



# Literacy Matters

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## Sandstone Vista Series

Launch on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June

The Sandstone Vista Series of short novels aimed at emergent readers will be launched at the 'Highland Readers' Day' on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> June. The novels were written by the well known authors Suhayl Saadi, Des Dillon and Isla Dewar and their publication was financed by a Highland Adult Literacies Grant.



Suhayl will also be attending the event along with authors Lin Anderson, Anne Donovan and Margaret Elphinstone.

The four will form a panel to talk about themselves as readers and later they will be discussing their work in smaller group sessions. In the afternoon, there will be further workshops on reading, writing and getting published.

The event, organised by the Highland Council's Education, Culture and Sport Service, will be held in the Council Chamber at Highland Council HQ, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness. To attend costs £6 and pre-booking is essential. For more information, please contact Charlotte MacArthur, Area Libraries Officer on 01349 868460.

## Funding Deadlines

The next deadlines for applications for Adult Literacies Funding are:



Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> August  
 Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October  
 Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December

Decisions will be made about a fortnight later and successful applicants informed as soon as possible after that.

## Adults get to know their city

ABE Inverness, in partnership with an independent agency, Working Without Walls, has recently completed a pilot project to provide literacy tuition for adults with special educational needs. A successful funding bid was made to Highland Adult Literacies and the project ran for 12 weeks from January to April 2004.

Basic reading and writing skills were practised within the context of 'Know Your City' whereby activities and exercises made use of authentic materials such as city maps and public transport timetables. Great use was also made of digital photography as a visual aid to learning.



Participants were awarded with certificates and a display of their work was made at Crumpets Coffee Shop in the Spectrum Centre.

Session plans of the course which could be adapted to any town are available on CD Rom from Jill Crawshaw at ABE Inverness - telephone 01463 710013.

## The Big Plus

*Promotional Material*

We have received a range of free promotional material from the Big Plus including T shirts, coffee mugs, calculators, pens, rulers, notepads, carrier bags, mouse mats, highlighters, stress balls, key rings, bookmarks and newspapers. If you would like to receive a supply of these items, please give us a call.

# Training Courses



These sessions are free and open to anyone who is interested.

To book your place, please telephone or Email Chris McLintock at the Highland Adult Literacies Office.

## TUESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2004

11.00 am – 12.30 pm followed by lunch

### Advocacy Highland

Presentation of the work of a new independent voluntary organisation which aims to support people make decisions which affect their lives and have their views listened to and taken into account.

Their priority groups are people

- who have learning disabilities
- who have mental health problems including dementia
- who are older and frail
- who are homeless

but they have discretion to provide advocacy for others if they need it.

Presented by Sheilis Mackay, Advocacy Manager

**Location: Beaufort Hotel  
Culduthel Road, Inverness**

## TUESDAY 29<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2004

11.00 am – 12.30 pm followed by lunch

### Literacy and Learning Disabilities

Promoting abilities and encouraging learning for adults with learning disabilities.

Presented by Gill Sutherland, Working Without Walls and Jill Crawshaw, ABE.

**Location: Beaufort Hotel  
Culduthel Road, Inverness**

### Fast Track ITALL

The 2-day fast track ITALL course had a successful first day on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May, delivered by Isabel Duncan and Norman Ross to 21 delegates.

A further course is planned for later in the year and if you would like to attend, please let us know and we will add your name to the waiting list.

# CAVSS

## A Highland perspective

In January, CAVSS provision commenced at the North Highland College, Thurso when literacy/ numeracy tutor, John Sawkins, joined an NVQ level 1 and 2 Professional Cookery class. The idea of CAVSS was explained to the students and John set about conducting interviews using Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).

Many students' ultimate aim was to own and run a restaurant or B & B and they hoped to progress through NC/NQ onto HNC Cookery. The impression gained from talking to students was that, although core skills were clearly an issue, the central key to their progress was overcoming stress and building confidence. Students could do basic everyday calculations accurately - it was only when they were put under pressure of deadlines or when someone was checking up on them (looking over their shoulder) that the errors emerged.

Prior experience at school seemed to get in the way of being able to face a maths tutor again. Students refused to attend available 'drop-in' sessions for core skills, but seemed happy to talk through calculations directly relevant to recipes. Students were introduced to the 'dignified interface' eg [www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise](http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise) which allowed them to practice basic tasks. John discussed learning styles with them and concluded that most learned best through doing rather than via listening or from diagrams.

The class had to produce meals for about 50 guests on a daily basis. The day started with Helen (the catering tutor) identifying the dishes and ingredients and allocating tasks to each of the students. By late morning the pressure was intense as all dishes had to be ready for serving by 12.15. Helen and John decided to work mainly one to one with the students, chiefly because they could not afford for them all to stop cooking at once.

John gave IT help to one of the older students so that he could type the menu for the day and, although this was a laborious process, he took great pride

in the result. John worked with other students to help with their maths as they multiplied up the ingredients: eg a recipe for four portions had to be prepared for twenty. The students would often make up the recipe five times over rather than rely on their mathematical calculations! One of the students taught John how to prepare meringues at speed which was good for the student group because they saw that the tutor was fallible under pressure! Maths was the most important core skill in the students' eyes. Literacy came up less frequently. At the end of the course, the ILPs were revisited to see if short term aims had been achieved or needed to be revised.

The time invested in putting the literacy/numeracy tutor into the class alongside the vocational practitioner produced marked results in terms of 'outcomes'. Chiefly, it is the issue of confidence that is addressed and students find new ways of facing up to and dealing with gaps in their basic skills.

John believes that CAVSS should be used next session from the beginning of the course, so that the literacy/numeracy tutor can plan lessons alongside the course tutor and tackle key issues in context. In time, it may be possible to incorporate similar schemes into all the College's vocational programmes.

On 17<sup>th</sup> May, representatives from North Highland College, Banff and Buchan College and Porterfield Prison took part in a video conference with CAVSS practitioners in Western Australia. Hosted by the Western Australia Department of Education and Training, practitioners in Scotland were able to put questions to and discuss issues with a group of Australians who have already been pioneering this work for some years. Both sides of the globe found this to be a very useful exercise and we have to thank the Australian contingent for their generosity in setting this up and taking time out to take part. It is hoped that a CAVSS group (perhaps virtual?) can be set up in Scotland to exchange ideas and experiences as people take this style of delivery forward.