

July 2025

project adult literacy
A program of the Newport Beach Public Library

pal

Literally Speaking

Empowering adults to achieve greater success in their lives through literacy skill development

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IMPORTANT DATES

In Our Own Words Submissions DUE

Friday, July 18

Hoffman Nominations DUE

Thursday, July 31

Volunteer Tutor Training

Tuesday, August 5

New Learner Orientation

Wednesday, August 6

International Literacy Day

Friday, September 5

JULY BIRTHDAYS

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

to some of our fabulous Volunteers!

Lynne

Gavin

Claire

Shelly

Annie

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LEARNER HIGHLIGHT: Tugba Taskin

Could you tell us a bit about your journey learning English? When did you start, and what motivated you?

After I came to the US, the cashier asked me a question on my first shopping trip. I didn't understand. When the cashier realized I didn't understand, she asked me again. I still didn't understand. Then she showed me a bag and asked me if I wanted it. That's when I realized how bad my English was. Even though my communication skills were very good and I loved communicating, I couldn't express myself. I started ESL class as soon as I could, but Covid-19 came out within two months. While taking care of my children at home, I was constantly watching grammar lesson videos on YouTube. When I had difficulty understanding, I sometimes got stressed, but my desire to learn never stopped. My oldest son had just started kindergarten and was learning very quickly. When he started first grade, I could barely understand him. It made me feel like I was missing out on their lives. Learning a new language definitely boosts your self-confidence. It also develops your sense of belonging. I always told myself this. Never give up!



Tugba Taskin - PAL Learner



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LEARNER HIGHLIGHT: Tugba Taskin

What were some of the biggest challenges you faced when you were first learning English, especially with reading and writing?

I remembered my first year of elementary school. I was very excited. I felt the same childish excitement. The most difficult thing for me while reading a book was pronunciation. How do you pronounce this word? How should I make the sounds? I still have difficulty. I realized that we don't move our jaw muscles much when we speak Turkish, but when we speak English, my jaw muscles need to be more flexible.

I can say that writing is the most enjoyable and relaxing thing in life for me. I am someone who writes very emotional poems and articles in my native language. I was very curious about whether one day I would be able to put my feelings and thoughts into writing in English with the same feeling and meaning. Is this possible in all languages? Do you know when I started to love English after all these years? There is a saying that I love very much in Turkish. I was very happy when I learned that this saying also exists in English. 'Every cloud has a silver lining.' All languages are created for humans. Enjoying the process is a very important factor in learning.

Congratulations on writing a book! Can you tell us about the book? What is it about, and what inspired you to write it?

Thank you very much. Our book includes our caravan camps and our travels with the RV, which we did as a family to collect memories. I wrote this book from my oldest son's perspective. I wanted it to be a beautiful memory that we could leave to our children. It was an unforgettable memory for us. We hoped it would inspire other families.

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LEARNER HIGHLIGHT: Tugba Taskin

How has writing this book impacted your confidence, particularly in your English language abilities?

A person's lifestyle definitely affects their vocabulary. Even our children learned a lot of words they didn't know before. For example, 'Awning, Rv slide, leveler, fresh tank etc... Writing is like a legacy left to the future. When I was a child, I published a book of poetry. We printed exactly 300 copies. I promoted each one and sold them myself. My self-confidence increased a lot then. I felt the same confidence inside me. This book gave me the freedom and self-confidence that every person can express themselves in every language.

What advice would you give to other adult English language learners who dream of writing a book?

They can start writing in the same simplicity as a elementary school student. As we learn and use words, they fit into our brains like puzzle pieces. But when we don't use them, they just fly away. Believe in the power of words. It is very important and meaningful for a person to be able to express themselves. Sometimes a pen and a blank page can be your best friend.

Congratulations

Tugba's book - "My Childhood Adventures on Wheels" will be available to check out from the Literacy Office in September!

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UPCOMING EVENT: International Literacy Day



project adult literacy

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY CELEBRATION

2025

Volunteers, learners, family and friends are encouraged to attend.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2025
10:30AM - 12:30PM

**CIVIC CENTER COMMUNITY ROOM
100 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE NEWPORT BEACH
(NEXT TO CITY HALL)**

✧ You are Invited! ✧

Join us for an International Brunch and celebrate our Literacy community! Volunteers, learners, family, and friends are encouraged to attend. We will be presenting a special learner with the Rochelle Hoffman Memorial Award as well as giving out this year's In Our Own Words – a collection of writings from learners in our program.

We have learners (and volunteers) from all around the world who come together for one common goal...to develop literacy skills and empower each other to achieve greater success in their lives – at home, at work and in the community.

We would love for you to share your culture by bringing a dish from your native country to our International Literacy Day Celebration.

Please contact us to RSVP!

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PAL UPDATE: New PAL Office Hours

Project Adult Literacy's Staff Office hours have changed better serve our community and maximize the impact of our program.

NEW STAFF OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday: 9:00am - 4:00pm

Please stop anytime during our office hours to get assistance, pick up resources, learn more about our program or just to say hi!

Please note the Literacy Office is always OPEN.

You can stop by in the evening or on weekends to browse our literacy collection of resources.

PAL RESOURCES: News For You

News for You provides up-to-date, easy-to-read news articles that help learners of all levels with their English reading, writing and speaking skills. All the articles are based on reports from respected news sources including the Associated Press and The Washington Post. The content is thoroughly reviewed by adult education professionals and editors to ensure accuracy, low-level readability and appropriateness.

Two Ways to Access News for You

- **Newspaper Format** (in the Literacy Office every Wednesday)
- **Online Format** (<https://www.newsforyouonline.com> and use password: 3B4684)



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LIBRARY RESOURCES: Summer Reading Program

Level up this summer at the library!

Summer
reading

There is still time to sign up for the Newport Beach Public Library Summer Reading Program. Now through August 2, we invite you to participate in the fun Adult Reading Program.

Adult Summer Reading Program

The Adult Summer Reading Program is the perfect excuse to take back your reading time. Track your time spent reading or listening to books, submit book reviews, and complete activities to earn great prizes!

Level Up Your Reading

This year, we had a community goal of 🎯 600,000 minutes (that's 10,000 hours!) and we have already achieved this goal! But we are encouraging everyone to keep reading! Whether you prefer fantasy, historical fiction, graphic novels, or anything in between — every minute read counts.

For more information visit:

<https://www.newportbeachlibrary.org/calendar/summer-reading-program>

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SPEAKING EVENT: Oliver James - Literacy Advocate

OC Read Presents

Literacy Advocate and Motivational Speaker:

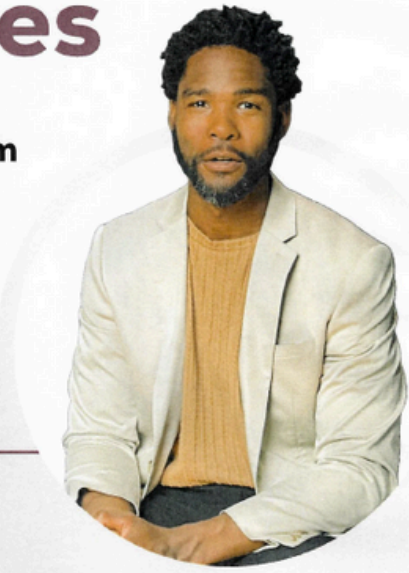
Oliver James

Friday, August 8, 2025 at 5:00pm

Tustin Library
345 E Main Street Tustin CA 92780

Early arrival suggested. No registration
required, all ages welcome.

**Oliver James is an
online sensation and
motivational speaker.**



FREE SPEAKING EVENT

OPEN TO TUTORS & LEARNERS

Friday, August 8 at 5:00pm

Presented by OC Reads

In his videos, Oliver often introduces himself by saying "I'm a 36-year-old man who struggles with reading." However, it wasn't long ago that he would say "I can't read." You see until Oliver was in his 30s, he was functionally illiterate.

His story has been so inspiring that he ended up being interviewed on ABC's Good Morning America, the Jennifer Hudson Show, NPR and other major outlets. He was featured in People magazine and in December, Oliver joined Tamron Hall on her show to discuss his reading journey. Oliver was also awarded the 2023 National Literacy Honors Award by the Barbara Bush Foundation for the light he shed on being functionally illiterate. Now, Oliver speaks to schools, conferences and educators about many topics. He talks about the importance of literacy as well as opening up about many deep struggles he has gone through with learning to read as an adult, his challenges, triumphs and his mental health.

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