



Liftoff to Literacy Tutor Information

Thank you for your interest in becoming a tutor with *Liftoff to Literacy*! We could not make this program work without tutors like you.

In its 1991 National Literacy Act, Congress defined literacy as "An individual's ability to read, write, and speak in English, and compute and solve problems at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job and in society, to achieve one's goals, and develop one's knowledge and potential."

More than 43 million people in the United States have low literacy skills and struggle with their reading. Low literacy effects the economy, communities, and families.

Adult Literacy Programs work to combat low literacy, one person at a time. Adult literacy programs are learner driven – learners set their own reading goals and work at their own pace. These programs happen through dedicated volunteers committed to helping improve their community and the life of their learner. Adult learners who participate in literacy programs often have success in many areas of their lives such as gains in employment and earnings, an improved self-image, and positively impacting their children's schoolwork.

Ontario City Library's adult literacy program, *Liftoff to Literacy*, is supported by the California Library Literacy Services grant and the California State Library. These grant funds provide materials, staffing, and education support for our program.



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LIFTOFF TO LITERACY

Basic Structure of Lifftoff to Literacy

Lifftoff to Literacy follows the statewide standards of adult literacy programs in libraries.

To achieve learning for our adult learners:

1. Volunteer tutors and adult learners are paired together for one-on-one tutoring.
2. Pairs set reading and writing goals based on what the learner desires to accomplish.
3. Pairs ideally meet for tutoring 1x per week for 60-90 minutes.
4. Pairs meet until goals are met.

YOUR ROLE AS A TUTOR

Tutor Requirements

In order to be a tutor with *Lifftoff to Literacy*, all potential tutors must:

1. Complete tutor training (2 hours)
2. Pass a background check with the City of Ontario
3. Attend a Volunteer Orientation (safety tour of building)
4. Commit to 6 months of tutoring
5. Attend continued trainings as they are offered.

Volunteering in the *Lifftoff to Literacy* program is not recommended if you need to complete "required" volunteering hours, either for school or other reasons. The library does not accept court-required volunteers.

Adult learners join *Lifftoff to Literacy* at irregular intervals and, sometimes, unexpectedly. After you complete the tutor requirements listed above, you may remain waiting for several weeks until a learner is available. Tutors and learners are matched up based on availability and other factors that would benefit learning.

Tutor Responsibilities

In your role as a tutor, your responsibilities include:

- Contacting your learner and setting up a meeting time.
- Conducting tutoring sessions with your learner
- Preparing a weekly lesson – review resources available to you.
- Creating lessons plans (turn in the first 6 lesson plans to Literacy Staff)
- Tracking your hours
- Entering your tutoring hours on Better Impact by the last day of each month
- Stay connected with Literacy Staff – report any problems or concerns

*Expect to spend 2-3 hours per week volunteering (1 hour prep work + 1 – 1.5 hours tutoring)

Virtual Tutoring

Virtual Tutoring is an option. If meeting online works best for you and your learner:

- Use any platform that best suits the needs of you and your learner.
- If needed, create and send a meeting link to your learner.
- You can use your personal devices, but the literacy program has technology devices available to tutors and learners to use in the library.
- Tutoring sessions should be distraction free and professional in nature.

Popular platform options for virtual tutoring:

- Jitsi
- Google Duo
- Zoom
- What's App
- Discord
- Facetime/video calls
- Email
- Texting
- Phone calls

REPORTING VOLUNTEERING HOURS

Better Impact

One of your responsibilities as a tutor is to keep Literacy Staff updated on the number of hours you volunteer, your tutoring experience, and the progress of your learner. The City of Ontario uses **Better Impact**, a system that tracks and organizes volunteer hours and activities. As a volunteer, you will be able to login to Better Impact to input your volunteer hours. Hours must be inputted by the end of each month.

When your tutor training and background check is complete, you will be sent your login information to Better Impact. You can also download the "My Impact" app. On the app you can clock in and out for volunteering. On the Better Impact website, you can add in your volunteering hours retroactively.

When reporting your hours on the Better Impact website, you are encouraged to utilize the feedback box to report on:

- Your learner's progression. Have they met a goal? Or started a new goal?
- "Feel good" stories – sometimes we use these for future marketing.
- Your tutoring experience – are you having difficulties?
- Supplies needed
- Questions or concerns

Additionally, the quarterly report must be filled out every 3 months. In this report, you will be able to report on your learner's progression and your volunteering experience in more detail. You will be sent the link for the quarterly report when it is time to complete it.

Much of the information on the report is also required by the City of Ontario and by the State Library for our CLLS grant reporting.

****Volunteering hours must be updated in Better Impact by the last day of each month.**

Tracking Your Volunteering Hours

You are responsible for tracking how long you volunteer and for reporting these hours. You earn volunteering hours starting with your attendance at tutor training. Please enter each type of hours as separate entries in Better Impact.

Please track your hours in 3 categories:

1. **Prep Hours** – Time spent researching, contacting your learner, preparing your lesson plan, etc.
2. **Tutoring Hours** – Time spent with your learner tutoring.
3. **Other hours** – This could be trainings, library events, or any other volunteering hours that is not prep work for sessions or tutoring sessions.

TUTORING SAFETY

Safety Protocols

The safety of *Liftoff to Literacy* participants (both learners and tutors) is a priority. Please follow these safety standards:

- Meet only in the library or a public space such as a community center or a café.
- Never meet in a private home, either your home or the home of your learner.

Both tutors and learners are asked to share their contact information and to use their personal devices. (See the section titled "Adult Literacy Classroom" for more details on available technology for in-library use.)

*Do not help your learner with their personal tasks that involve private information.

*Do not give your learner legal, medical, or financial advice.

Inappropriate Conduct

Inappropriate conduct is defined as any action or words that make you feel uncomfortable and is not acceptable by anyone at any time.

If inappropriate conduct should occur between you and your learner at any time:

- End the session immediately.
- Report the conduct to Literacy Staff.
- Participants may be dismissed from the program and, if necessary, further actions will be taken.

*If you and your learner need to dissolve your pairing for any reason, please contact Literacy Staff.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is critically important. You'll sign a confidentiality agreement at the volunteer orientation. Do not disclose your learner's personal information, their literacy level, or their tutoring status to anyone.

Discuss with your learner about their desired level of confidentiality and what you should do if you see them outside of the library. Do you wave and say hello? Or would they rather you ignore them? Have this discussion with your learner in your first tutoring session. Some learners may want to keep their literacy level or tutoring status private, even from family members. It is important we hold their confidence and trust.

RESOURCES FOR TUTORING

Liftoff to Literacy provides workbooks, manuals, and many other resources needed for tutoring. All the items are free to tutors and learners. The main curriculum provided is the *Challenger Adult Reading Series* by New Readers Press.

Challenger Adult Reading Series

Challenger Adult Reading Series, 2nd Edition by New Readers Press:

- Teacher's manuals are given to all tutors at their volunteer orientation.
- Student manuals include Levels 1-8.
- Student Writing workbooks compliment the series, which are also available.
- Some students will be more advanced and will not need the Challenger workbooks.

Tutor, 8th Edition by New Readers Press:

- This is given to all tutors at their volunteer orientation.
- It is an instruction manual for tutoring teens and adults.
- Chapter 6 is all about setting goals!

Challenger Placement Tool

Literacy staff uses the Challenger Placement Tool to assess a learner's reading level. Learners read aloud several lists of words and based on the number of words read correctly, literacy staff are able to match up the learner with the appropriate workbook level. As you work with your learner, you may discover that the original workbook level assigned may be too easy or too hard. Tutors should continuously evaluate their learner to make sure the work level is appropriate for their learner. You want to give them work that challenges them but is not so difficult it frustrates them.

The initial results of a learner's assessment are shared with their tutor upon pairing. The learner's assessment is repeated every 3-4 months. Literacy staff will make arrangements with tutors ahead of time for these repeated assessments. By repeating assessments, learners are able to see their progress, which is very encouraging!

Additional Curriculums Available

Sometimes the Challenger Series is not the best match for a learner. If this is the case, we offer additional curriculums to support reading and writing learning.

- The Active Reader Curriculum
- Vocabulary Boosters
- Meaning Matters Series
- And more!

ADULT LITERACY CLASSROOM

The Adult Literacy Classroom is available to tutoring pairs for their tutoring sessions. The classroom houses all of the literacy resources available to learners and tutors:

- Library Literacy Collection – for check out
 - Library card required
 - Fiction for all levels
 - Non-fiction, both casual reading and learning materials
 - WonderBooks – the books read to you!
 - Hi-Low Readers – books with a high concept level for adults, but written at a lower reading level

- Activities
 - Games
 - Flashcards
 - Jenga: writing edition
 - Scrabble Games

- School Supplies
 - Notebooks, paper, office supplies
 - Whiteboards
 - Timers
 - Notecards (flashcards)

- Smartboard – large tablet attached to the wall
 - Use for internet and presentations, and it has whiteboard capabilities!

- Technology Devices – Library use only
 - Amazon Fire Tablet – with the digital literacy collection on Cloud Library
 - Laptop (1)
 - iPad (2)
 - CD Player
 - Voice Recorder

- Cloud Library Collection – free ebook collection
 - Cloud Library App
 - Library card needed
 - Quick & Easy Reads Bookshelf (Hi-Low Readers)

*To book the literacy classroom for literacy tutoring, email Literacy@OntarioCA.gov. It is recommended that you make your tutoring sessions with your learners on the same day and time each week to make it easy to remember. Reservations in the literacy classroom can be made for ongoing reservations.

ROLES AND GOALS

Liftoff to Literacy is a goal driven program. Learners set their own goals and their success is measured by goal achievement. This process allows learners to learn at their own pace which builds motivation, is a positive experience, and encourages persistence.

The Roles and Goals forms are provided by California Library Literacy Services and are a required element of the CLLS grant reporting. The Roles and Goals forms help establish and track learner goals.

There are two forms used as part of Roles and Goals:

1. **Roles and Goals Role Map Worksheet** – Great for brainstorming what types of goals a learner might want to achieve.
2. **Roles and Goals Form** – Includes suggestions of common learner goals with space available to write in other goals.

Goals are divided into four categories:

1. Lifelong Learner
2. Worker
3. At Home and as a Family Member
4. Community Member/Citizen

*The Roles and Goals form should be completed in the first meeting with the learner and returned to library staff.

LESSON PLANS

Your lessons with your learner should be catered to your learner and work towards goal achievement. A standard lesson with your learner has 6 parts:

- Homework Review
 - Find out what worked and what did not work.
 - Be encouraging and supportive if your learner was unable to complete it.
 - Discover barriers that might have kept your learner from doing their work.

- Workbook Lesson
 - Discuss the concept of the lesson.
 - Can be from the Challenger Series, another curriculum, or a lesson you create.

- Reading Aloud
 - Have your learner read aloud each lesson.
 - Note missed words – make these “sight words,” a list your learner can study.
 - Note patterns in reading aloud.

- Writing Activity
 - Have your learner write in each lesson.
 - Note commonly missed words – add to the “sight words” list.
 - Check for spelling and punctuation accuracy.
 - Consider journaling or writing stories.

- Fun Learning Activity
 - Games, puzzles, or online videos or games.

- Assign Homework
 - Assign homework that supports their goals.
 - Homework should reinforce the lessons learned.
 - Homework should be fun and engaging.
 - Consider reading and writing assignments.

YOUR FIRST TUTORING SESSION

Your first session sets the tone for how you will plan lessons for your learner. Please be prepared and ready to tutor your learner in reading and writing.

In your first session:

- Determine your learner's desired level of privacy. If you see them outside of tutoring, do they want you to acknowledge them? Or do they wish for privacy?
- Learn about your learner's level of education (both formal and informal).
- Learn about your learner's homelife and support system.
- Discuss and set goals with your learners. What do they want to accomplish?
- Fill out the Roles and Goals form. Return the completed form to Literacy Staff after your first session.
- If they don't already have one, get your learner a library card! (Visit the check out desk in the library.)
- Hold your first lesson.
- Set up a date and time for the next lesson.

When creating your lessons, feel free to innovate! Research websites, videos, and games that would assist you in your lessons. Find other resources outside of the provided curriculums. Create activities that support goal achievement. Remember to keep the learner's goals in mind! For example, if a learner has a goal to provide healthy meals for their family, provide them an easy-to-read recipe for them to follow and cook as part of their homework.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

When working with learners, it is imperative to show kindness and compassion. Be encouraging during lessons and support your learner where they are in their learning journey.

Things to Remember

- Do not use the term “illiterate” when describing someone. This term is inaccurate when describing learners and is often an unkind label. Most learners have some level of reading ability. When describing a learner’s reading skills, use “levels” to describe literacy, for example, “My learner has a low literacy level” or “My learner is at a basic reading level.”
- Your learner can be any adult who has reached out for help. Are you comfortable working with learners of all races, backgrounds, religions, sexes, political parties, learning levels, and disabilities? If you are not, please let Literacy Staff know and we will strive to match you with someone who you feel comfortable with for tutoring.
- Sometimes pairs just do not click. It happens. If you need to dissolve your pair for any reason, let Literacy Staff know. We will attempt to reassign you with another learner.
- Volunteering in *Liftoff to Literacy* should be a positive experience for both you and your learner. If one or both of you are not happy, then learning likely will not happen. It is better to dissolve pairings and start fresh with a new learner than to have a bad tutoring experience negatively affect learning and volunteering.

THE NEXT STEPS

After you complete your tutor training, the next steps to volunteering in *Liftoff to Literacy* include:

- Completing your paperwork for the background check with the City of Ontario Police Department. Human Resources will contact you to set up your appointment after you have turned in your initial paperwork.
- Complete the tutor training part 2, the online portion. The video links will be sent to you with your initial paperwork.
- Attend your in-person Volunteer Orientation where you will:
 - Complete your *Liftoff to Literacy* application
 - Share your availability – when are you available to tutor?
 - Complete your library volunteering paperwork
 - Receive a safety tour of the library
 - Receive more information on the tutoring program including the *Tutor, 8th Edition*, and a teacher's manual, depending on your potential tutor.
- Practice preparing a lesson, review lesson plans, and research potential technology options.
- Get a library card!

Getting Paired with a Learner

Once you are paired with your learner:

- Use the Better Impact feedback field to share issues, problems, or successes you may be having with your learner.
- Be sure to sign in at the check out desk if tutoring in the building (this is explained at the volunteer orientation).
- Reserve the literacy classroom as needed (email Literacy@OntarioCA.gov).

Review this document regularly to remind yourself of your tutoring responsibilities.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please reach out at Literacy@OntarioCA.gov. We are happy to help!