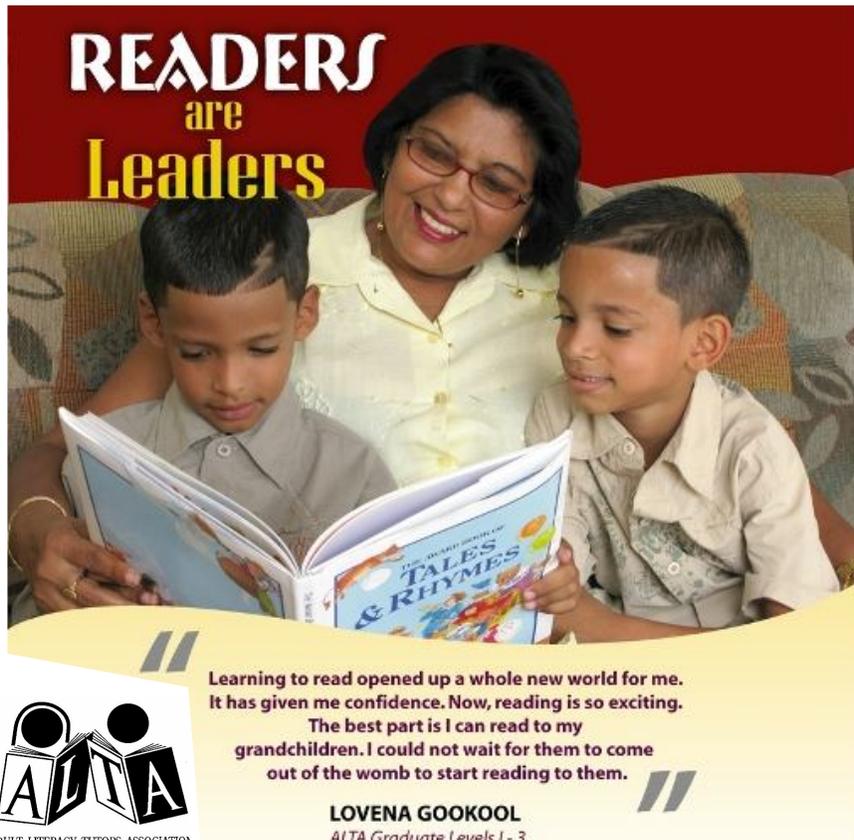


ALTA NEWS



READERS
are
Leaders



Learning to read opened up a whole new world for me. It has given me confidence. Now, reading is so exciting. The best part is I can read to my grandchildren. I could not wait for them to come out of the womb to start reading to them.

LOVENA GOOKOOL
ALTA Graduate Levels 1 - 3

June 2008 Volume 14 Issue

BELMONT 624-2582/3442
84 Belmont Circular Road

Mon -Thurs 9am-5pm altapos@alta-tt.org
Fri 8am-4pm

SAN FERNANDO 653-4656
St Paul's Anglican Church Hall,
3rd Floor, 12 Harris Promenade

NEW SOUTH DAYS & TIMES!
Mon/Wed/ 9am-2pm altasfd@alta-tt.org
Thurs

Inga Crichlow / Marilyn Rampersad Talma

ARIMA 664-2582
Arima Terminal Mall

Tues/Thurs/ 9am-5pm altaarima@alta-tt.org
Fri

Alana Lynch-Gomez

www.alta-tt.org

SPOTLIGHT ON ALTA

Upstream Magazine Over its next four issues, Upstream magazine, which has ‘a wide Christian readership’, will dedicate editorial space to discussing literacy. This will coincide with their ‘Readers are Leaders’ promotion which seeks to reward and celebrate readers while spreading the news that there is help for those who experience difficulty in reading and writing. Tear-off entry forms in the May issue ask ‘How can reading give you an edge in life?’

Natasha Coker-Jones, Upstream editor, proposed a partnership with ALTA, writing “I see Upstream Magazine as a strategic tool for encouraging persons to read more and where needed to enhance their ability to read.” To this end, Upstream will feature ALTA students, tutors and classes in the next issues.

To kick off, ALTA Level 3 graduate Lovena Gookool and two of her grandsons star on the flyer to launch the ‘Readers are Leaders’ promotion - reproduced on our newsletter cover. The flyers, included in the May issue of Upstream, also serve to inform about registration in September for ALTA classes. Upstream has given the artwork for the flyers to ALTA, so we have a new, attractive flyer for the September awareness drive thanks to Upstream, Lovena and her grandsons.

TV For eight weeks, ALTA had a regular slot on CNMG’s ‘Live’, at 11am on Tuesdays from 15th Apr. - 3rd Jun. Thanks to CNMG and tutors Brenda De Silva, Hetty Sarjeant, Jeanette Williams, Carlyle Singh, Janice Ferreira, Norbert Yaw Ching Jnr, Karen Campbell and Paula Lucie-Smith as well as student Alicia Dixon, for projecting a comprehensive portrait of ALTA.

Newspapers On Tuesday 17th June, Cherisse Moe’s excellent article ‘Words get in the way’ captured attention with a lovely photo of Allese Weekes, a student from the Belmont Level 3 class, on the front page of the features section of the Guardian. Allese spoke candidly about her experiences, presenting a positive role model for dealing with literacy problems. Many thanks to Cherisse for an inspiring article touching on the critical issues and for citing T&T’s literacy statistics accurately!

BG-ALTA INTERNET PROJECT

The BG Information Management Department is all set to install four computers with internet at Belmont and two at San Fernando, as well as run an 8-hr training session. The training will include how to set up an email address, send emails, surf the net and the basics of MS Word. At the end of the second session, certificates will be presented.

Dates: **Sat 5th and 12th July** at Belmont (must attend both days)

Times: *Group 1: 9am - 1pm; Group 2: 1pm - 5pm*

Target: 20 Level 3 students and 4 tutors per group. Refreshments provided.



From July, the BG computers will be available for students, tutors and coordinators to use. Times for student use will be limited by the availability of a tutor since a tutor must log on the students. The tutor also assists with basic emailing and finding/linking to free literacy websites.

ALTA would like to set up a schedule for July (to consolidate what was learnt) and then from September for students to use the computers. For this we will need volunteers, who are familiar with the internet or who have done the BG training, to take on a regular 2-hr shift at the 'ALTA net café' in Belmont and San Fernando. In San Fernando, initially this must be within office hours. In Belmont, this must be outside of class hours, i.e. not on Mon & Wed 8-11am; Tues and Thurs 5-7pm. The volunteers may use the computers for their own email and netsurfing. Contact Joanne at Belmont if interested.

TUTOR CERTIFICATES & AGM ON SAT 25th OCT 08

Mrs. Zalayhar Hassanali, our patron, will present certificates to those who have successfully completed their one year of teaching. Congrats to those who have made it through their first year of teaching and thanks to those loyal ALTA tutors who continue to volunteer year after year!

Note that refund of the \$100 deposit will be limited to tutors who complete their 1-year volunteer teaching in the academic year directly following their training. Those who defer or make up their teaching hours beyond the first academic year will be certified, but not refunded. Tutors wishing to donate their deposit should notify one of the ALTA offices so cheques are not made, mailed out and left in limbo when not cashed.



REFRESHERS

August: Belmont - Thurs 21st & Tues 26th (no Level 3)
South - Sat 23rd (Naps Girls)
September: Belmont - Sat 6th (no Level 3)
Sat 13th (Level 3 only)

Time: **8am – 4 pm** (Yes - whole day and starting at 8am promptly!)

Annual training is mandatory for all continuing ALTA tutors and essential to develop and maintain a standard of excellence in teaching. Because the refresher is just one day, several skills are reviewed through the written assignments submitted by the end of July *before* the refresher. Submitting your assignment on the day of the refresher means you will get no feedback, so never know where you might have gone off-track.

Coordinators who are not teaching should submit homework for a level that they will be coordinating in Sept. 2008.





REGISTRATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

Because of the public holiday on the first Monday in September, ALTA registration this year will be in the second week of September: **Tuesday 9th & Wednesday 10th Sept**, 9 am-6 pm. As Literacy Day is the day before - Monday 8th September - attention will be focused on literacy, hopefully boosting our awareness drive.

As always, we are relying on tutors to spread the word about registration and to put up flyers in their community, church, workplace - anywhere with a flow-through of people. We also really need more students to talk about their ALTA experience on radio, TV or in a newspaper article with a photo. Their testimonies serve to inspire prospective students who may be reluctant to register. Please submit names and phone contacts before the term ends!

Help is also needed at the 11 public libraries where we register new students, with volunteers especially needed for the San Juan, Tunapuna (help needed 9am-noon) Sangre Grande and Princes Town libraries. Please call the library coordinator listed below, or email ALTA, if you can do a 2-hr shift.

LIBRARY	COORDINATOR	LIBRARY	COORDINATOR
Arima	Jennifer Antoine 790-2685c /398-1263c	San Fernando	Inga Crichlow 684-2671c /652-2980h
Chaguanas	Marilyn Rampersad 798-1656c /672-5085h Sylvia Gordon 798-9791c /671-2023	Sangre Grande	Marsha Scott 478-2021
Couva	Maureen Richins 712-6298c /636-3693h	Siparia	Jean Rahaman Lutchman 647-7611
Point Fortin	Lynette Frederick 777-1219	San Juan	Ruth Frazer-Munroe 682-0322c /675-3780h
Port of Spain	Camille Parmassar 742-0946c /632-1162h	Tunapuna	Veronica Haywood 681-5676
Princes Town	Myrna Jones 712-2548c /655-1187h		
CENTRE	COORDINATOR	CENTRE	COORDINATOR
Mayaro bpTT Resource Centre	Agatha Williams 630-3259h	Warrenville Regional Complex	Lilian Ramsaroop 378-8738c /671-0116h

CONDOLENCES TO ALTA TRAINERS

Marilyn Rampersad Talma - lost her husband in April.

Arlene Wallace Romero - lost her mother in June.



TUTOR TRAINING

This year 91 volunteers successfully completed the intensive 6-day ALTA training. As usual, the Saturday course in Belmont was over-subscribed. Once again, UTT in Couva and Bethel Pentecostal Assembly in Arima kindly allowed us to use their facilities.



We welcome onto the training team Carla Mohammed, whose mastery of the ALTA approach plus her enthusiasm for teaching, and in particular for ALTA teaching, make her a joy to work with.

Likewise, expert tutors Brenda De Silva, Jeanette Williams and Felicitas Kissoon have greatly strengthened the team of facilitators for group sessions, joining our faithful master tutors Camille Parmassar, Earlyn Wilson, Cheryl Thurab-Prince, Lilian Ramsaroop, June Hezekiah and Sylvia Gordon.

Fourteen experienced tutors accepted ALTA's invitation to attend the course a second time in preparation for becoming coordinators or facilitators in the new academic year and we look forward to their fresh ideas and input.

VOLUNTEER FAIR

Tutors Marilyn Jordan-Romany and Margaret Ryan ably manned the ALTA booth at the Volunteer Fair hosted by The Volunteer Connection on Wed. 30th April at the Brian Lara Promenade. Marilyn reported lots of interest and attracted a much-needed, new Reading Circle volunteer for Belmont.

Marilyn gave out all the flyers - 'Learn to Read' for students, 'Have Time' for tutors and 'Sponsor-a-Student'. She displayed some Workbooks, a Phonics CD, Spelling Dictionary and the student anthology 'At Last'. Thanks to The Volunteer Connection for organizing this successful outreach to attract new volunteers. We look forward to participating next year.

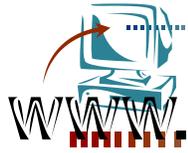
DONATIONS

- Two box fans from Courts for the St James class.
- A vacuum for the South office from TECU in Marabella.
- WITCO, American, Canadian, Syrian-Lebanese & UK Women's Clubs. Special thanks to Petroleum Women's Club for two generous donations.



BELMONT OFFICE FACELIFT

The front and Willis Street side of the ALTA building in Belmont have been painted in a new shade of blue – but downstairs only. Top storey and inside are still to be done. Any donations or volunteers?



NEW FEATURES ON ALTA WEBSITE

The ALTA website www.alta-tt.org has more accessible National Literacy Survey statistics, a comprehensive picture of ALTA materials with photos and links to pages, an up-to-date calendar of ALTA events, class list, Sponsor-a-Student and Friends of ALTA forms, all newsletters since October 2006, and tutor resources.

Tutors can now download the attendance register, Initial Student Data form and end-of-level student evaluation. They can print out and complete, or even easier, fill out using Word or Excel and email back to altapos@alta-tt.org

The more sophisticated site was produced by Analiese Ferreira (tutor Janice Ferreira's niece) who has been volunteering at ALTA Belmont since mid-March. Many thanks to Analiese for making life easier for tutors and making our website more informative and user-friendly.

WORKPLACE UPDATE

Maureen Baldeo, who gave nine months of valuable expertise to our Workplace Literacy Programme, in April moved on to her 'dream job' - Field Editor for the Caribbean with Pearson Education International (UK). We miss her infectious laugh, unwavering optimism and innovative ideas. Cheryl Thurab-Prince and Marilyn Rampersad Talma have stepped in to follow through on Maureen's initiatives and incoming requests.

In October, ALTA plans to begin special training for 20-30 tutors who fit the criteria for workplace contracts. Interested tutors should read the *ALTA Procedures and Guidelines*, pg. 38, to decide if they qualify, and submit their information on the workplace form.

GIVE THE 'GIFT OF READING'

Birthday, anniversary, Christmas - what do you give the person who does not want more 'things'? The ALTA 'Gift of Reading'! This gift is for the person for whom giving is better than receiving; for someone who wants to make a difference, but doesn't have the time to volunteer.

You purchase a 1-year Gift Certificate for \$500 or a 1-term Gift Certificate for \$180 to sponsor an ALTA student. ALTA mails you the Gift Certificate and you present it to your friend, relative or business associate. Through your gift, they have helped someone.

Last December we introduced the 'Gift of Reading' to gauge interest and those who responded were impressed with the certificate crafted by our resident artist Rosie Henderson. We are hoping for a big response this year for both personal and corporate gifts. Spread the word, and if you are an early Christmas planner, check if you have someone just right for this special gift.

VENUE CHANGES

Closed - low student numbers:

- Maraval, Maloney, Brazil Village

Re-opening

- Pt Fortin Library, morning

New - based on demand and willing tutors:

- A morning class at the San Fernando ALTA Office
- Cedros Community Centre



NOTES FOR TUTORS

Orientation In August/early September, coordinators will arrange with both new and continuing tutors a date to review start-of-term procedures, the initial student assessment and lessons for the first month. This session is very important to get to know your co-tutors, work out tutor teams and get into 'ALTA mode'. Bring along your *ALTA Adult Workbook* tutor set for Term 1, *Tutor Training Handbook* and *Procedures and Guidelines*.

Problem Solving As outlined in the *Procedures and Guidelines*, issues among tutors and/or students should be taken first to the coordinator of the class. If a resolution can't be reached, the issue is then referred to the Regional Coordinator who will meet with the parties involved. On the rare occasions when the problem persists, the Regional Coordinator will take the matter to the CEO, Paula Lucie-Smith, and the parties will be informed of the course of action decided upon.

Student Certificates Please collect certificates, sign and distribute to your students before the end of term. Consult your coordinator if unsure whether to promote a student. Make sure students who need to change venue, e.g. Beginners going to Level 1 or L2 going to L3, have chosen from the list of options (class list available on the website) and that this is entered on their evaluation report. Reports on students who are repeating may be submitted later but must be at ALTA within one week of the end of term, by July 11th.

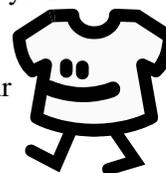
Level 3 Tutors should collect for their graduates a list of:

- Gov't Lifelong Learning Centres for school leaving or CXC
- ALTA Reading Circles for continued regular reading

Tutor Certificates Tutors should hand in their certificates on the day of the Refresher so their grade can be inserted before the end of the year.

New Academic Year Term 1: Mon 15th Sept. – Fri 12th Dec.

15th Anniversary T-shirts Several tutors have made this their ALTA 'uniform' for class. Also ideal for ALTA meetings.



CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT & ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER

(Summary of an article by Edward M. Hallowell & John J. Ratey 1992)

ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) is characterized by excessive activity and inability to concentrate on one task for any length of time. Structure, education and encouragement are the watchwords for dealing with ADD.

1. Teachers, get support from colleagues, parents and the school. Know your limits. Don't be afraid to ask for help. You are not an expert.
2. Ask the ADD person what will help. They are often very intuitive, but too embarrassed to volunteer the information as it can be rather eccentric.
3. Those with ADD need **structure**. Make lists they can refer to when they get sidetracked. They need reminders, repetition, direction.
4. Post **rules** on the notice board. They need to know what is expected.
5. **Repeat** directions: write, speak, repeat. Announce what you are going to say, then say it, then say it again.
6. Make frequent **eye contact** and seat the ADD child near your desk.
7. Set limits. Do it consistently, predictably and promptly. Take charge.
8. Have a predictable schedule. If you need to change, give lots of warning.
9. Help them make an after-school schedule, to avoid one of the ADD hallmarks: procrastination. Go for quality, not quantity, of homework.
10. Eliminate timed tests. ADD responds well to rewards and incentives.
11. Allow for **escape valves** such as leaving class for a moment, instead of waiting for the child to 'lose it'.
12. Monitor progress often. Persons with ADD benefit greatly from feedback. It helps keep them on track and can be very encouraging.
13. Break down large tasks into small tasks so they aren't overwhelmed.
14. Be playful, **have fun**, be unconventional, be flamboyant. Introduce novelty. People with ADD love to play; they hate being bored. But be careful of over-stimulation. Like a pot on the fire, ADD can boil over.
15. Seek out and underscore success. They need all the positive handling they can get. Because they live with so much failure, they need praise. Without it, they shrink and wither. Always look out for sparkling moments. They are far more talented and gifted than they seem.
16. **Memory** is often a problem. Use mnemonics, flashcards, cues & rhymes.
17. Teach outlining and underlining. This helps give a sense of mastery *during* the learning process, when he or she needs it most.
18. Those with ADD tend to be poor self-observers. They often have no idea how they come across or how they have been behaving. Ask questions to promote self-observation. "Why do you think that girl looked sad when you said that?" "How do you think you might have said that differently?"
19. **Exercise** One of the best treatments for ADD is exercise. Exercise helps work off excess energy, it helps focus attention, it stimulates certain hormones and neuro-chemicals that are beneficial - and it's fun.