

GARAGE SALE?

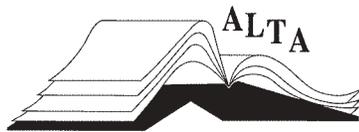
It's said that necessity is the mother of invention. And it was necessity that led to ALTA's first ever Garage Sale! Jerri Brandenburg needed to get rid of some teaching materials she no longer used. She mentioned it to Jean Fortune, who brought it up at a board meeting, where other members agreed that they, too, had superfluous materials. These items might be a real treasure to some other therapist, so why not share them? And thus was born the idea for an ALTA Garage Sale at our Spring Conference!

With very short notice, a limited group of CALTs were notified and asked to donate some items. Only six boxes of materials were collected, donated by a mere seven individuals: Jerri Brandenburg, Linda Byther, Beverly Dooley, Jean Fortune, Kathy Gilman, Edith Hogan, and Jean

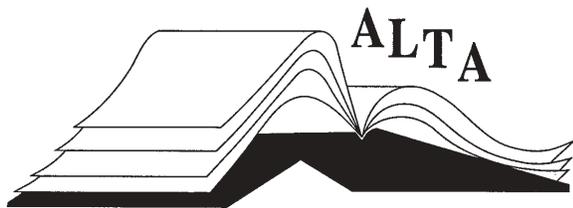
Raabe. (Thank you, ladies!) Items were generally priced from \$1.00 to \$3.00, with some as inexpensive as two for a \$1.00 and a very few for \$5.00. ALTA bags were offered for \$2.00.

Most items were used or gently used, although there were some brand new books, games, work books, etc. included. Out of this meager offering, the ALTA Foundation took in over \$400.00. Even more thrilling, though, is that many therapists--particularly beginning therapists--were able to find some inexpensive items that would benefit them in their efforts to teach our kids. (Remember how expensive and difficult it was just getting started in your own teaching careers?). Making affordable materials available to other therapists was met with overwhelming enthusiasm.

As a result of our ALTA members' positive response to this first "recycling" effort, your board has decided to hold an even bigger, better sale at the next spring conference. Most therapists possess no longer needed or duplicate materials just taking up space. So do your spring cleaning this summer, saving your unnecessary things for ALTA's sale. Your donations will help in three ways: 1.) they will provide some other therapist with affordable materials, 2.) they will benefit the ALTA Foundation, a 501(C)(3) non-profit entity established to accept donations and contributions in support of ALTA's educational mission, and 3.) they will reduce your clutter and make space for YOUR purchases at next year's sale! Watch for details and collection sites in upcoming newsletters.



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Academic Language Therapy Association®
Dedicated to the remediation of written-language skills.

bul•le•tin

Summer 2003

The bul•le•tin is a quarterly publication of the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA), and is free to its membership.

Reading Disabilities: Why do some children have difficulty learning to read? What can be done about it?

by G. Reid Lyon, Ph.D.

The National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD) considers that teaching and learning in today's schools reflect not only significant educational concerns, but public health concerns as well. Our research has consistently shown that if children do not learn to understand and use language, to read and write, to calculate and reason mathematically, to solve problems, and to communicate their ideas and perspectives, their opportunities for a fulfilling and rewarding life are seriously compromised. Specifically, in our NICHD-supported longitudinal studies, we have learned that school failure has devastating consequences with respect to self-esteem, social development, and opportunities for advanced education and meaningful employment. Nowhere are these consequences more apparent than when children fail to learn to read. Why? Simply stated, the development of reading skills serves as THE major foundational academic ability for all school-based learning. Without the ability to read, the opportunities for academic and occupational success are limited. Moreover, because of its importance, difficulty in learning to read crushes the excitement and love for learning, which most children have when they enter school.

As we follow thousands of children with reading difficulties throughout school and into adulthood, these young people tell us how embarrassing and devastating it was to read with difficulty in front of peers and teachers, and to demonstrate this weakness on a daily basis. It is clear from our NICHD research that this type of failure affects children negatively earlier than we thought. By the end of first grade, children having difficulty learning to read begin to feel less positive about their abilities than when they started school. As we follow children through elementary and middle school, self-esteem and the motivation to learn to read decline even further. In the majority of cases, the students are deprived of the ability to learn about literature, science, mathematics, history, and social studies because they cannot read grade-level textbooks. Consider that by middle school, children who read well read at least 10,000,000 words during the school year. Children with reading difficulties read less than 100,000 words during the same period. Poor readers lag far behind in vocabulary development and in the acquisition of strategies for understanding what they read, and they frequently avoid reading and other assignments that require reading. By high school,

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President's Letter

The ALTA 2003 spring conference and annual meeting was a day of information and inspiration. We were definitely given tools to continue to nurture our "garden" of students. Our thanks are extended to the conference committee for providing an opportunity to update our information on reading instruction and to renew professional friendships. Thank you, Jana Jones, Kim Mullins, Nancy Coffman, Chris Bedenbaugh, Nanci Utay, and Laura Tiedemann. Barbara Wise presented activities, strategies and measures to assist our students as they strive to become independent readers. Phyllis Hunter addressed the essential elements for insuring that all children read on grade level. She concluded with her Top Ten List for implementing research-based reading programs.

The Austin Area Branch of the International Dyslexia Association's Outreach Committee has received an official proclamation from Texas Governor Rick Perry that proclaims October 2003 as "Dyslexia Awareness Month" in the state of Texas. Thank you Austin Branch for your efforts on behalf of parents, educators and individuals with dyslexia.

Congratulations to Pat Sekel, Director of the Scottish Rite Learning Center of Austin for completing the dual accreditation process with ALTA Centers Council and the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC). Pat was presented with certificates from each organization at the IMSLEC meeting held in Atlanta, Georgia, November 16, 2002. Congratulations, Pat!

Have you considered a donation to the ALTA Foundation? Due in part to a generous gift from the Foundation, the ALTA program committee was able to provide two nationally known speakers for our 2003 spring conference. Charitable gifts to the Foundation can be made as honorariums, memorials, or as support to our professional organization.

Mark your calendars for our annual spring conference scheduled for April 17, 2004. You will not want to miss this conference. The Shelton School has graciously offered its facility for our meeting.

Kay Peterson, CALT
ALTA President

Upcoming ALTA Exam Dates

September 20, 2003
FUNdamental Learning Center
917 S. Glendale
Parklane Shopping Center
Wichita, KS 67208
P 316-684-7323

September 27, 2003
Payne Education Center
3240 W. Britton Rd., Ste. 104
Oklahoma City, OK 73120
P405-755-4205

October 4, 2003
Center for Youth & Families
Dyslexia Center
PO Box 251970
Little Rock, AR 72225-1970
P 501-666-8686

January 17, 2004
Southwest Multisensory
Training Center
600 S. Jupiter
Allen, TX 75002-4065
P 972-359-6646

June 5, 2004
The Neuhaus Education Center
4433 Bissonnet
Bellaire, TX 77401
P 713-664-7676

June 30, 2004
The Scottish Rite Learning
Center of West Texas
602 Avenue Q
PO Box 10135
Lubbock, TX 79408
P 806-765-9150

Reading Disabilities *continued from Page 1*

the potential of these students to enter college has decreased substantially. Students who have stayed in school long enough to reach high school tell us they hate to read because it is so difficult and it makes them feel “dumb.” As a high school junior in one of our studies remarked, “I would rather have a root canal than read.”

It is important to note that this state of educational affairs describes an extraordinary and unacceptable number of children. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (1998), 38% of fourth graders nationally cannot read at a basic level – that is, they cannot read and understand a short paragraph similar to that in a children’s book. Unfortunately, reading failure is disproportionately prevalent among children living in poverty. In many low-income urban school districts the percentage of students in the fourth grade who cannot read at basic level approaches 70%.

The educational and public health consequences of this level of reading failure are dire. Of the 10 to 15% of children who will eventually drop out of school, more than 75% will report difficulties learning to read. Likewise, only two percent of students receiving special or compensatory education for difficulties learning to read will complete a four-year college program. Approximately half of children

and adolescents with a history of substance abuse have reading problems. Failure to learn to read places children’s futures and lives at risk for highly deleterious outcomes. For this reason the NICHD considers reading failure to reflect a national public health problem.

How Reading Develops, and Why So Many of Our Children Have Difficulty Learning to Read

Converging scientific evidence from studies supported by NICHD indicates that learning to read is a relatively lengthy process that begins before children enter formal schooling. Children who receive stimulating oral language and literacy experiences from birth onward appear to have an edge when it comes to vocabulary development, developing a general awareness of print and literacy concepts, understanding and the goals of reading. If young children are read to, they become exposed, in interesting and entertaining ways, to the sounds of our language. Oral language and literacy interactions open the doors to the concepts of rhyming and alliteration, and to word and language play that builds the foundation for phonemic awareness – the critical understanding that the syllables and words that are spoken are made up of small segments of sound (phonemes).

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Access the ALTA bul•le•tin On-line

You may now access the Academic Language Therapy Association newsletter, ALTA bul•le•tin, on-line. Go to ALTA’s web site at www.ALTAread.org and click on the title “RESOURCES” in the heading. You will then come to the Newsletters page. There is a large banner-type heading announcing the availability of the ALTA bul•le•tin. Click on the icon that says: “click here.” The newsletter in its entirety will be downloaded to your computer. The newsletter, which is in Adobe Acrobat PDF and has numerous pages, will take several minutes to download.

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Vocabulary and oral comprehension abilities are facilitated substantially by rich oral language interactions with adults that might occur spontaneously in conversations and in shared picture book reading.

However, the experiences that help develop vocabulary and general language and conceptual skills in preschoolers are different from the experiences that develop specific types of knowledge necessary to read, including knowledge about print, phonemic awareness, and spelling. These skills need to be systematically and, depending upon the level of the child's background knowledge, explicitly taught. Preschool children who can recognize and discriminate letters of the alphabet are typically from homes in which materials such as magnetized let-

ters and alphabet name books are present and are the source of teaching interactions with parents. Clearly, these children will have less to learn when they enter kindergarten. The learning of letter names is also important because the names of many letters contain the sounds they most often represent. With this knowledge, the child is oriented to what is termed "the alphabetic principle" – a principle that explains how sounds of speech (phonemes) become associated with letters of the alphabet (phonics). This principle stands at the core of learning and applying phonics skills to print.

Ultimately, children's ability to comprehend what they listen to and what they read is inextricably linked to the depth of their background knowledge. Very young children who are provided opportunities to learn, think, and talk about new areas of knowledge will gain much more from the reading process. With understanding comes the desire to read more. Thus, ensuring that reading practice and the development of new vocabulary takes place. Through these early interactions and the systematic exposure to language and literacy concepts provided by parents, caregivers, and teachers, skilled readers learn to apply phonemic and phonics skills rapidly and accurately. Children that practice reading develop fluency, automaticity, and the ability to read with expression, and to apply comprehension strategies to what they are

reading to facilitate understanding. It all starts very early, with those initial language and literacy interactions that expose the child to the structure of our language and how print works.

Unfortunately, few children who later have difficulties learning to read, and particularly children from poverty, come to kindergarten and the first grade with these advantages. We know that the average middle class child is exposed to approximately 500,000 words by kindergarten; an economically disadvantaged child is exposed to half as many, at best.

In essence, children who are likely to have difficulties learning to read can be readily observed in the initial stages of their literacy development. They approach the reading of words and text in a laborious manner, demonstrating difficulties linking sounds (phonemes) to letters and letter patterns. Their reading is hesitant and characterized by frequent starts, stops, and mispronunciations. Comprehension of the material being read is usually extremely poor. However, it is often not because he or she is not smart enough. In fact, many children who have difficulty learning to read are bright and motivated to learn to read – at least initially. Their difficulties understanding what they have read occur because it takes far too long to read words, leaving little energy for remembering and comprehending what was read. Unfortunately, the slow and inaccurate reading of words cannot be improved in any appreciable way by using the context of what is read to help pronounce the words correctly. Consequently, while the fundamental purpose of reading is to derive meaning from print, the key to comprehension starts with the rapid and accurate reading of words. In fact, difficulties in decoding unfamiliar words and learning to recognize words rapidly are at the core of most reading difficulties. These difficulties can be traced systematically to initial difficul-

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Shelton School

ties in understanding that the language that is heard by the ear is actually composed of smaller segments of sound (e.g., phonemic awareness). And here we come full circle - many of these early difficulties in developing phonemic awareness are due to a lack of literacy and oral language interactions with adults during infancy and early childhood. Thus, because the environments most bereft of these interactions are those characterized by poverty, the cycle continues.

Can Children with Reading Problems Overcome Their Difficulties?

Yes, the majority of children who enter kindergarten and elementary school at-risk for reading failure can learn to read at average or above levels, but only if they are identified early and provided with systematic, explicit, and intensive instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension strategies. Substantial research supported by NICHD shows clearly that without systematic, focused, and intensive interventions, the majority of children rarely "catch up." Failure to develop basic reading skills by age nine predicts a lifetime of illiteracy. Unless these children receive the appropriate instruction, more than 74% of the children entering first grade who are at-risk for reading failure will continue to have reading problems into adulthood. On the other hand, the early identification of children at-risk for reading failure coupled with the provision of comprehensive early reading interventions can reduce the percentage of children reading below the basic level in the fourth grade (i.e., 38%) to six percent or less.

Are Certain Reading Instructional Approaches More Effective Than Others?

Yes. On the basis of a thorough evidence-

based review of the reading research that met rigorous scientific standards, the National Reading Panel (NRP), convened by the NICHD and the Department of Education, found that instructional programs that provided systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, guided repeated reading to improve reading fluency, and direct instruction in vocabulary and reading comprehension strategies were significantly more effective than approaches that were less explicit and less focused on the reading skills to be taught (e.g., approaches that emphasize incidental learning of basic reading skills). The NRP found that children as young as four years of age benefited from instruction in phonemic awareness and the alphabetic principle when the instruction was presented in an interesting and entertaining, albeit systematic manner. Likewise, the National Center for Educational Statistics recently reported data from its Early Childhood Longitudinal Study involving 22,000 children showing that, after controlling for family income, youngsters who attended more academically oriented preschool programs had significantly higher scores in reading, math, and gener-

al knowledge when tested in the fall of their kindergarten year than children attending less academically oriented preschools. Five NICHD longitudinal early intervention studies have examined the effectiveness of different early intervention approaches provided in kindergarten and first and second grades for those children most at-risk for reading difficulties. These studies strongly suggest that such programs if implemented appropriately, could reduce the number of children who fail to learn to read well below the 38% rate currently observed nationally. It is also important to note that the majority of children composing this unacceptably large group of poor readers ARE NOT provided special education services, as is discussed next.

Will Effective Reading Instruction Reduce the Need for Special Education?

That is possible in the long run. What is now clear is that effective instruction will help differentiate between children whose reading problems are related to inadequate instruction (curriculum casualties) versus children who continue to struggle despite early and intensive instruction. The number of children with reading dif-

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LEAD

ficulties served in special education reflects only a fraction of the number of school-age children who fail to learn to read. Recall from the previous discussion that approximately 38% of fourth grade students read below the basic level. Keeping in mind that the majority of these children will continue to have reading difficulties throughout their school career if they do not receive systematic and focused early intervention, we can estimate that at least 20 million school-age children suffer from reading failure. Among these 20 million children, only approximately 2.3 million school-age children are served in special education under the category of Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD). The remaining 17.7 million poor readers not meeting the eligibility requirements for the SLD category are either provided some

form of compensatory education or overlooked all together.

We have taken care in our NICHD early intervention and prevention studies to identify ALL children who are at-risk for reading failure within a given sample and to identify the instructional approaches that are the most effective for the majority of these students, irrespective of whether they are eligible for special education. As noted earlier, these studies have indicated that, with the proper early instruction, the national prevalence of reading failure can be reduced significantly. Thus, by putting in place well designed evidence-based early identification, prevention, and early intervention programs in our public schools, our data strongly show that the 20 million children today suffering from reading failure could be reduced by

approximately two-thirds. While still a totally unacceptable rate of reading failure, such a reduction would allow us to provide services to the children who are in genuine need of special education services with substantially greater focus and intensity.

Our challenge now is to close the gap between what we know works from research and the ineffective practices that many prospective teachers are taught during their preparation and the ineffective instruction still being provided in most of our nation's classrooms. The question is, do we have the courage to do so?

G. Reid Lyon, Ph.D., is Chief of the Child Development and Behavior Branch of the National Institute of Child Health & Human Development, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD.

Firsts at the Scottish Rite Learning Center of Austin

It has been quite a busy year at the Scottish Rite Learning Center of Austin! In November 2002, IMSLEC granted accreditation to the Learning Center. In April 2003, The Scottish Rite Learning Center of Austin received its accreditation from ALTA.

The Scottish Rite Learning Center of Austin recently graduated its first group of therapists from its therapist training program. On April 24, 2003, five dedicated educators, Melinda Bankston, Polly McLean, Kathy Sederholm, Janet Smith, and Lynelle Sylliaasen completed

all requirements making them eligible to take the ALTA national exam. On that same date, Lynn Hoover completed requirements as a Master Instructor for the SLRC's therapist training program, and became eligible for Qualified Instructor status.

ALTA Foundation

The ALTA Foundation provides financial support to the Academic Language Therapy Association in an effort to educate professional Academic Language Therapists in the most current research-based information. This information will emphasize strategies and techniques most effective in clinical and school settings.

The ALTA Foundation supports programs that enhance the self-esteem of students with dyslexia. The Foundation also supports programs to help students and their peers understand dyslexia and demystify the disorder. Other Foundation activities include opportunities to promote and support best practices among our members and maintain high levels of professionalism in the field.

ALTA CENTERS COUNCIL (ACC)

What do they do? What have they done lately?

The ACC maintains a system of accreditation for post baccalaureate educational programs designed to prepare Academic Language Therapists to provide therapeutic instruction to students with dyslexia and/or related written-language disorders and prepares Qualified Instructors for teaching and supervision of academic language therapists. The ACC Council is composed of representatives from each of the accredited training centers. The ultimate goal is to provide quality services to the learning different population and dependable information for the public.

In order to maintain a system of accreditation, ACC members conduct evaluations of centers that are seeking accreditation and also make regular visits to currently accredited centers to insure continued compliance with standards. In addition to submitting an annual report each year, each center is visited every three years and then again five years later. The standards are constantly being refined and updated to insure that trainees receive the best, most up-to-date training. That explains the smiling faces in the graduates of the LEAD and SMU graduates you see pictured!

In the last 18 months all of the 11 currently accredited centers have had their three-year "reaffirmation" visit. Those centers are:

Centers for Youth and Families,
Little Rock, Arkansas
LEAD (Literacy Education & Academic Development, Inc.), Argyle, Texas
Multisensory Language Training Institute of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico
The Neuhaus Education Center, Bellaire, Texas
Payne Education Center, Oklahoma City and Ardmore, Oklahoma
The Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas, Lubbock, Texas
Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas
Southwest Multisensory Training Center, Allen, Texas
Stratford Friends School Multisensory Teacher Training Program, Havertown, Pennsylvania
Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, New York
Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, Dallas, Texas

The Scottish Rite Learning Center of Austin (Austin, Texas) was granted accreditation in April 2003 to bring the number of centers to an even dozen.

Each of the ACC accredited centers is required to offer CEU opportunities. So, if you are in need of a quality CEU opportunity, contact your nearest center!

ACC also grants scholarships for training at an accredited center. If you or someone that you know would like to apply for a scholarship, ask the center for an application. We would love for one of our trainees to be the one who wins a scholarship!

ACC is one of the five organizations that comprise the Alliance for Accreditation and Certification of Structured Language Education (the Alliance) sponsored by the International Dyslexia Association. The Alliance has produced a directory in CD format listing all therapists certified by a member organization. These organizations are ALTA, ACC, IMSLEC (International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council), and AOGPE (Association of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators). There is more about the Alliance and its mission elsewhere in the newsletter.

Nancy Coffman, MS, CALT
ACC Accreditation Chair

Help ALTA with your Website Visit

When you purchase your books, music, and videos using the www.amazon.com link found on the ALTA website, you help ALTA with its website operating expenses. ALTA receives 5% of the purchase price when you buy an item by vis-

iting www.altaread.org first, then clicking on the link for [amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). In addition, ALTA receives 15% of the purchase price when you visit the book review section of the ALTA website and make a purchase. Once you review a book and decide to

purchase it, click on the link for www.amazon.com. Consider www.amazon.com through www.altaread.org when shopping for professional reading material, children's books, music, and videos and help ALTA with operating expenses.

The Director is a Doctor

Pat Sekel, Director of the Scottish Rite Learning Center of Austin, graduated with highest honors from The University of Texas at Austin on May 17, 2003. Her degree is a Doctorate of Philosophy in Curriculum and Instruction, Language and Literacy (Reading). Her specialty is reading disorders, in particular dyslexia, with her dissertation entitled, "The Phonemic Awareness Knowledge and Skills of First Grade Teachers: A Sound Idea?"

The Learning Center recently earned national accreditation through the International Multisensory Structured

Language Education Council and the Academic Language Therapy Association. This distinction is bestowed upon teacher training centers that uphold stringent training guidelines, training educators to work with students with reading, spelling and writing difficulties. Dr. Sekel led the Learning Center through this accreditation process in less than two years and this training center is the only location in Central Texas with this national recognition. The Scottish Rite Learning Center of Austin prepares teachers to become Certified Academic Language Therapists, using the Basic Language Skills curriculum, an Alphabetic Phonics derivative.

In addition to teaching teachers, the SRLC also works free of charge with students with dyslexia and conducts low cost educational evaluations for dyslexia.

Dr. Sekel serves on several national committees and national boards as well as speaks nationally on the topic of dyslexia and remediation of reading disabilities. She has been named four times to Who's Who in Education and twice to Who's Who in Health Professionals. In addition, in 2002 she won the Community Builder Award from Lodge 12 and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Rawson-Saunders School for Dyslexics.

Allen ISD Language Therapists Award Student Scholarships

The Language Therapists of the Allen Independent School District (AISD) are proud to announce that the first two recipients of \$100.00 college scholarships are Kirsten Hunnicutt, who plans to attend Veterinary Technical School and Chad Stevenson, who plans to attend Collin County Community College. Chad plans to be the first in his family to complete a college degree! These two students attended Alphabetic

Phonics classes during their elementary school years and went on to graduate in the top half of their class.

Funds for the scholarship were earned through the sale of Norton Elementary student David Guerra's t-shirt design at our 6th Annual Phonetic Spelling Bee. His design was chosen out of 40 applicants. Congratulations, David! The theme was "Be the best that you can bee!"

Over 125 students participated, making it our most successfully attended spelling bee! A grant from the Foundation for Allen Schools allowed each participant to receive a gold, silver or bronze medal at the event. We are eagerly looking forward to next year!

Scottish Rite

CEU NEWS

The 2001-2003 audit has been successfully completed. Thirteen members, which is 2% of our active membership, were chosen randomly to be audited this year. All thirteen sent in proof that they had earned the required 20 contact hours of CEU credit by the deadline.

The next audit will be held in the spring of 2005. Another 2% of our members will be audited then, and the rest of us will need to sign a statement affirming that we have earned our 20 contact hours of CEU credit. So begin now to plan to attend some of the many wonderful workshops and conferences that are held each year. You can find suggested opportunities on the CEU calendar on the ALTA web site (altaread.org) and in each newsletter.

Kathy Gilman

Dear Friends at ALTA,

The Austin Area Branch of the International Dyslexia Association's Outreach Committee has great news! As a result of their tireless efforts, the AABIDA Outreach Committee has received an official proclamation from Texas Governor Rick Perry that proclaims October 2003 as 'Dyslexia Awareness Month' in the state of Texas.

The proclamation states:

State of Texas
Office of the Governor

According to the International Dyslexia Association, an estimated 15-20 percent of Americans are affected by dyslexia, a language-based disorder.

Dyslexia, which comes from the Greek meaning "difficulty with words," constitutes one of several distinct learning disabilities. Characterized by difficulties in single word decoding, this disorder deeply affects a person's ability to read, write and spell. Dyslexia may also cause problems in putting things in order, following instructions and differentiating between left and right.

With proper diagnosis, appropriate instruction, hard work and support from their families, teachers and friends, individuals with dyslexia can excel in school and later as working adults. Children with dyslexia usually can succeed at the same level as their peers once they are diagnosed and begin receiving extra training at home and school. Adults with dyslexia can improve their skills with programs utilizing multisensory structured language techniques that can help them learn to read, process and express information more effectively.

In an effort to assist parents, educators and individuals with dyslexia, the International Dyslexia Association is designating October as Dyslexia Awareness Month. At this time, I encourage all Texans to offer support to those affected by dyslexia and to recognize the efforts of those who are working to assist them. Their success is Texas' success.

Therefore, I, Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim October 2003,

Dyslexia Awareness Month

In Texas, and urge the appropriate recognition whereof.

In official recognition whereof, I hereby affix my signature this the 9th day of June, 2003.

Ricky Perry
Governor of Texas

This official proclamation is a crucial step for the Austin branch. The Austin branch will be working to provide P.R. opportunities, information seminars, and other opportunities to 'blitz' the Austin area with information on and about dyslexia. We encourage all Texans to take advantage of this opportunity during October 2003.

Also, please help me in recognizing the tireless efforts of Melody Kump, AABIDA Vice-President, and Ginny Garrison, AABIDA Outreach Committee Chairperson.

Sincerely,
Sharon McMichael
2003 AABIDA President

bulletin Calendar

Event: C. J. Davidson Memorial Lecture Series: "Advances in Literacy" From Research to Practice
Date: February 6, 2004 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas
Location: Lubbock Civic Center, 1501 6th St., Lubbock, TX 79401
Presenters: Gordon Sherman, Ph.D., Developmental Dyslexia: Lessons from Neuroscience Deardra Rosenberg, M.A., LDT/C Lessons from Neuroscience: Applications in the Classroom

Event: Introductory Alphabetic Phonics Dyslexia Therapist Training
Date: June 7 – 25, 2004
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas
Location: 602 Avenue Q, Lubbock, TX
Contact: Doris Haney, 806-765-9150

Event: Advanced Alphabetic Phonics dyslexia Therapist Training
Date: June 21 – July 2, 2004
Sponsor: Scottish Rite Learning Center of West Texas
Location: 602 Avenue Q, Lubbock, TX
Contact: Doris Haney, 806-765-9150

Event: "Reading Disabilities & ADHD: Enhancing Student Achievement"
Date: September 18-19, 2003
Sponsor: C.B. Pennington, Jr. Conference Center
Location: Baton Rouge, LA
Presenters: G. Emerson Dickman, Richard Lavoie, Reid Lyon, and Larry Silver

Event: Phonemic Awareness Class
Date: Tuesdays: 10/14; 10/21; 10/28; 11/04; 11/11; 11/18
Times: 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm
Sponsor: Stratford Friends School Multisensory Teacher Training Center
Location: 5 Llandillo Rd., Havertown, PA
Contact: Sara Rivers, P 610-446-3144
Cost: \$280
Credits: One Credit or Thirty hours
Description: The major focus of the class will be on practical, multisensory activities that cultivate phonemic awareness in children. Extra attention will be given to working with young children.

Event: Phonemic Awareness Class
Date: Tuesdays: 2/24; 3/9; 3/16; 3/23; 3/30
Time: 4:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Sponsor: Stratford Friends School Multisensory Teacher Training Center
Location: 5 Llandillo Rd., Havertown, PA
Contact: Sara Rivers, P 610-446-3144
Cost: \$280.
Credits: One Credit or Thirty hours
Description: The major focus of the class will be on practical, multisensory activities that cultivate phonemic awareness in children. Extra attention will be given to working with young children.

Event: Basic Language Skills
Sponsor: The Neuhaus Education Center
Location: 4433 Bissonnet, Bellaire, TX
Contact: Irene McDonald, 713-664-7676
Dates: September 16, 23, 30, 2003; October 7, 14, 21, 28, 2003; November 4, 11, 18, 2003; or April 26—May 7, 2004; or June 7—18, 2004.
Description: A 60-hour course for teachers, specialists, and educational therapists working with students with special needs on learning to read and spell. The course provides a comprehensive approach to teaching literacy skills, e.g. phonological awareness, letter recognition, decoding, comprehension, spelling, grammar, and written composition. This curriculum is particularly effective with dyslexic or reading-disabled students. Completion of this course is a prerequisite for entering the Dyslexia Specialist Preparation Program. Prerequisite: Foundations for Language

Teachers Learn: The characteristics of students with learning differences, especially dyslexia. The reliable reading and spelling patterns in the English language. Structured procedures and sequential curricula which insure students' progress in both learning and retaining information

Event: Cooking In The Kitchen: Language And Literacy For Preschool
Dates: September 10 or 17, 2003
Sponsor: The Neuhaus Education Center
Location: 4433 Bissonnet, Bellaire, TX
Contact: Irene McDonald, 713-664-7676
Description: A three-hour workshop that develops oral language around a specific topic and lays the foundation for successful reading. Participant will learn essential pre-literacy skills, activities that develop those skills, and how to plan lessons to develop the early literacy skills of preschool children. Participants will receive the screening tool Get Ready to Read!

Event: How Anxiety Affects the Body
Date: August 11, 2003, 7:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Dallas Dyslexia Information Group
Location: Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Asbury Hall, Room 203
Presenter: Dr. Jerry Kozlowski, Professor Physiology Dept., Southwestern Medical School
Contact: Velda Carr Skinner, 214-357-0565
Credit: CEU credit pending

Event: Research on Multisensory Reading Programs
Date: September 8, 2003, 7:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Dallas Dyslexia Information Group
Location: Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Asbury Hall, Room 203
Presenter: Dr. Mary Dahlgren, Language Therapist and Researcher, Payne Education Center, Oklahoma City, OK
Contact: Velda Carr Skinner, 214-357-0565
Credit: CEU credit pending

Event: Getting and Staying Organized
Date: October 13, 2003, 7:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Dallas Dyslexia Information Group
Location: Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Asbury Hall, Room 203
Presenter: Mary Hodges, Language Therapist
Contact: Velda Carr Skinner, 214-357-0565
Credit: CEU credit pending

Event: Gifted and Learning Difference
Date: November 10, 2003, 7:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Dallas Dyslexia Information Group
Location: Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Asbury Hall, Room 203
Presenter: Dr. Addie Beth Denton, Counselor, Oak Hill Academy
Contact: Velda Carr Skinner, 214-357-0565
Credit: CEU credit pending

Event: Holiday Party at the home of Velda Skinner
Date: December 13, 2003, 7:30 p.m.
Sponsor: Dallas Dyslexia Information Group
Location: 3605 Vancouver Dr., Dallas, TX
Contact: Velda Carr Skinner, 214-357-0565
Credit: No CEU credit for this event

Event: Leadership Goals for 2004
Date: January 12, 2004, 7:00 p.m.
Sponsor: Dallas Dyslexia Information Group
Location: Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, Asbury Hall, Room 203
Presenter: Velda Skinner, Language Therapist in Private Practice
Contact: Velda Carr Skinner, 214-357-0565
Credit: CEU credit pending

CEU Calendar

<i>Event:</i>	Dyslexia Identification Seminar	<i>Presenter:</i>	Gloria Cooney, Pat Sekel, Dena Crook, Janet Schroeder	<i>Event:</i>	Review for ALTA Exam
<i>Date:</i>	September 25, 2003 and January 15, 2004	<i>Credit:</i>	CEUs 6 hr.	<i>Date:</i>	April 3, 2004
<i>Sponsor:</i>	Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children	<i>Cost:</i>	\$5 for attendees not in the SRLC CALT process or not on staff at Rawson-Saunders	<i>Sponsor:</i>	Scottish Rite Learning Center, Austin
<i>Location:</i>	2222 Welborn St., Dallas, TX	<i>Contact:</i>	Pat Sekel, 512-472-1231, psek@austin.rr.com	<i>Location:</i>	Rawson-Saunders School for Dyslexics 2600 Exposition, Austin, TX
<i>Presenter:</i>	TSRHC staff			<i>Presenter:</i>	Dena Crook, CALT
<i>Contact:</i>	Susan Dyess 214-559-7800			<i>Credit:</i>	No CEU's for this workshop
<i>Event:</i>	Sorting through Federal and State Laws	<i>Event:</i>	Advanced Spelling Procedures	<i>Cost:</i>	\$5 for attendees not in the SRLC CALT process or not on staff at Rawson-Saunders
<i>Date:</i>	September 6, 2003; 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	<i>Date:</i>	November 1, 2003	<i>Contact:</i>	Pat Sekel, 512-472-1231, psek@austin.rr.com
<i>Sponsor:</i>	Scottish Rite Learning Center, Austin	<i>Sponsor:</i>	Scottish Rite Learning Center, Austin		
<i>Location:</i>	Rawson-Saunders School for Dyslexics 2600 Exposition, Austin, TX	<i>Location:</i>	Rawson-Saunders School for Dyslexics 2600 Exposition, Austin, TX	<i>Event:</i>	Multisensory Typing
<i>Sections:</i>	What is IDEA, Section 504, Title I	<i>Presenter:</i>	Melissa Gleason, CALT	<i>Date:</i>	Sept 8 & 10, 2003
<i>Presenter:</i>	Dave Richards, Esq. & Pat Sekel, Ph.D.	<i>Credit:</i>	CEUs 3 hr.	<i>Sponsor:</i>	Southwest Multisensory Training Center
<i>Credit:</i>	CEUs 3 hr.	<i>Cost:</i>	\$5 for attendees not in the SRLC CALT process or not on staff at Rawson-Saunders	<i>Location:</i>	600 South Jupiter, Allen, TX
<i>Cost:</i>	\$5 for attendees not in the SRLC CALT process or not on staff at Rawson-Saunders	<i>Contact:</i>	Pat Sekel, 512-472-1231, psek@austin.rr.com	<i>Credit:</i>	CEUs 6 hr.
<i>Contact:</i>	Pat Sekel, 512-472-1231, psek@austin.rr.com			<i>Contact:</i>	Dr. Beverly Dooley, 972-359-6646
<i>Event:</i>	Multisensory Math	<i>Event:</i>	Power Writing	<i>Description:</i>	To give therapists tools to teach keyboarding to students.
<i>Date:</i>	Oct. 4, 2003	<i>Date:</i>	February 7, 2004	<i>Event:</i>	ADHD/ADD Seminar Region 10
<i>Sponsor:</i>	Scottish Rite Learning Center, Austin	<i>Sponsor:</i>	Scottish Rite Learning Center, Austin	<i>Date:</i>	September 26, 2003, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
<i>Location:</i>	Rawson-Saunders School for Dyslexics 2600 Exposition, Austin, TX	<i>Location:</i>	Rawson-Saunders School for Dyslexics 2600 Exposition, Austin, TX	<i>Sponsor:</i>	Southwest Multisensory Training Center
<i>Presenter:</i>	Leah Read, CALT	<i>Presenter:</i>	Moselle Domingue, CALT	<i>Location:</i>	600 South Jupiter, Allen, TX
<i>Credit:</i>	CEUs 3 hr.	<i>Credit:</i>	CEUs 3 hr.	<i>Presenter:</i>	Dr. Paul Warren, Region 10
<i>Cost:</i>	\$5 for attendees not in the SRLC CALT process or not on staff at Rawson-Saunders	<i>Cost:</i>	\$5 for attendees not in the SRLC CALT process or not on staff at Rawson-Saunders	<i>Contact:</i>	Dr. Beverly Dooley, 972-359-6646
<i>Contact:</i>	Pat Sekel, 512-472-1231, psek@austin.rr.com	<i>Contact:</i>	Pat Sekel, 512-472-1231, psek@austin.rr.com	<i>Credit:</i>	CEUs 3 hr.
<i>Event:</i>	Evaluating for Dyslexia with a Spanish Twist!	<i>Event:</i>	Advancing Reading Concepts	<i>Description:</i>	Understanding ADHD/ADD and the interrelationship with dyslexia; Keep therapists current with dyslexia laws.
<i>Date:</i>	Oct. 16, 2003; 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM	<i>Date:</i>	March 6, 2004	<i>Event:</i>	Visualizing & Verbalizing Strategies for Composition
<i>Sponsor:</i>	Scottish Rite Learning Center, Austin	<i>Sponsor:</i>	Scottish Rite Learning Center, Austin	<i>Date:</i>	October 13 & 15, 2003; 8:30 AM - 11:30 AM
<i>Location:</i>	Scottish Rite Theater 207 W. 18th Street, Austin, TX	<i>Location:</i>	Rawson-Saunders School for Dyslexics 2600 Exposition, Austin, TX	<i>Sponsor:</i>	Southwest Multisensory Training Center
		<i>Presenter:</i>	Lynn Hoover, CALT, QI	<i>Location:</i>	600 South Jupiter, Allen, TX
		<i>Credit:</i>	CEUs 3 hr.	<i>Contact:</i>	Dr. Beverly Dooley, 972-359-6646
		<i>Cost:</i>	\$5 for attendees not in the SRLC CALT process or not on staff at Rawson-Saunders	<i>Credit:</i>	CEUs 6 hr.
		<i>Contact:</i>	Pat Sekel, 512-472-1231, psek@austin.rr.com	<i>Description:</i>	Allow therapists to have tools for helping the learning different student to organize thoughts to produce written ideas.

ALTA members are responsible for maintaining their own personal CEU records for possible audit.

Alliance Report

Kay Peterson, CALT Vice President of Special Projects

The Alliance Board of Directors met in Washington, D. C. on May 4, 2003. Two representatives from each of the participating groups were in attendance. The five organizations that have joined to form the Alliance under the sponsorship of the International Dyslexia Association (representatives - Emerson Dickman, Nancy Hennessy) are the Academy of Orton-Gillingham Practitioners and Educators (representatives - Jean Foss, Angela Wilkins), ALTA (representatives - Martha Sibley, Kay Peterson), ALTA Centers Council, (representatives - Valerie Tucker, Nancy Coffman) and the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (representatives - Joyce Pickering, Mary North). Committee reports were presented and future projects were discussed. Work is continuing to clarify the Alliance purpose, mission, and to establish priorities. The Board of Directors will meet after the IDA Conference in November.

2003 ALTA Conference

Jana Jones - Programs

"This day was exactly what I needed when I needed it!"

"It's very interesting to hear about current research."

"I will be reading more professionally beginning today."

"Visitation during lunch was beneficial - all of us meeting for first time - all different levels from novice to veteran."

"Best day I've had at an ALTA conference (8yrs.)"

"It couldn't have been a better day!"

These comments from evaluations from the 2003 conference reflect on a wonderful day enjoyed with friends, remarkable learning experiences, and inspiring messages from speakers to enable us to continue to carry out our mission to perform quality professional service.

As a first time planner for the conference, I believed that the secret to a successful conference would depend on a strong planning committee. I am extremely grateful to the committee members who worked so hard and so willingly to make this conference a success. While it is impossible to mention everyone, I would like to point out a just a few of our members who really made this conference so enjoyable. Connie Peters shared her expertise in planning this event. Nancy Utay and her committee made the door prize corner look like Christmas in April. Chris Bedenbaugh delighted everyone with the seed packets and plants that continue to remind us that we are "Sowing Seeds for the Future." Laura Teidemann made sure the room arrangement was just right.

The 2003 conference was the setting for the first ALTA "garage sale" which was organized to benefit the ALTA Foundation. Linda Byther and Kathy Gilman jumped on Jean Fortune's suggestion and collected and organized items to be sold. It was a perfect opportunity for some of us to clean out files and for new therapists to stock up on materials. The sale was well received by our members and we heard many requests to do it again next year.

For the last two years, Larry Evans made it possible for us to meet in Elliott Hall at Highland Park Presbyterian Church. Elliott Hall operates on a rotating calendar due to the huge demand for the beautiful facility so we will be moving to a different location next year. Joyce Pickering has graciously agreed to allow us to hold our 2004 conference at the Shelton School.

Many plans are already in place for the 2004 conference. Your comments on the evaluation forms have been very helpful in planning for our meeting next year. Thank you for your input and I will continue to appreciate your suggestions and help for next year's conference. Watch for early announcements and early registration. I am already looking forward to seeing you there!

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**Mark your
Calendars
ALTA Spring
Conference
April 17, 2004**

Milestones



LEAD graduating class



Pictured is the 2003 graduating class of the SMU Learning Therapy Program.

“Imagination is more important than knowledge.

Knowledge is limited.

Imagination encircles the world.”

– Albert Einstein

Welcome, New Active Members:

Echo Alexander, Kim Anderson, Jason Day, Rita Feinstein, Camella Jantz, Polly McLean, Sue Rodgers, Vivian Scruggs, Donald Shuler, Jr., Ann Williams.

Welcome, New Student Members:

Anita Adkins, Judith Angelides, Leslie Booth, Carol Donovan, Ann Douglas, Belinda Duett, Billie Eastland, Judy Echols, Karen England, Gregory Ezzell, Terie Farren, Elizabeth Flory, Karen Frey, Stephanie Gaines, Kathleen Galbraith, Kari Garbera, Marsha Garner, Daryl Gelender, Dana Gilliland, Sandra Glicksman, Sharon Graves, Jill Griffes, Ingrid Hoffmeister, Sharla Israel, Melissa Johnson, Jocelyn Kelso, Elizabeth LeBlanc, Marie Loper, Dorelyn Martin, Barbara Mars, Dana Michener, Anna Moerdyk, Jeannette Pernis, Roberta Read, Tammy Riemenschneider, Elodia Rocha, Shelly Roszak, Linda Sadler, Pamela Schkade, Deborah Sigoloff, Regina Smith, Marsha Taylor, Tammy Tran, Gregory Vidal, Judith Waldie, Colleen Waltisperger, Cindy Waltrip, Pamela Williams, Ann Winkle, Jodi Witt, Susan Wood, Jeri Wooldridge

Congratulations, New Qualified Instructors

Catherine Ghassemi, Aimee Hanneman, Sari Lynn Hoover, Helaine Meisler, Nancy Senior Michael, Livia Pepper, Margaret Williams.

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Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic Services

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) is a national organization that provides textbooks on audio tape for students with documented vision loss, dyslexia, or a learning disability in reading. RFB&D is changing over to a CD format; however, with so many texts in their library, the process has been a slow one.

The Austin area branch of RFB&D hosted its second annual scholarship dinner where four recipients were honored with college scholarships. If you know of a student who is diagnosed with dyslexia or a learning disability in

reading and uses RFB&D resources, this student qualifies to apply for a scholarship. Contact the branch of RFB&D in your area to see if it offers students the same opportunity.

RFB&D is quite beneficial for dyslexics grades four through adulthood. For additional information, please contact RFB&D, 323-9390, or www.rfb.org. Talking Books complements RFB&D by providing a free machine and leisure reading on audio tape. An application may be secured by contacting your local library or www.loc.gov/nls/.

FAQs about ALTA CEUs

Frequently, Certified Academic Language Therapists may need to be reminded of the ALTA Continuing Education Unit Requirements. Below is a list of Frequently Asked Questions about ALTA CEU's. Keep this list handy, as it may be useful in the future.

1. Why is ALTA requiring CEUs for members?
Requiring Continuing Education Units brings ALTA one step closer to meeting the necessary criteria for licensure by promoting current, competent methods and standards of practice in academic language therapy.

2. How many hours are required?
Two CEUs equal 20 contact hours to be completed every two years.

3. Who will keep track of the hours accumulated?
Each therapist will document accumulated hours on a form entitled "Record of Continuing Education Hours."

4. Where do I get the record form?
The form is available from the ALTA office and can also be down-loaded from the ALTA web site.

5. Do I send the Record of Continuing Education Hours to ALTA?
No, that form is for your records only.

6. What documentation do I send to ALTA?
If you are notified that you have been selected for audit, you will turn in the form entitled, Member Verification Form documenting your 20 hours of continuing education.

7. When do I send the record form to the ALTA office?

If you are notified that you have been selected for audit, you will turn in documentation of your hours at the same time that you send in your membership renewal form and fees.

8. When will I be notified that I have been selected for audit?

You will be notified 45 days prior to the membership renewal date.

9. How many therapists will be audited each year?
Each year 2% of the membership will be randomly selected for audit.

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10. What if I am selected for audit and lack the required 20 hours?

You have a 90-day grace period in which to acquire and submit verification of your earned CEUs. After the 90-day grace period, you will be subject to penalties and/or disciplinary action as per the ALTA Grievance Procedures. A \$50 late renewal fee will be assessed if the documentation is postmarked after the 90-day grace period.

11. What if I earn more than the required two CEUs in a two-year period?

A maximum of 20 extra contact units (2 CEUs) may be accrued during a license period. These may be applied during the next two consecutive renewal periods. First hours earned will be the first hours used. If extra hours have not been used at the end of four years, those hours will be dropped.

12. How long do I need to keep my hours documentation?

Your hours must be kept for a minimum of three years.

13. I just completed my certification requirements. When do I begin documenting CEUs?

Your CEU requirement begins the THIRD membership renewal after active membership status is achieved.

14. What if continuing education sponsors in my area do not have ALTA approval?

Pre-approval by the ALTA continuing education committee is required if you wish to count a continuing education event that does not already have ALTA's approval. This type of pre-approval would be handled on an individual basis. It is the responsibility of the member to secure pre-approval from ALTA.

15. Do I have to pay a fee to acquire CEUs?

Currently no fee is required to acquire CEUs.

16. How will I know the times and locations of CEU events in my area?

Check out the ALTA web site and the ALTA newsletter for listings of approved events and sponsors.

17. Do I need to get documentation from the Sponsoring Agency?

Yes, the sponsoring agency will provide a letter, form, transcript, or certificate. This documentation should be placed in your personal ALTA CEU file in the event that you are selected for audit.

18. Do I have to send anything to ALTA if I am not selected for audit?

Yes, you will continue to send in your annual membership fee. You will sign a statement on your membership renewal form that you have earned your CEUs for the year.

19. If an ALTA member is presenting at an approved event, does the presenter get CEU credit?

Yes, you will get two hours credit for each hour presented. Credit is limited to one presentation of the same topic.

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