achieve my GED and Literacy London is the perfect fit for me and my anxieties. They have been a huge support in helping me reach my end goal, which is employment. Also being here has given me much exposure to the resources available to help make my plan succeed. It has most importantly given me hope and the strength to get off the couch and move forward. It was a great relief to know I could get help with the way I learn. The road to my future looks way brighter since I have been introduced to Literacy London.

Rose.

Rose Johnston

It is my hope that the needs of these very basic learners not be forgotten. If they are they will remain locked in a cycle of depression and failure.

- John Dale



Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

Dear Literacy London

Literacy matters to me because I have more confidence now. I'm not afraid when someone asks me to fill out forms.

Literacy matters to me because it changed my life. Now I'm reading to my family and reading stories to my son at night.

My hope for the future is to get another job. I would like to use my literacy skills my new job.

Thank you literacy London.

Norman

Literacy has helped me to read the newspaper. Now I am able to give my own opinions about what is going on in the world.

Anonymous



Page 2 /


Love letter to Literacy

I love to read. Reading has allowed me to learn about the world without even leaving my chair. I get to exercise my imagination. I paint the story. I add the colour, the faces, the look of the place that the story is telling. I have adventures. I travel. I solve mysteries. I fall in love. I learn new skills. I have questions & can find answers. I get to learn new words & what they mean. I expand my mind.

Learning for me has not always been easy. Reading has helped with this & has opened many doors.

My wish for the future is that everyone has the opportunity to learn to read.

Barb Kearns



Literacy has made it easy for
me to get a job, run errands,
enjoy reading books, doing math
and just keeping busy.

- Anonymous

Dear Literacy,

Literacy is an important part of my life. Without literacy, there wouldn't be any schools like there are now. Literacy has taught me how to read and write properly, I have learned how vocabulary works. Literacy is the most important word in my life. Literacy will help in my future by increasing my knowledge so I can achieve my goals in life. I love that we all have some form of literacy it also could help with people who have reading and writing issues. Thank you for being a part of my life, and I would hope that others would see literacy like I have and will continue using it.

Thank You

Love

Claudette LaFramboise



Where do I belong

For so long I often wondered where do
where do I belong I long to know
where I belong.

For so long we over come to find
where do I belong or do I even belong

Oh how we longed to find where I belong
and to who do I belong do I belong
to god. far and wide and opened eyes

I shall not hide or be denied or even
justified for I am qualified from being
to end from newborn to adulthood.

Shrewd, Sorrow and Pain I do not blame
or feel shame for the question does remain
where do I belong where do I belong.

We finally found where I belong is a very
special place where I belong the place is
called OCHS it's a place of learning, reading
writing where everyone makes me feel I belong

After so long I can finally say I know
where I belong and OCHS is where I belong.

Written By
Pauline Labram-Lalre



Literacy is a gift

Literacy removes my fear

Literacy restores my faith

Literacy is my comfort

- Joe Paishk

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

A Life of Literacy

A Poem By: Alexander Lajambe

A life of literacy
Is to seemingly
Live freely
Within the boundaries of society
To integrate
And assimilate
Into a world built upon fate

Without a word's defense
We're caged in a fence
Barred with no exit or entrance
Though deemed impossible
To find knowledge probable
It is conceivable
To break bounds once inseparable

Hope is a characteristic
Looked upon as nostalgic
But is the enigmatic static
That sparks intricate linguistics
And makes us...
Heuristic

You see, a life without literacy
Is to seemingly
Live in difficulty
While silently
Fighting feelings of futility
A story soaked in familiarity

So speak up and be loud
Make a sound
And be proud
For literacy shall receive its crown
Remember, it is never too late, for literacy can be found



Literacy shapes almost every
aspect of my life.
It opened up opportunities for
me, even at a young age.
It gave me the skills I need to
explore new and exciting
places, to access knowledge
and teach it to others, and to
imagine new possibilities.
I Love Literacy!

- Anonymous



Hello my name is Shaunalee and I am a Literacy lover!

Love life and live it to the fullest potential
If opportunity knocks answer it!
Take control of your destiny
Everything is what you make it
Remember that you are someone that matters
All you do is a reflection of who you are
Collect the pieces of you life's puzzle
Yes to your future

To all my fellow literacy lovers:

- ❖ *Dream big*
- ❖ *Imagine endless possibilities*
- ❖ *Open a book and let your mind soar.*



Contact

Shaunalee Larabie

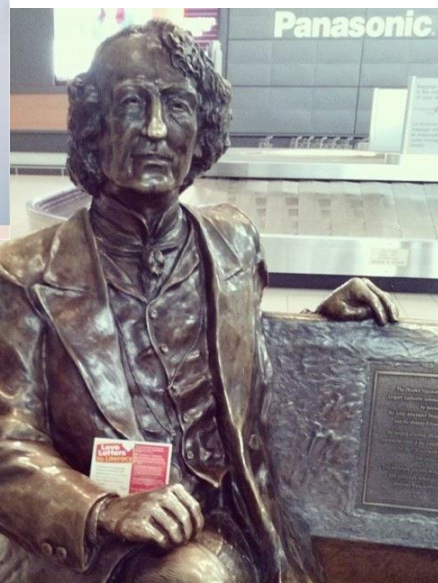
Growing up I was a non - reader. I like to put the blame on my parents as they never really read to us although My parents were very musical and I learned a great deal from them through songs - (my phonological awareness has always been my forte thanks to my parents). Fast forward a few years later- I now have 3 children of my own and a wonderful book loving husband. I have a wonderful job as an early literacy specialist and I thank him every day for forcing me to read to our children each night- 1 French story and 1 English story religiously as it has given me a new love for books. My boys are book lovers and so smart. They learn new words with me every night and are able to tell their own stories using their imaginations learned through our shared reading. I take these special moments with my own children and share / transfer them to the families who attend our early years centre.

My passion is books and I truly am blessed to have such a book loving family. I tell all my families that you can go anywhere if you just turn a page ☐

Marie McEvoy

Literacy, you have made me.
I only hope that you will share
with others what you have shared
with me.
Thank you for all you've given me
in the past and continue to
provide to make my future look
brighter.

Johanna White





To: Annabel Corbman.

For young people, chances for an interesting
career in time further depends to a
great degree on their competence in
basic literacy and greater enjoyment as
learning ^{as} you go on. It is never too late
to realize how important literacy is
~~in the classroom~~

June 13, 2014.

In case you cannot read the above writing:

"For young people, chances for an interesting career in time depends to a great degree on their competence in basic ~~literacy~~ literacy and greater enjoyment as learning goes on. It is never too late to realize how important literacy is.

Margaret McKee

June 13, 2014

"I love reading books to my 3 year old son!!! Brings such joy to both of us. Looking forward to him reading to me one day!"

Lindsay's Love Letter to Literacy





What Literacy London means to me.

Literacy London gave me the confidence that I can read and write. For years I avoided and hid from the fact that my literacy skills were poor and very much essential in every day living. I believe Literacy London has changed the way I look at my self and the world around me. Today I can say I can read and write and no longer do I avoid and hide from it. Thanks to Literacy London for saving lives and making the world a better place.

Sean. McKeon

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario



28/01/2014

Love Letter for Literacy

I would not be writing this Love Letter to you if it wasn't for Literacy London.

Having better literacy skills is improving my confidence in all parts of my life. I read the Metro every day and I am able to talk to others about things that interest me. Reading gives me confidence to move on with my life.

Sue M

My passion is books and I truly am blessed to have such a book loving family. I tell all my families that you can go anywhere if you just turn a page

Marie McEvoy

Kingston Literacy matters to me because it has helped me gain more confidence in myself. As well it has been a great experience for me. I am learning so much for being tutored. I am enjoying the time I spend. My hope for the future is to be more confident in math and to be able to read better.

Sue M

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

LOVE LETTER TO LITERACY

Deborah Morgan

I love literacy because being in a literacy program I learned that:

- * I could learn new things and that I was smarter than I thought I was;
- * There is a place where I feel accepted, safe, where I can be myself;
- * There are other people just like me, that I'm not alone;
- * Learning is hard, but it's also way more fun than I thought it would be;
- * Hard work really pays off;
- * It's OK to struggle and be scared, and it's OK to ask for help;
- * Life can be good.

Reading this, one would probably think that these are the words of a literacy learner. Ironically, these thoughts also reflect my experience as a literacy program coordinator, tutor and instructor.

Two years before I was hired as the first literacy coordinator of a fledgling literacy program in my rural Alberta community, I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. I was a young Mom at home with a newborn and a four-year-old and after my diagnosis, I didn't know what the future would bring and feared I would never work again.

But I got lucky. I discovered a field of work that was flexible, exciting and full of creative, innovative, like-minded people. I found a caring, supportive community where I felt valued, where it felt like anything was possible. That was 28 years ago.

I have (reluctantly) retired from literacy work due to the progression of my MS, but I loved every minute of being in this field and will always love literacy for giving me so many opportunities to learn and grow and have fun. Literacy taught me that I could be good at something, despite my health concerns. I love literacy for giving me a wonderful career that never felt like work and for being the medicine I needed to stay strong and keep going.

I love literacy for loving me back.





LOVE LETTERS TO LITERACY

(Instead of a love letter to literacy, this is about a love letter that was written because of literacy.)

When I was traveling throughout Alberta, doing research for my book *Opening Doors*, I heard a story that truly is a "literacy love letter".

Ida, a literacy worker in central Alberta told me about George, a man in his mid-40s who had come bursting into her office one day to tell her that he had written his first love note.

"That's great!" she told him

"Do you want to know what it said?" George asked.

Ida said, "Oh no, that's okay."

"But I want to tell you."

Ida told me that she put her pen down and looked up at George and said, "Okay, sure. What did the note say?"

"Gone downtown," George beamed.

When Ida told me this story, she said, "It took me a while to realize what all was being said in that note. I thought how never before had he been able to read and write and how in those two words he was saying to his wife - 'I'm going downtown, I want you to know that and I'll be back soon.' He called it 'love note' and it really was."

Deborah Morgan



I would like to thank you for the Literacy Program. Before I started attending Literacy London, I lost my confidence and was afraid to write a complete sentence or even I forgot my words. I see significant, positive changes in my reading and writing. Thanks to Literacy London, today I would like to start my dream business as a motivational speaker. I have built confidence and strong interpersonal skills and I feel ready to go back to the work environment without doubting my abilities. For all those positive changes my family and I give the credit to Literacy London. It's not just about learning to read and write, as you see, this program brings incredible positive changes in my life and other people like me.

I'm sure this program will help us to continue our learning process and achieve our goals. I appreciate the work Literacy London does, as it assists us to develop our knowledge and to be successful.

Best regards,
Farahnaz

Farahnaz Nazir

The best thing about
working in the field of
literacy, is that glint you see
in the eyes of the people
you help...the glint of
success, accomplishment
and self-worth.
This is a wonderful field to
work in.

Debera Flynn

Dear Literacy:

I would like to say Niá:wen (thank you in Mohawk) for helping me get the confidence in my writing to go on to University. Without the help and support I have received from my teachers at Native Women's Resource Center of Toronto and my online tutors I would never of gained the strength and knowledge to go forward with my education.

Right now with the help of Literacy tutors, I am writing my first thesis. This is an exciting step for me. Just over a year ago I would of never of dreamed of going to University but literacy gave me the strength to learn to write and to take a summer experience program offered at the local University, and from there I enrolled.

Niá:wen

Okhano Northstar





This photo of some of Organization for Literacy in Lambton's learners and volunteers was taken in a very strategic location. Immediately behind our group you will notice a flowerbed that will soon be blooming with beautiful hosta plants. In 2006, OLL's learners worked with the City of Sarnia staff to create this "Dow Community Heritage Hosta Garden". The garden won us a Heritage Award, which was presented at a meeting of Sarnia City Council.

As our motto is, "A Place to Grow", what better way to symbolize to the community that coming to OLL will help people develop new skills, than planting a living monument on the grounds of our community centre. In addition to the garden, our learners compiled a booklet describing ten different varieties of hostas as well as a brief history of hostas and some care tips. The hosta garden has grown so much that building administrators have decided that in honour of the Lochiel Kiwanis Community Centre's 100th anniversary in 2017, we will split the plants and gift them to another location in the city.

Organization for Literacy in Lambton



Literacy is My Hope

Literacy provides hope and hope is a gift. Have I ever taken hold of such a prize that leads me out of uncertainty into profound assurance? Hope is the breath of nature that surround me every day and see a sprig that shoots up from crevasse of sundried rocks providing the water to life within.

Hope is the first ray of sunshine that peaks above the horizon every morning with blazing truth, telling us we can make it through. Hope is dissipated when a moon rises in the dark night, foreshadowing that a new day will dawn.

Hope persuades. The glow of hope like the strike of a match will burn a candle and discover a whisper of a flame and bring life to a room, making a candle useful is my flame of hope alive and make a difference in the world.

Literacy is a gift

Literacy removes my fear

Literacy restores my faith

Literacy is my comfort

Joe Paishk

...you should always
follow your dreams, no
matter what life throws
in your way. With a little
dedication, determination,
and motivation, you will
be able to achieve your
dreams and follow your
passions.

- Melissa Blais





L - Learning is endless

I - Independent learning

T - Tendency. To think we could never learn

E - Evolve. Every day we become a better and wiser person

R - Reach for the stars!! Never give up!

A - Academic

C - Credible. You are a wonderful person!!

Y - Yes, you can!! You can do anything you set your mind to!

Port Cares Learning Centre

I love reading books to
my 3 year old son!!
Brings such joy to both of us.
Looking forward to him reading
to me one day ☺

Lindsay Rice



LOVE LETTERS TO LITERACY

I love literacy because it has a tremendous impact on my life. I enjoy learning new things, like the animals' background and their habitats. I enjoy reading very much. Whether I read mysteries, forensics, animals, history or geography, I can read and dream of the world that I would like to travel.

Janis Ryersee



Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

Dear Irene

I am writing this letter to tell you three reasons why Literacy matters to me

They are:

Being in the Literacy program helps me to show my grandchildren that it is ok to get help with some things in life.

I can get help with my reading and writing. I feel good about myself and it shows to my family members.



Yours Truly
Rick S.





Above and below: Mr. Gord Stone and his golden retriever Holly, seen showing their love for literacy.

"Literacy is really important to me because I've seen so many kids struggling with reading, and when I found out a similar program to PAWS started out in the U.S, and was successful, I knew I could help. It's such a simple skill to learn when you're young and it carries on for the rest of your life, if it's to get a job or just to go far in life literacy is the first step in ensuring a good future."



Gord Stone

I am feeling more confident in learning about math and how to do fractions. I have met lots of new people. I'm learning lots in the job skills class. I am learning how to spell new words.

I would like to the Literacy Council to continue.

Crystal Weiss

West Nipissing Mural



Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

This is Jackie. I can tell you how this is helping me. I read my first book and tell time and write a lot now. I'm so happy in my new life overall but I need more input. I can help myself so much more. Oh, I do have ADD so it is hard for me to focus for 2 hours, but I am learning. I have literacy people & others to help me. I need help for now but one day, I can do it on my own. Do not give up on us!

Keep this going, please and thanks.

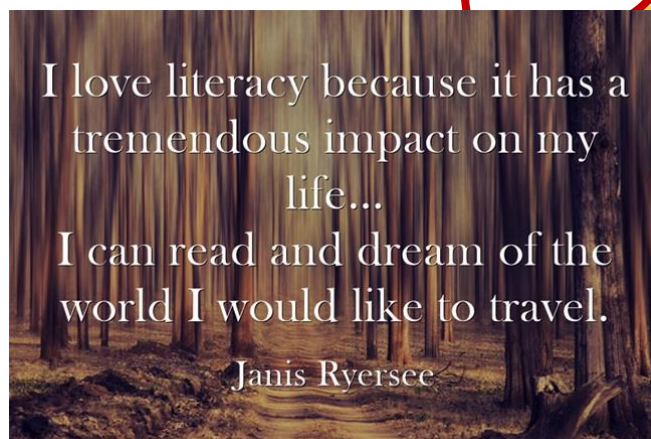
Jackie White

Dear Literacy

Literacy, you mean the world to me. You've helped me to maintain good health. You've helped me to gain financial independence. You've helped me to enjoy family friends, and neighbours. You've helped me to travel to faraway lands and to experience thrilling adventures through books. You've helped me to get a job I love. Literacy, you have made me, me. I only hope that you will share with others what you have shared with me. Thank you for all you've given me in the past and continue to provide to make my future look brighter.

Love,

Johanna White



Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

Happy 20th Anniversary!



I liked my literacy class from the very beginning. It is a smart, generous, and helpful program for everyone, especially immigrants. This is a life supporting gift. When I arrived in Canada the first time, I needed to communicate with people and read and write. Then, I would know what to do to manage my life. I can explain what I need and understand what people say because of my literacy class. I got confidence to travel all over the world. That is why I love literacy.

Anonymous

I ma Doing my upGrading on my READING.
To help me to Ren my CHALLENGE Book, o.H

Anonymous

When I started at the literacy council, I had Dyslexia. The literacy council helped me. Now, I can read newspapers and books. I can now use a computer.

I am happy to write this story. My life is better for me.

Anonymous

One of the greatest legacies that I received from my Mother was the gift and love of reading. Throughout my life, reading has sustained me on so many levels. It humbles and saddens me to think that all Canadians have not been blessed in the same way.

- Marilyn Duncalfe

Love Letter to Literacy

This literacy and basic skills class gives me a chance to improve my literacy skills. I really need to improve my reading and writing. And that will help me understand better what I read something. These literacy skills will also help me and my family. I will be able to help my kids more with their homework what they bring home from school. It will help me to get a better paying job. I enjoy learning new things everyday.

Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy

Literacy is very essential in everybody's life. If you want to succeed, you have to be able to read and write at a high level. Without this ability, you will always end up at the bottom end of the job scale, for the rest of your life. This is why I think it is important, for the people who need it, should be able to read and write well.

Anonymous



LOVE LETTERS TO LITERACY

To me Literacy means that it opens the door for this generation and the generation to come to have better opportunities in life, to be able to communicate with people that are more educated and to understand in a different level. Literacy helps me to be ready to face different situations at work, or in the community.

Anonymous

I am writing about my weekend in Orillia at the Lakehead University. I arrived here on Friday morning with 4 other students and a teaching assistant.

At first, I was very scared as I have never done anything like this before. But I am also very excited with all that I have learned. To be honest with you, the second day has been the most challenging. I really enjoyed working on the computer and writing my story.

I was chosen to come here and would do it again if given the opportunity. I would highly recommend the conference to anyone.

Learning is very important to each and every one of us.

Anonymous



Literacy

Literacy something you need
can not flee makes you free
it gotta be in everyday in the
class I be learning in the class
see smiling faces feeling a purpose
with out it I'll be a quitter it makes
it easier Literacy makes me wanna
someone.

Anonymous

Learning

I like to learn because when I learn I get
to know things

Learning helps us to become educated.

We learn reading, writing, oral
communication,

Math, speaking, and how to get along with others.

Listening skills are important to learn.

Literacy teaches us how to behave ourselves.

I love literacy!

Anonymous



*Literacy is the best. It helps to
make people feel good. People
need to work at it to make it
a better world.*

- Carlos Greaves



My Dream of Literacy

When I finish my schooling, my life will be bright;

Literacy in my life is like the sunshine every day.

The skills I am learning provide me with great light;

After I finish my schooling, I hope to
get a job with good pay.

Anonymous

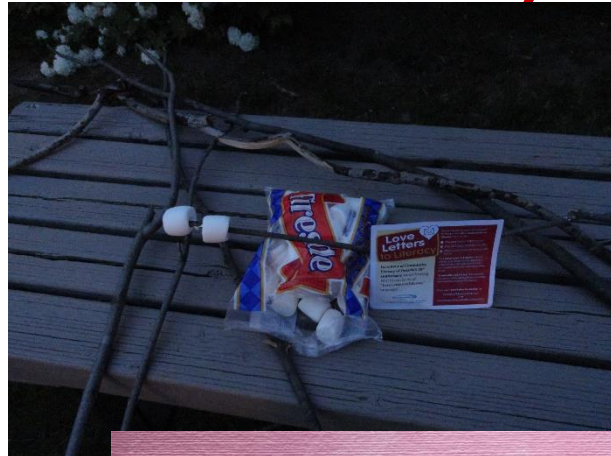
Dear Literacy,

My love for you is patient and it is
kind. It always protects; always trusts,
always hopes, and always perseveres.

My day is dark without the brightness of
reading in the hot summer.

My love for you literacy, never fails. I am
thinking of you, day and night. Marry me.

Anonymous



*I am grateful for all that my
teachers have taught me, there; as
I continue my journey*

Anonymous

Computers are the future and they are here now.

Computers have helped me look for information e.g. countries, cities and war zones

How to write which I love. Different words and different writing styles.

Learning new languages. On Facebook, I can talk to people in different areas and different
places, e.g. Newfoundland, Italy.

Anonymous

It is good to be happy and answer questions. I feel the best at the North Bay Literacy Council.

It is good to have the Canadian Red Cross. I took a first aid course to help people.

I can write letters to my son and my 2 grandchildren. It makes me feel good and happy. Kathy my tutor is good to me.

All the best to my good friends at the North Bay Literacy Council. It makes me feel good to go to school.

Anonymous

Literacy opened a lot of doors in my life. Now I can read more fluently. It helped me use a computer.

I feel more independence filling out forms and reading the letters that come to me.

It makes me happy going to Hamilton Literacy Council.

Now I help a computer class.

Anonymous



Before the world is filled up anymore with human beings, it just might be a good idea to continue to save for future generations, those wooded areas with their drifting or rushing flow of water. This is what for a long time has mattered to me.

It is no wonder that water has had such an appeal to so many people. Every living soul consists of about 75% water. We like to swim, or paddle about! Many of us have a canoe or a rowboat and for those who love speed and do not mind having to look only ahead and pay out a bundle of cash, there are multi-engine racing launches available - but those speeders will likely never know the quiet of the forest on a windless day.

I like to walk through a forest of trees where the branches of trees from both sides of the stream meet to provide a canopy of branches and leaves. At a slow pace, I enjoy looking side to side, and sometimes downward into a valley confining a creek. Hopefully, there is some spread of forest on each side of the waterway. If the trail is winding most of the way, it will be of more interest for the same reason that the entrance foyer of Kleinhau's Music Hall at Niagara Falls, New York, is slightly curved and not a straight line - one does not view the entire foyer in one glance.



Besides a drifting flower of water, there should always be included along the trail some memorable place where the hiker will have to pause to view a rapid or waterfall, within the forest! I have been a support of the Bruce trail Conservancy for many years and have many favourite memories to enjoy. I have tried to help make it possible for others to enjoy what nature has provided.

Love letters to literacy: matters to me; has impacted on my life; hopes for in the future.

Literacy is being able to read and write.
Advise/tell future people what matters today.

Anonymous

Literacy mean

Learning what certain words mean
That I don't understand the right meaning of a
word, That I'm not sure on.

Literacy has helped me learn more on what
I don't know or have trouble understand some word
when I read a story when I do my work.

I would like to see literacy in the future help
those who need the help but were to afraid to
ask for help

L - Learning

I - idea

T - Thinking

E - energy

R - reading

A - Ask

C - Create

Y - Young

Anonymous



Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

My goals are to complete my grade 12 with great marks and to become a nurse when I'm done grade 12.

I'm pretty proud of everything I have achieved here. I've never had such great marks in my life. I'm so proud of myself.

Anonymous

The reason I like to go to the Literacy council is it helps me with math, spelling and job skills.

I didn't know how to spell and read.

I didn't go to a normal school or high school.

I now have a job cleaning a building.

Anonymous

Love letter to Literacy!

Dear CLO,

Literacy has impacted my life!

I am graduating this year, and the program taught me a lot.

My hopes are keeping on track with my math so I don't forget anything I did at the ALC.

Now I am graduating in 2014, then finding a job with my diploma.

Thank you for having a program for us to learn what we forgot as the years went by

Anonymous



Being in the literacy program helps me to show my grandchildren that it is OK to get help with some things in life.

Rick Sisson



Here are my thoughts of how literacy helps me in life.

It helps you to better yourself in life and learning.

I'm a stronger reader now than before. I hope the literacy council never stops helping people better themselves.

I'm more confident now.

Anonymous

Literacy shapes almost every aspect
of my life. It opened up
opportunities for me, even at a
young age. It gave me the **skills** I
need to **engage in my community**,
to **explore** new and exciting places,
to access **knowledge** and teach it to
others, and to **imagine** new
possibilities. I ❤️ literacy!

Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

LOVE LETTER TO LITERACY

SUBMISSION

Nov. 2013.

Dear 18 year old me:

In the year 2013 you will enter a crossroads in your life where you will need to know about money. A class that you will be taking will be teaching financial literacy, which means the understanding of how to handle your money.

You will learn about: income and expenses, spending plans, savings, banking and credit, balance sheets, shopping tips, stocks, bonds, and shares; and it will include math, reading and writing. These will all help you in preparing for your future goals, so you will not always be broke.

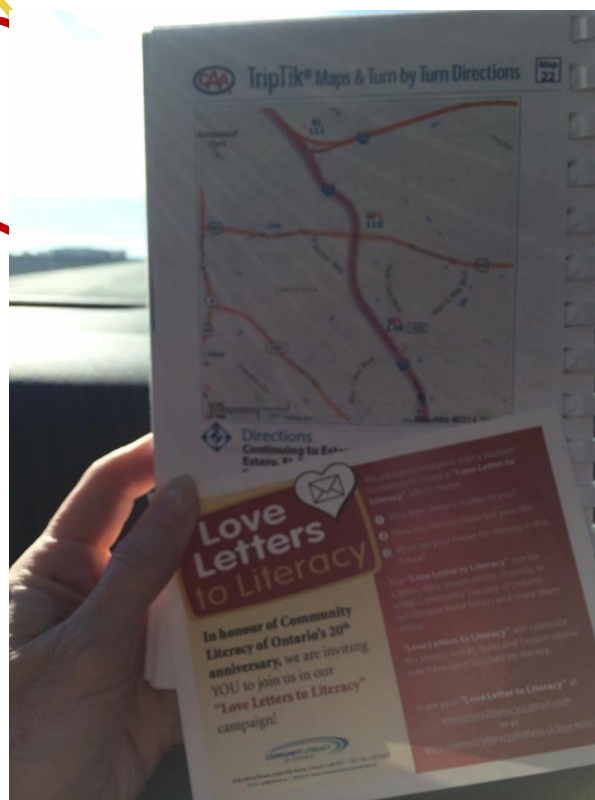
Pay attention!

Love,

Your 22 year old self.

(P.S. Be smart and start savings NOW!)

Anonymous



My goals:

- Obtain my grade 12 equivalency
- Go to college for either Executive Office Administrator or Human Resources
- Graduate and begin my career
- Be a role model for my daughter

Achievements I'm proud of:

Taking the first steps in enrolling at ALC so I can complete my education. I'm also proud of the marks I receive on assignments and tests - so much more rewarding when you see marks you've worked hard for.

I'm also proud to understand math now. Before, anything other than simple everyday math was like another language to me, but I get it now, and if I have a hard time, either Katie or Dave is more than willing to help.

Last but not least, I'm happy to have not given up, even though at times it felt too stressful or that I didn't have the time. I've kept at it, and will keep going until I have achieved what I set out for

Anonymous

Today I can say I can read and write and no longer do I avoid and hide from it. Thanks to Literacy London for saving lives and making the world a better place.

- Sean McKean



Literacy is being able to read and write. It's important to me because it helps me in many ways.

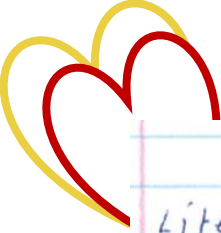
First, I can help my kids with their homework, and meet the teacher and talk about their reports.

Second, I can fill out my forms without help.

Third, literacy will help me to learn more. Last, it gives me an opportunity to find a job.

It's important for me to build my skills so I can read and write better and help others.

Anonymous



May 8, 14
Literacy has helped me to do
read the newspaper. Now I am able to give
my own opinions about what is going on
in the world.

I can do my own work: grocery shopping,
banking and being more independent.

In the future I hope to become a
great person and also to get a fabulous
paying job in Corunna.

Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

I am happy, helpful and nice to go to ODLG in the job skills.

We need more job skills.

We do lots of clocks, maps, stories, books, filling out forms and budgets.

Anonymous



I read books, newspapers and the Bible fluently.

I want to be a better Mom for Joshua, my son. He goes to a disabled school. They have ADD programs.

I want to get a better job.

We need help for mothers to get our kids in school full time. We want schools without guns or knives

Anonymous

I love learning new things. People ask me all of the time how much longer before I'm done school. I tell them I don't know, because every day I learn something new, and I'm always hungry for more. I went on a field trip with my son's class, to the Eldon House in London and the tour guide was talking about the War of 1812 and I understood what she was talking about. I would not have known that two years ago. Literacy is not just spelling, reading or math. There is so much more! I wake up every day and wonder, what new things will I learn today.

Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

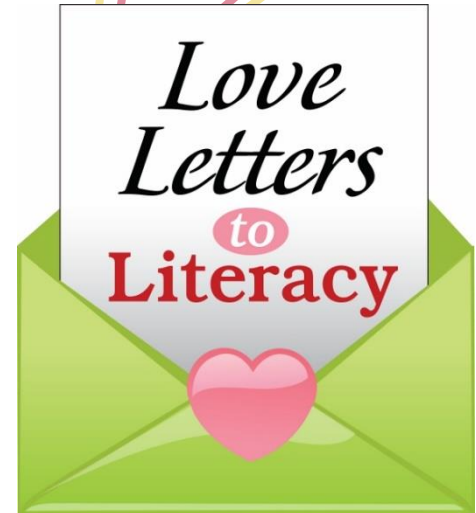
My goals:

- * To learn my schooling and gain a diploma
- * To become a graduate
- * To prepare for and take the GED test

Achievements I'm proud of:

- * coming back to school
- * improvements in Math and English that I've made

Anonymous



Dear Literacy,

I want to let you know how much I appreciate you for providing me with the spice of life that is reading and writing.

You showed me that there is light at the end of the tunnel and by doing so gave me a sense of inspiration. This has brought me so much joy because I am able to read and communicate with the rest of the world.

This has been a life-changing experience for me, my family and others. The skills I gained will live with me for a lifetime and they will be passed onto others who will learn from me.

Thank you for being there for me. You are unforgettable! I hope the Government of Canada will see the benefits in you and expand funding.

Sincerely,

Anonymous



Love Letter to Literacy.

I never had the chance to learn as a child. I felt very insecure many times, but didn't know why so; since I've had the chance to go to school here it's like a totally new world. I can understand when I read, I'm learning how to communicate, I could go on and on, but what I'm saying is, I'm finally getting a chance to learn. Literacy is changing my life.

Anonymous

LITERACY ADDS FUN TO YOUR LIFE.
AND A BETTER WAY TO A JOB.
LITERACY IS THE PLACE OF SMILING
FACES.

- ANONYMOUS

When I was 35, I didn't know how to read and write. My husband left me and I didn't know what to do. I went for a job at Carmins. I worked there for 2 years. Then because of my reading, I lost my job. After I lost my job, I went to the Hamilton Literacy Council. I was scared but I had good teachers.

Anonymous





Dear P.W.C.,

Love Letters to Literacy

Thanks, I love what you are doing for me and others.

I love your method of teaching. It helps me with my
Reading. my tutor is very good to me with understanding

I love the way my tutor teaches me to improve. my
tutor is very nice to me. I have to give my gratitude

to Miss Jennifer Noxon and Miss Ruth secunda

for helping me with my reading and that is great

for me. In the future. I can help those in need of
literacy to reach their goals. Literacy gives me

independence. Literacy helped me to get my driver's licence

Thanks to P.W.C for making things happen in my life and

that is very good P.W.C is a blessing,

Thank you

Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

Dear Literacy,

I think literacy is important because without it we wouldn't be able to read, write or use many of the machines we depend on today. We wouldn't be able to express ourselves in writing, which would make us very upset because we'd be unable to communicate with others. It'd also prevent us from filling out forms or signing agreements and contracts that we need to do for jobs. Also, filling out government forms would be an issue. We need to be able to read ingredients and be able to measure when we are cooking and learn to read nutritional values to stay away from food that is harmful. Then we can go for more of what is healthy. We also need financial literacy because we need to work with money in our day-to-day lives for paying bills, taxes and managing our money. Not being able to manage our money and spending more than what we make with credit cards can put us in debt. Literacy also includes digital technology, which is important because a lot of things are online now so if we can't use computers, we won't be able to find things that we need.

Thank you literacy for helping me with my essential life skills.

Regards,

Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy

Every part of my Literacy program is important. This program is very helpful to me because I am improving my math especially with additions. It makes me a better person.

Anonymous

"Literacy has given me hope and the strength to move forward"

A love letter to literacy from an adult student
(www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/love-letters/)

how Literacy has helped me

1. Literacy has helped me learn new things.
2. I have improved in my daily reading, my times tables, and every day life.
3. The future brings hope for me to get my grade 12, OLL helps me to do this.

Anonymous





Jan 28/14
Wut Literacy London mens forme
To len so my live can gat eser
an bater. So I dont hav to de pand
on and ebut ty. It will save
me time to red a good ortter
and to rite it out in stad woti
to tuck to my suprvsr.
It will be eser to mutacat
with wy wife. I wish it will
cum ese as fids ing things.
sins I din oin to literacy London
I hav lnt mor in tow yers.
Than I hav in my how time
in scooltim. BK Jan. 28/14



Anonymous



Dec 11/2011

To the Board of Directors and Staff
of Community Literacy of Ontario

Literacy for me has been a very good thing
in my life. learning has been a wonderful thing in my
life. I never realized how important having an
education is until now. I had a job before I began
this program that I loved. but I was unable to keep
it because of my education and learning disability.

But from this program I now believe that I
could keep a job like my last one. This program
has already open doors in my life and from
this program there lies a better future ahead
for me and others.

I Love learning
and the
knowledge

get from learning

Thank you



One more thing my life has become a lot
better with better literacy skills.

thanks again for this program in Elliot
Lake
Ont

Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

Literacy Council

Congratulations on your 20th anniversary!

Thank you for the work you do in helping newcomers to our country and illiterate people already here, to read and write!

I wish you all the best in the future.

I feel it is a privilege to live in a country where we are encouraged get an education and not in a country where we would not even be allowed to learn to read and write. I am an avid reader and have been since I first learned to read.

I remember when letter writing was still "in vogue". In the late 1940's, when my future husband returned home after being overseas in WW II, we met and he decided to attend Trade School in Toronto to be an electrician, coming home only on the weekends. Many letters were exchanged during those months when he was down there and I was here.

In the 1970's, when our children were growing up, our son was attending university in a co-op course. I wrote to him every week sending him a small amount of money and telling him all the family and community news. When he was on his work term he was often in very remote places (such as, we learned later, an ice floe) and we would be anxiously waiting for his letters.

We were very surprised, when getting our house ready to sell to find the letters I sent to him down in the basement in a box of his university text books. We all sat down and read them and it was interesting to see what had happened during those years.

At the same time our son was in university, our oldest daughter who had graduated from university, was back-packing through Europe and our only way to communicate with her was by letter. Sometimes I would wait two weeks for a letter. She would write and tell me where to send the next one.

Anonymous

"Literacy is a gift.
Literacy removes my
fear. Literacy restores
my faith. Literacy is my
comfort".

- An adult student in their Love
Letter to Literacy

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

Dear Literacy,

You matter to me because you taught me a better understanding of how to deal with situations, comprehend everyday tasks and conversations, have knowledge on surrounding operations and environment, but overall, you made me smarter! Not a lot of people in society have a proper comprehension of what takes place around them, I am truly lucky. Without you in my life, I might as well live under a rock.

The impact you have made in my life is a grand one. While I was attending high school, I found it hard to understand many things that were happening around me. Once I started learning about you, literacy, and taking the time to soak it all in, everything became easier. I am now going back to high school to obtain my diploma, except this time it is not as challenging. Being literate has helped me get my life on the right pathway, I now have goals and accomplishments that I am very proud of.

In the future I hope to see more programs and courses to teach you to those whom are unaware of you. I wish that you could touch the lives of many more people. If you were taught and understood by everyone, there would be less crime and hatred in the world. Being illiterate affects a person's ability to think properly, which results in the making of poor choices. Although not everyone is capable of understanding you, they should at least put forth an effort.

Anonymous



Literacy matters to me because it is good to know how to read, write and use computers as well as do math.

Literacy has made it easy for me to get a job, run errands, enjoy reading books, doing math and just keeping busy.

My hope for my literacy in the future is that I get into a pre-apprenticeship program.

Anonymous



Literacy Matters To Me

Literacy London has changed my life because I almost gave up on my writing, reading and grammar skills.

I thought "English as a Second language" would be enough and I wouldn't need to learn more than that. However, over time I realized I needed more language training.

I found information on Literacy London and asked for their help. After I started in this class and saw all these beautiful, kind dedicated people who are there to help me learn it was my dream come true.

I see the changes in my skills that were once very poor, but are not anymore. Every day I learn more.

I am such a lucky person that I have the best tutor who is so patient with me.

Anonymous



Dear Literacy London
I'm getting the help I've always
been needing in class.
I'm doing better than I ever have
in the past.
I plan to get my ged and get
a better job for myself down
the road

Nathan C.

Anonymous

I'm finally getting a chance to
learn. Literacy is changing my
life.

- Anonymous

I was born in Jamaica.

I came to Canada in 1987.

When I started school, they told me that I could not go to high school because I did not know how to read and write. So, I registered in an Adult Literacy program at East End Literacy, now renamed as Centre for Community Learning & Development (CCL&D).

I am trying very hard to keep up in my class, because I am still struggling with my health. But I am doing much better now. Thanks to all literacy workers. Because of literacy I feel good about myself. Because if it weren't for learning I don't know where I would be right now. Learning teaches me about myself, different types of literacy. If we try hard enough we can succeed and reach our goals. Thank you Centre for Community Learning & Development (CCL&D).

I am grateful for all that my teachers have taught me, there; as I continue my journey.

Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy

An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

Love Letters to Literacy

These are a few of our favorite things:

Letters, ledgers, love notes and large print.

Internet, instructions, I-Pads and invitations.

Tablets, TV guides, train schedules and textbooks.

Envelopes, entertainment, educational worksheets and exit signs.

Recipes, race tracks, recipes and record labels.

Advertising, audio books, accounting and advance notice of sales.

Cell phones, clocks, concert tickets and comics.

Yearbooks, Yahoo, and year end statistics.

I simply remember all the things I can read and then I can feel so GLAD!

(with all due apologies to The Sound of Music)

Anonymous

First I want to say how much I appreciate all the teachers who are helping me to become literate. It is a wonderful experience for me, it has opened up so many new doors for me. For instance, I started one year ago, I did not recognize A from B. Now when I pass a sign on the road I can recognize the words and am starting to read what it says.

When I go to church at least four words in every verse of the Bible I can read. I can also find my texts in the bible during church

If I get the chance to continue for another two years I know I will become fully literate.

I want to thank my teachers again.

Anonymous





Where do I belong?

For so long I often wondered where do I belong I long to know where I belong

For so long ive overcome to find where do I belong or do I even belong

Oh how ive longed to find where I belong and to who do I belong do I belong to god.

From far and wide and opened eyed I shall not hide or be denied or even justified for I am
qualified from begging to end from new born to adulthood.

Threw sorrow and pain I do not blame or feel shame for the question does remain where do I
belong where do I belong.

Ive finely found ware I belong after so long to know where I belong .

The place ive found is Avery special place it is called tcld it's a place of learning reading
writing ware everyone makes me feel I belong .

After so long I can finely say I know where I belong and tcld is where I belong.

Anonymous

My hopes for the future are to get into
the renovation industry. I have a guaranteed
renovation job waiting for me out west
through my aunt, as soon as I get my G.E.D.
Being in the Literacy London program is
going to allow me to get the upgrading I
need to rewrite the G.E.D pre-test and get
one step closer to completing the final
G.E.D. Then I will be able to head out west
and start work and getting my life
track.

Anonymous

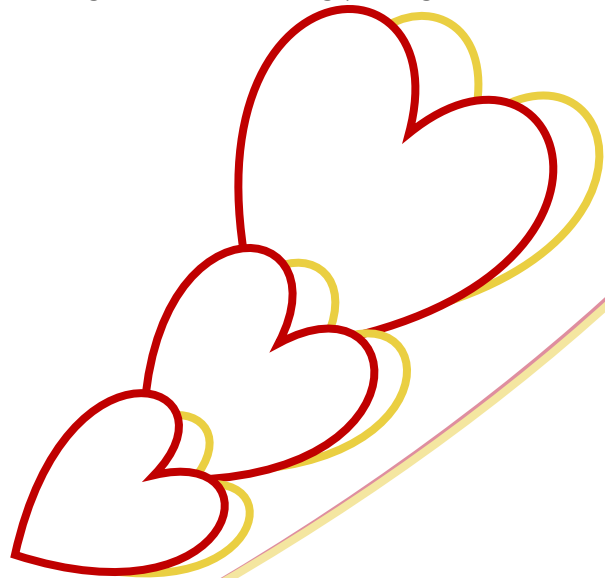
I LOVE reading and writing. Here is why.


Reading means I can learn so much about so many things. I can learn practical, necessary things like when I read the instructions that come with something I have bought; or, like when I need to take medicine and I need to know that I am taking it correctly. Reading also helps me understand things I'd never experience myself, like when I read about people's stories or their biographies. I especially like to read about people growing up in other parts of the world, in other cultures. What a great way to see other parts of the world, without even getting on an airplane! Reading is a great way to hear about other points of views also. It isn't always possible to talk to people to hear their opinions, by reading things people have written, you can hear lots of different perspectives and then form your own opinion.

Of course, writing is just as good as reading. Through writing, I can share my thoughts and my knowledge with other people. That way, I can be better understood, and I can help others. At work, I often have to write things - emails or papers - and by writing, I can influence people to do good things. In some small way, I think that helps make the world a bit better.

Maybe best of all, because I can read and write English, that means I can help others to learn and improve their reading and writing also. Tutoring is such an amazing privilege and I'm so lucky to be able to do this. I love it!

Anonymous





It has come to my attention that as of April 1st the Labour Market Agreement will be changed to redirect the bulk of funding for skills development to employers. This will result in a drastic reduction in funding to literacy and employment services. PLEASE DO NOT let this happen!!

I am a volunteer tutor for The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region. This group, and others like it across the country, have a proven track record and the skills and understanding necessary to be able to help people to improve their basic literacy, including reading, writing, and mathematical skills. This enables a lot of people to be able to GET A JOB. We are helping people to be more employable. To direct funding to employers would be to only help those who already have a job, to say nothing of the fact that this would be a low priority item for companies, while it is our primary objective. Also, a lot of employers only have a very few employees. They wouldn't be able to implement literacy training, and why would we want to reinvent the wheel, anyway, when we have agencies using volunteers to get the job done now?

This seems like picking on the vulnerable to me. Sometimes the results of these programs are hard to quantify and don't appear in a 'performance report' put out by a 'consultant'. Consider the student who always had to get her daughter to take time off work in order to accompany her to a doctor because her English was not good enough to be sure that she could explain to the doctor the details of her ailment. How can you even measure the value of self-esteem when now, because of The Literacy Group, a student can go into a store or restaurant, or on a job interview, confident in his ability to be understood? Sometimes major life improvements start with small steps.

A lot of people need literacy assistance in order to be able to get a job. Often people may be struggling to articulate that they are, in fact, qualified for a particular job.

I am proud to be a tutor for The Literacy Group. I see my student improving every week. It is extremely rewarding. Literacy groups are already struggling for funding. Please do not make the situation worse.

Anonymous

Love Letter To Literacy



It is important for me to be here at school to get my GED education because without it I can't get a good paying job. I have tried to get a job with a grade 12, but it is very hard to get a job above \$15.00 dollar mark today . So I have to go to school and work hard every day. At my age of 58 years I am working in math, reading, spelling, and computers. Learning is very important for me now. I am also happier, and I am accomplishing a lot since I have been with this class I have come a long way. The literacy and basic skills program really matters. Today a lot of people out in the world are out there without a grade 12 and I think literacy basic skills program will help them. So give it a try today you won't be disappointed. Literacy adds fun to your life. And a better way to a job. Literacy is the place of smiling faces.

Anonymous

Literacy matters to me because it has helped me become a better person. It is helping me achieve my goal which is receiving my Grade 12 diploma. I have one credit left which is my Grade 12 English.

Anonymous

Dear "Love Letters to Literacy",

Reading and writing are very important skills in my life.

It's necessary to communicate with people. Literacy has impacted my life by making it easier to express myself.

My hopes for literacy in the future are to grow and learn more English each day.

Anonymous



Love Letters to Literacy

Literacy means the world of opportunities for me. Without it, I wouldn't be able to get a job in the future. Without having gone to get higher education earlier in life was a major setback for me. Returning to school now has become a big milestone for me. The literacy program is a big help for me. Its helping me understand the wider possibilities of the world. I have learned that , with literacy, nothing is impossible I can achieve my goals in my life, no matter how big or small.

Anonymous

Quatrain

My love for literacy is so high

New learning takes me in to the sky

Language arts, math and communications are tools

They are some lessons learned in school

Anonymous

I am happy to come to the YMCA because the teachers help me as good as they can to see that I get the education so I can help my kids with their homework, find a good job so I can help my family

So I want to see how far I can reach in my education where I can go to college to do my PSW. To people who think they cannot do it I would say you have to try.

Anonymous

"Dear Literacy: I'm getting the help I've always been needing in class. I'm doing better than I ever have in the past. I plan to get my GED and get a better job for myself down the road."

- A "Love Letter to Literacy" from an adult student
(www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/love-letters/)



My Love Letter To Literacy

① - Why does literacy matter to me?

It matters because without this program, I would not have the goal of getting my grade 12 diploma and the possibility of taking future courses. This program gave me the possibility of having a more positive look at my life and future.

② - How has literacy impacted my life?

It has impacted my life in many positive ways! The Employment Center introduced me to this literacy program. These services have helped me discover new and even more effective ways to learn, study and meet my full potential. I must congratulate the programs and all those who make it possible for their amazing work and opportunities they provide for us. This program, with the assistance and support of my amazing Teacher and Program Coordinator, has contributed to greater self-sufficiency, more confidence and self-esteem. It has increased my confidence in my academic skills in order to assist me in reaching my goals.

③ - What are my hopes for literacy in the future?

I hope that literacy programs will be recognized and supported by other government agencies in both towns and cities. I hope that this program and its employees will be more supported, and recognized for their hard

work, and that the program be made more visible to the public. I would like to see the continued excellence of skills of Instructors and Program Co-Ordinators. In the Adult Learning Centre in, Cochrane Ontario The staff tries very hard to make it a welcoming environment. This literacy centre is a place of mutual respect for all individuals. They provide ongoing motivation and encouragement, To help you move forward. They encourage you to celebrate all successes - both big and small! They make sure to address any physical barriers and contribute to greater self-sufficiency. They also help increase confidence and academic skills in order to assist in reaching our goals. That is why I am emphasising the importance and continuation of the quality of people in this amazing program. It must be said that the quality of staff is important. Without them The program is just an other program. I am so grateful and thankful for this program and for all those participants that make it all possible.

Now my future and quality of life
looks and is much brighter.

Thank You

Anonymous



Love Letters to Literacy

I work at an Adult Learning Centre and I see lack of literacy all the time. I see the difference literacy makes in the lives of people. In the same building where I work is the Ontario Works office. People are referred to us from that office regularly. What I see are the majority of people referred to us from that office are people of low literacy. I have seen the change in their lives if they stay with us long enough to get some literacy training. It is not just education, it makes a difference in the quality of life. I have seen some people that could not even read their prescriptions or recipes or read stories to their children or grandchildren, things that we take so for granted. If their literacy is that low, then they are unable to use the computer. Now it is getting so you have to fill out a lot of forms on computers and low literacy makes that very difficult. I think that years ago, a person could function better without reading and math skills a lot easier than today. It is a proven fact that low literacy skills lead to poor health, poverty, unemployment and crime. We have a lot of newcomers in our country that are in need of some literacy training to.

I would like to see more funding for literacy. I would also like to see more agencies working with Literacy to get people in the door and into a program that is suited to their needs.

Anonymous

Going back to school as an adult makes me feel more comfortable helping my kids with their homework and more comfortable mixing with people. It makes me more focused on my future.

There may be challenges when you kids- appointments, when your kids are sick and at times it may be stressful for you with kids. But when I still attend school I get over the stress. Here I chat with people I explain my difficulties to my tutor and they will be able to understand and help me out.

Anonymous

May/07/2014



Love Letters to Literacy,
Helps "us" get our schooling.

I would encourage people to go back to school because without education in Canada you cannot get a job and to me I am coming to school because I want to learn what I didn't learn before. I want to help my kids with their homework. I hope to get a better job and I like coming to school because the teachers are fun to work with. They teach you well they take their time and teach you

I think coming here has done wonders in my life because there was a lot I did not know that I know now.

Thanks to my teachers, I can tell somebody about this school

Anonymous



Literacy has helped me improve my reading its helping me have ~~me~~ have more confidence in myself and better understanding more in reading and using words I never used before. I'm happy to be there. The tutors are helping me alot. I feel better that I am improving myself for what may lay ahead. If it was not for the staff and tutors I wouldn't have gotten this far. I thank them for being here to help me.

MS



In my Opinion

Things I learn in class include the eight 8 parts of English Language,
Speaking, writing, listening, math, career prep, and digital technology.

My thinking skills have improved my confidence and knowledge;

And my visual learning style and communication will help me in college.

I love literacy, because I can express my opinions, and tell my own story.

Anonymous

I was accepted in to the Personal Support Worker program August 2013. After being in the course for 1 month I was asked to leave and go get some literacy upgrading. Now I have been in the literacy program since November 2013 and the teacher is helping me a lot with the big words in my PSW course book. My self- esteem is very high now since my reading and write has improve with the help of my teacher.

Anonymous



ONLY FOR YOU, LITERACY!

Literacy, only for you I would not be able to write this love letter to you.

Only for you I would not be able to write notes to my husband, children, grandchildren, or friends and tell them how much I love them.

Only for you I would not have been able to get a good job.

Only for you I would not be able to relax and read a good book.

Only for you I would not be able to read recipes to prepare great food for my family.

Only for you I would not be able to read road signs and drive freely, wherever I want, with ease.

Only for you I would not have had the pleasure of reading and introducing new books to my children and grandchildren, and seeing their faces light up.

Only for you I could not read the newspaper to keep up on world events.

Only for you I could not fully enjoy the beautiful libraries we have in this country.

Only for you I would not have been able to get the education that I received.

Only for you I would not have the joy of being able to teach my children and grandchildren to read.

Only for you I would not have been able to keep up a written correspondence with my best friend, who lives 3,000 miles away, for the past 30 years!

Only for you I would not be able to read the Bible myself.

Only for you I would be lost in a world of ignorance and it would not be blissful.

Only for you I would not have met the wonderful people in my book club.

Only for you I would not be able to read the menu at a restaurant.

Only for you I would not be able to live a convenient private life, because only for you I do not have to depend on others to fill out forms and documents, which are required for schools, banks and other institutions.

Only for you I can live an independent life because I am confident and self-sufficient.

Thank you Literacy, because it is

"Only for you."

Anonymous



Love Letters to Literacy

I love the computer classes at the LAMP centre and the Move Your Body, Stretch Your Mind classes.

Because I feel I can communicate much better, and relax my body, leave my problems behind, then my creativity grows, matures, and dances.

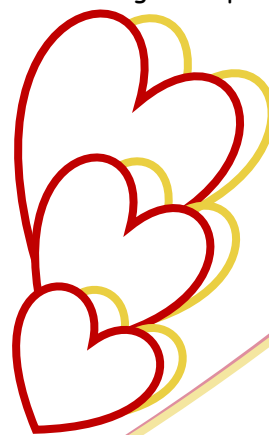
What this program means:

It is very positive for me to come to Wednesday and Thursday classes, with very positive and sensitive teachers. The writing part, and verbal assertive exercises has made me more sure of myself, as a positive person. The computer classes on Thursday, the last three months, have made me quite computer literate. Example, gmail use and typing out slowly a few pages and great confidence to type and print in future.

How I use it:

I use yoga to relax myself upon awakening (or when I am in a tense situation I use correct breathing etc. I am writing more poetry (as I always wanted to) and more self aware journaling. I am getting on the internet soon and using computer more and feeling more like a person. I feel more in touch with my body and correct breathing. I feel more assertive, more like writing, more comfortable on computer and feel more like achieving more positive life goals. I am looking to the future.

Anonymous



Love Letters to Literacy

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Anonymous

Love Letters to Literacy



An inspirational collection of literacy letters, stories, poems and pictures from across Ontario

Video

Click on the icon below to watch Community Learning Alternatives [Love Letters to Literacy video](#) on YouTube:

