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Literacy Matters

Resources

For Borrowing by Partners

We have a wide range of resources available for borrowing by Adult Literacies partners.

Resources from Learning Connections



These include books for teaching reading, writing and numeracy, together with books which concentrate on workplace literacy and health. There are also dictionaries, tutor guides and diagnostic tools plus more theoretical works detailing research into literacy and numeracy.

AbilityNet Accessibility Kit



The AbilityNet Accessibility Kit has a selection of adaptive computer equipment and software for adults with physical and learning disabilities.

Reports, Videos and DVDs



Also available are a number of reports which will be of interest to adult literacies practitioners. There are also a number of videos and DVDs of conferences and seminars about adult literacy

Digital Cameras



We also have two digital cameras for borrowing by adult literacies tutors for use when working with learners.

Laptops and Tablets



There are 14 laptop and 6 tablet computers for use with literacies classes. Initially, the computers will be available in Inverness, Fort William and Kingussie and will enable internet access through Highland Libraries using WiFi technology.

Complete lists of the resources can be downloaded from our website on www.halweb.co.uk. Alternatively, lists can be ordered from the Adult Literacies Office.

If you decide that you would like to borrow any of these resources, or if you would like to view them yourself, please get in touch.

Adult Literacies Funding Awards

4 Successful Bids

Ross and Cromarty Community Learning has been awarded £19,710 to continue to provide adult literacies opportunities with disadvantaged communities in Easter Ross. In order to enhance provision, the weekly hours of the Adult Literacy Support Worker will be increased to 21. The project will run from August 2005 to July 2006.

Working Without Walls has been awarded £5,706 for running Local History and Numeracy classes for people with learning disabilities. WWW is working in partnership with a number of organisations to provide these classes for their clients. The project runs from July to October 2005.

The **Isobel Rhind Centre** has been awarded £2,332 for a project which will combine literacy learning with a combination of outdoor activities including fishing and walking. The project runs from July to September 2005.

Eden Court Theatre has been awarded £1,950 to provide a further series of workshops based on exploring literacy through song writing, music and drama. The project will be based at the Spectrum Centre in Inverness and is targeted at young people who may not be best served by more formal methods. The project will run from October to December 2005.

Funding Deadlines

The next deadlines for applications for Adult Literacies Funding are:



Wednesday 17th August
Friday 7th October
Friday 2nd December

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

If you have an idea for a project but you are not sure how to carry it forward, please contact us at the Adult Literacies Offices as we would be very happy to discuss this with you. An updated application form was issued this January and is available in both hard copy and electronic formats. To be considered for funding, applicants must use this new form.

Sandstone Vista New Series



They say the best things always come in threes and this has been very true for the new series of Vista books for emergent readers from Sandstone Press.

Firstly there are three brand new titles – *Blood Red Roses* by Lin Anderson, *Gato* by Margaret Elphinstone and *This Time This Place* by Muriel Gray. *Blood Red Roses* is a crime novel and a prequel to Lin Anderson's full length novel *Driftnet*. Margaret Elphinstone's *Gato* is a historical novel set in a mill and *This Time This Place* is a selection of Muriel Gray's journalism about topical issues which would make a very good basis for class reading and discussion.

Sandstone doesn't do things by halves, however, and so there were also three launches for the books. The first was in Ottaker's Bookshop, Dundee on the 4th of May at which Lin Anderson did a reading and met readers. The second was the Highland launch which was held on the 23rd May in Nairn during their Book Festival where both Margaret and Lin gave readings to an appreciative audience, and the third launch was in Borders Bookshop in Glasgow on 3rd June where again both Margaret and Lin were present to read from their books to the assembled company.

This new series of books was funded both by Highland Adult Literacies and by Highland Council and copies are available for borrowing through libraries and also, for adult learners, through

their local ABE service. Copies can be bought directly from Sandstone through their website www.sandstonepress.com. For any enquiries contact Bob Davidson, Managing Editor on 01349 862583

Grundtvig 2 Learning Partnerships



The Highland Adult Literacies Partnership has successfully applied for funding to take part in an

international Grundtvig partnership which is part of the Socrates European initiative to promote Educational and Cultural exchange of ideas between learners and practitioners in different European countries. The project which we are engaged in is called METODA (Methodological Exchange between Trainers of Disadvantaged Adults) and will be concentrating on how peer mentoring is practised in the various countries.

The group from Highland which will be taking part in this project are Calman Trust who work with young adults in Easter Ross and Inverness who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. It will also involve similar groups in Denmark, Czech Republic, Spain, Italy, France and Austria. As the project progresses there will hopefully be spin offs for other groups in Highland as they also will have opportunities to learn how peer tutoring is working in other countries.

Literacies and Offending

By Norman Ross, Prison Literacies Liaison Officer

When describing to a fellow delegate at some conference exactly what I do, I often meet the response, “Well at least you’ve got a captive audience to work with”. How many times? When asking an incarcerated client, “Are you alright for next Thursday?” the response often echoes the aforementioned cliché – “I’m not going anywhere for a while”.

The humour reflected in these observations masks a contradiction. My ‘audience’ might be, in a sense ‘captive’, but this does not guarantee an audience with them. Let me explain.

Since taking up the post of Prison Literacies Liaison Officer for Porterfield Prison it has been my remit to provide support for prisoners with literacies difficulties both within Porterfield and on liberation to the community. These prisoners, due to a lack of confidence in their abilities in a shared learning environment, are not usually in a position to take up formal learning in the prison’s Education Unit. As with established Adult Basic Education in the Highland community, the most effective method for delivering literacies learning in prison is on a one to one basis.

One of the main barriers to learning in the community is the stigma attached to not being fully ‘literate’. The pressures of living in a closed prison setting, where everyone seems to know what everyone else is doing, accentuate these difficulties and overcoming

the stigma by providing a confidential service can be problematic. I have realised that making prison literacies interesting and engaging requires an adaptability and a willingness to go a step further (in a completely appropriate way of course) than in the community.



Posed by models

It is well known that the incidence of low levels of literacies in the criminal justice system is higher than in the community. This has resulted in an awareness of a consistent link between low literacies skill levels and persistent re-offending. Previously, other social factors such as deprivation, addiction and mental health have been considered among the chief causes of recidivism in modern society but difficulties with reading, writing and numeracy are now acknowledged issues which, alongside more recognized problems, urgently require challenging. Unfortunately, a prisoner is less likely to admit to, and voluntarily seek help for, low literacy skills than he is for a drink or drugs problem.

The successes the project has had have proved to be rewarding both for me and the excellent and dedicated volunteer tutors who have been working with me in Porterfield. On first going into prison, volunteers are naturally a bit nervous but it has surprised me how quickly comfortable and appropriate learning relationships have developed.

For instance, over the past 18 months I have been working with a learner who was on day-release to a catering course in Inverness College but who required support with literacy and numeracy. Inverness Library has been extremely helpful in allowing us to use the Reference Room for ICT tutorials on The Peoples Network. Alness and Invergordon Libraries have been equally co-operative. They have also shown sensitivity and discretion in allowing him to sign up to the Library system in an appropriate way. He can now borrow books which would normally have been out of his reach, negotiate the web, use e-mail and access other learning support sites. This would not have been possible without partnership working. He and his tutor both received awards at the Celebration of Learning. The learner has stated that he could not have taken on this course without our support. We are now planning support for him in the work-place and in the community.

This has been a pilot project where Adult Literacies have been working in largely unknown spheres and with no similar schemes with which to gauge practice or success. The experience of working with those who ‘aren’t going anywhere for a while’ has been rewarding, frustrating and illuminating. In challenging literacy abilities in the community we are taking a step towards guaranteeing active citizenship to the marginalised and excluded. The same goes for the prison system with the added factor that it will eventually reduce the burden on the system and the concomitant social burden that is persistent re-offending.

Next step opportunities.....

from the WEA

Are you working with a group who would like to

- undertake a slightly more focused integrated literacy course on a subject of their choice ie local history, personal development, creative writing or health issues?
- develop further their literacy skills and perhaps even gain a level 1 SQA unit in Communications, Options and Choices or Local Investigations?

If so, the Workers' Educational Association may be able to assist. With funding from Highland Adult Literacies, we are able to provide a tutor and pay for all associated costs for groups to undertake issue based literacy courses. If you are interested, please give Hilary Lawson a ring on 01463 710577 or email the WEA at inverness@weascotland.org.uk

Learners' Forums

A very successful review day on 'Maximising Partnership Effectiveness', conducted by Alan Barr of the Scottish Community Development Centre, was held for the Adult Literacies Partnership at the Thistle Hotel on Monday 13th June. One of the main points identified for action was the need to expand the provision of Learners' Forums.

The idea of a Learners Forum is to give learners an opportunity to comment on their learning and make suggestions for change. The chance to discuss their ideas with others is often beneficial. To initiate the process, we will be inviting any groups who are learning together to hold a session where they can discuss their learning. We can provide sample questions for discussion but groups will be welcome to raise their own issues as well. We shall be getting in touch shortly with partners about this.



ABE News

New Co-ordinator for Skye

Welcome to Joey Graham who has been appointed to the ABE Co-ordinators post in Skye & Lochalsh. Joey, who has been an ABE volunteer tutor since 1998, will take up her post later this summer.

Also welcome to Joanna Patterson who started work as Resource Room Assistant on 1st June. Joanna is based at the Spectrum Centre, Inverness and will be able to help and advise both tutors and learners on the available adult literacies resources.

ITALL Courses

For anyone interested in becoming an ABE Tutor, there is a new ITALL training course starting in Dingwall on Tuesday 24th July. Further courses are planned in Fort William later in July and in Inverness, Caithness and Badenoch and Strathspey in September.

If you would like to join one of these courses, please contact the relevant co-ordinator.

Adult Basic Education 01463 251277	
Caithness	
<i>Libby Cook</i>	01955~605423
Inverness	
<i>Jill Crawshaw</i>	01463~710013
Ross & Cromarty	
<i>Norma Christie</i>	01349~864579
Lochaber	
<i>Ann-Marie Donoghue</i> 01397~707371	
Badenoch, Strathspey & Nairn	
<i>Isabel Duncan</i>	01479~811689
Sutherland	
<i>Barbara Watson</i>	01549~402050
Skye & Lochalsh	
<i>Joey Graham</i>	01478~614064
<i>to commence soon</i>	

Training



Dyslexia Awareness

Last October, some partners attended Dyslexia Awareness Training provided by Learning Connections and presented by their Development Coordinator, Don Mackie. The aim of the day was to enable those who attended to cascade training to others. If your organisation would like to arrange a Dyslexia Awareness Session, please contact Julie Simmons, Adult Literacies Strategy Officer 01463 251278 or email julie.simmons@highland.gov.uk

Future Training Sessions

We are now preparing for our next series of workshops related to literacy and numeracy provision. To help us with our planning, we have circulated a Training Needs Suggestions form to literacies partners. It would be helpful if as many people as possible could complete and return this form. We would be particularly interested in any new ideas for training sessions and for any offers to provide training.

If your organisation has planned any training that may be of interest to adult literacies practitioners and that you wish us to publicise, please get in touch with the Adult Literacies Office.

Alternatively, if you would like to arrange and stage any training related to adult literacies outside the Inverness area, please get in touch as we may be able to fund and publicise this.