

"In Our Voices"

Adult Learners
Share Their Stories

**LITERACY COUNCIL YORK SOUTH
ADULT LITERACY PROGRAM**

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- An adult literacy
organization

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Preface:

This book is a tribute to the diligent work of our learners and tutors over the past 10 years

Literacy Council York South wishes to congratulate all learners on their hard work and achievements.

Thank-you to all participants and all those who helped us develop this book.

Artwork: Front Cover by Gloria Rate. Back cover by George Abousaleh.

Minimal editing of spelling, punctuation and grammar was done. This is a work in progress.

Initials of participants have been used to protect their confidentiality.

The Aims of this book are:

1. To encourage a love of reading
2. To provide each participant with a free copy
3. To be a tutoring resource

Literacy Council hopes you enjoy reading it!

Edited by:

Di Searle on behalf of: :

Literacy Council York South

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"Us" by GC

When we moved into our house it was 1991. I loved Kathy. We lived there for a while. We got married in 1996. We were happy. We had three cats and a dog. We had people come over. We found homes for the cats.

In 1995 we found a place to learn to read better. It is called the Literacy Council York South. They are helping me to sound out words.

I am reading faster in class. I like reading books. I use my mind and eyes to read . I help the teachers in class .

I feel better about myself.

"Gloria's Trip to the Ocean" by GR (Feb. 23, 1999)

I went out east to Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland about twenty years ago. My children and I collected shells at a beach by the ocean and it was beautiful. We could hear the ocean when we put some shells up to our ears. We also went to a campground where we saw bears and snakes and they had alligators too.

"Tom and Emily" by FD

Tom and Emily are in love. I want Tom and Emily to be together forever. They are my friends. I would like to go their wedding.

"My Plan" by FD

I want to learn to read and write better. I want to get a better job and I want to get a better life. Some day I will get married.

"Friendship" by B&B

When Bruce and I moved into St. Luke's 10 years ago, we became very good friends as next door neighbors. He often said "Hello" or "Good Morning" by knocking on my bedroom wall. We visited over a cup of tea, watched T.V. or listened to music. We had a lot of fun together during those years.

One day Bruce decided to move to "Participation House". That was a very sad day for me. I miss the good times we shared.

We plan to keep our friendship alive by visiting back and forth on a regular basis.

"From My Journal" By MT

On Saturday 22nd August, 1998 I worked all day on a car and cleaned a truck. Then I went home. On Sunday the 23rd, I relaxed all day, watched TV and went to bed. On Monday the 24th I worked on a truck. I put brakes on it and cleaned it and for doing that I got a dirt bike. I'm going to pick it up on Friday.

"My Family" By MT

I like to play video games. My grandparents Bert and Pat liked to watched TV with me and we played "Wheel of Fortune".

My parents Phil and Patty watched TV, had parties and drank all the time. I didn't do anything with my Mom because she was working all the time.

My wife Ana, my son Peter and I play games, watch movies and spend time with each other.

"Forest Adventure" by AM

I got up at seven o'clock on Saturday morning and decided to have adventure in the forest. Before I got there, I was passing my old school when I was surprised by the swans in the school's sports field. I kept walking, and came to the Mill pond and stopped to watch people skating on the pond. Then, strolling on the pathway, I saw where the swans lived. It was a delight to see. Then I sat down to watch the ducks flapping their wings

"School" by SB

This morning when I woke up at 8. A.M. I prayed before I left home. I would be glad if all of my work was finished today. This afternoon I brought a piece of cake to school for my lunch. When I came here to school it was very hard for me to get adjusted, but after a few weeks everything was fine. I get to love my teacher and all the students. It is very good to go back to school at an older age if you did not get a education when you were much younger. I would like to say thanks to my dear teacher for helping me with my work.

"Doll's Clothes" by GR

Oct. 17, 1998

I like to make doll clothes. I have all colours of cloth. The colours are yellow, red, blue with flowers, pink and orange. The dolls are pretty when I have dressed them in the clothes. I do a good job.

"My Trip to the Ex " by GR

Oct. 17, 1998

I went to the Ex I played some games I played the Birthday games too Its all fun at the Ex. I played Bingo too at The Ex. I went on the log ride & I had fun, I got all wet too. I went to see the animals at the Ex. There are cows and pigs and horses as well as ducks and dogs. They jumped in hoops too. That's the end of the story.

"Summer Work" By FD

May 14, 1999

I was working at the golf course. My friends and I have been working with divot mix. We enjoyed green grass, nice trees, blue sky, beautiful flowers and small lakes around us. It was so good, I liked it. We have had a good time.

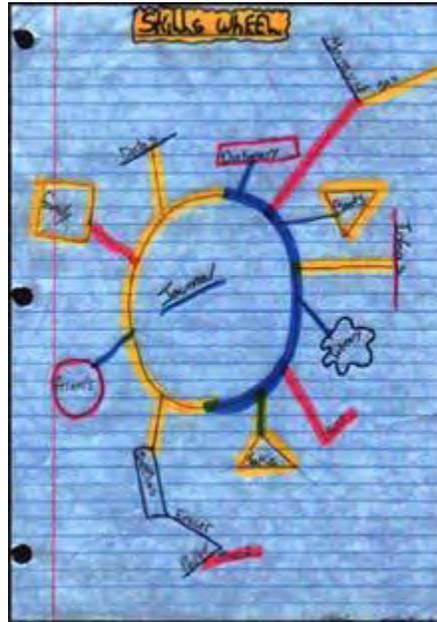
"My Story" by B.H.

I remember that my first problems started for me when I was in kindergarten. My mother told me that I had a lot of trouble with concentrating on anything for very long. But I was in grade 2 before my parents realized that I could not learn like other kids my age.

I remember that I cried a lot because the other kids would make fun of me. My mother kept trying to tell my teachers that I needed special help, but they would never listen and kept saying that I was just lazy. By the time I got into grade 7 and 8 I had the same teacher for 2 years and he was the only one who thought that I needed some help and that was how it happened that I went to High School.

It was a terrible school and I was frustrated all the time. I couldn't do the school work so mostly I just fooled around and because of that I used to get into trouble a lot. Then, my mother tried to teach me at home. It helped a little bit but not enough that I could get a job. There were meetings with my teachers and guidance counselors but they just kept saying that I was lazy and could do the work if I only tried. I did try I tried very hard but no matter how hard I tried I just could not do the work. Finally, my mom said that it wasn't fair to me and let me leave that school. It took us 3 years of phone calls and meetings before we finally found the adult Literacy Council York South.

And now for the very first time I feel like I am learning something. It is still hard for me, but I am trying hard and this time I know that I will be able to do better. The teachers are nice to me and I get along well with the other students. For the first time in my life I feel like I am accomplishing something.



"The Kittens in the Woods" By GR

June 8, 1999

My daughter Sheila went to the park and she found some kittens in the woods. They came right to her and licked her hand. There were two kittens. The colours were black and white and one of the kittens was orange, black, and white. They were fluffy. She found homes for them too.

"Spring Day" By GR

March 29, 1999

I do housework at home and my husband did not want me to work. He wanted me to stay home with the children. Now I do crafts with my grandchildren & I enjoy making Barbie doll clothes for them too.

"Gloria's Trip to the Beach" by GR

Feb. 27, 1999

I went to the beach for a swim and it was fun. We walked in the woods and we saw birds, dogs, and children playing in the Water. The children jumped up and down In the water. The children were have fun. And that is the end of the story.

"His Story" By DT

May 27, 1999

D T was born in western Ontario in the year 1930. When he was young, his most important role model was his brother Bill because he likes music and has reading and acting skills. Today he is a volunteer driver for the Cancer Society, runs a euchre club for seniors and is interested in canoeing and working with young people and teaching them canoeing. In the future he would like to improve his reading skills and hopes to play classic guitar. If he could change one thing about the world it would be to change the education system. It needs to have more discipline and to teach more skills

"My Son's Future" by AF

Mar. 4, 1999

I have great expectations for my son Peter. I would like to see him do well in school and benefit from his learning experiences and mistakes. I would like him to graduate from high school and go on to college and get a degree in business. I want him to be ready for the day he goes out in to the real world and finds the job he likes which can make him happy. I hope he finds a wife he can love and can love him for who he is and one day he can have kids of his own.



"My Chinchillas" by DA

Sept. 28, 1998

Chinchillas are native to four South American countries: Peru, Bolivia, Chile and Argentina. Today they are produced in many countries throughout the world. I think they have the finest fur in the world. They are nice little animals to take care of. I like feeding and looking after them and it isn't much trouble to look after them. Also they are nice to have for pets and as a hobby .

"My Biography" by SS

I am from a small country named St. Lucia. I was born on January 8th, 1974 in a city called St. Lucia. I am from a family of six. My mom and my Dad are married and they both are from St. Lucia. I attended the school from 1979 to 1989. I later got admitted to a grammar school from 1989 to 1992. After I graduated I decided to work for a while, before I furthered my education. In 1996 I was employed as a seamstress at a factory. In 1997 I decided to resign my appointment with them to travel to Canada. My hobbies are cooking, singing and meeting friends. This is were I am now.

"MY BIOGRAPHY" by EW

I was born in a country called Ghana and a town call Abair. I was born to wonderful parents. I was the fifth child of ten children. There were six boys and four girls. After four boys, Mom and Dad wanted a girl. That was me!

My Dad was the principal and my mom was the teacher of my school. So when I was five years old, I went to school. My growing up years were the happiest years of my life. It was a house full of children growing, playing and sometimes fighting with each other. I liked going to school because Mom and Dad were there all the time. I was not good at running or jumping but I was good at sewing. So when I finished school, I went to vocational school to learn sewing and cooking.

When I was 22 years old I got married and had two children. My marriage ended in a divorce. My Mom and Dad helped me take care of my children. Life was so hard so my sister invited me to come to Canada. I was very happy to come to a new country. At the airport I met a handsome man. He became my friend. July 29, 1991 was the happiest day of my life because I married my best friend and my new life began. He helped me get my papers and sponsored my kids to Canada. Now I have all my four children with me. Together with a wonderful husband, life is good.

"High and Mighty" by AF

I am referring to the rich snobs who live in their mansions and have three or four cars like Mercedes and BMW'S. We call them snobs because they walk with their noses up in the air.

They act as if they're better than every one else, but in my opinion they aren't. You know what really ticks me off?. It's the people who flaunt their money in every ones faces. I know we shouldn't judge people, but sometimes you cant help it. I know we can't afford a lot of name brands things like them, so we buy lower priced products. We do the best we can with what we have.

So for all the rich people who think that money can buy happiness "think again". I may not have all there riches, but I have something that all the money in the world cant buy and That's the love and respect from my family. So you can keep your nice cars and your beach houses because you can act happy with all your material things, but with out love and respect you don't have much. So in my words "I am the richest person in the word".

" Remember it's not how much you have it's how much you are loved ."

"Hockey" by RB

I love hockey. I play goalie. I play every Monday. It is fun. After the game, I shower and go home to watch the Leafs on TV.

"Joe's Reading Group" by MA

I like Joe's reading group. It teaches me how to be smart and like school. So I like to come to school because it will help me to work on my reading. I will learn how to be a good guy in Ice's group. Ice's group is the best! I like the book about Wayne Gretzky. I am the best hockey player on my team. We are going to play in Ottawa. After I learn how to skate I would like to try out for the NHL.

"My Job" By FR

I would like to learn how to read and write English to help me with my job. I need to write to be able to read orders. Then I need to write down the orders that are done

"The Bus" by LR

I like to read on the bus. I like to listen to my music. I like to relax and sleep on the bus. Some people like to eat on the bus.

"MY BIOGRAPHY" by DM

I was born in Canada. My childhood was very difficult because I was born premature. Learning was a challenge for me and my parents. It was a lot of hard work and did not seem possible.

I was born in 1961. I went to a local school. My teacher treated me the same as everyone else and especially with the ruler! I had many friends in my class but I also had many adversaries. I dealt with it the best I knew how. It wasn't easy. Then I began High School. I always tried my best in all I did.

My favorite subject was social science. I also liked wood work and home economics, where I met all the girls. In my typing class I was the only boy. It was a lot of fun. My class mates were very helpful. We also did spelling tests. This was a challenge for me. My teachers were very patient. We used word-processing computers. I also enjoyed my motor maintenance class. Both of my teachers were very good to me. All of my shop teachers were fun.

My parents came from Italy. My Grandfather came to this country first. Then came my mother and after that my father served Italy for two years in the army. My mother and father were married in Canada. On the very first day my father and my father's mother went to a store and bought some chocolate and fruit cake.

"My Job" by SR

I work with Chats on the computer and chopped up old newspapers before they moved to Wellington Avenue. I am also on two committees, Employment and Placements. Planning and Priorities.

I hope to get on the Board of Directors of York South Association for Community Living. I used to work with York Region Epilepsy. I did faxing, using a computer and I made coffee. My two supervisors were: SW and CH.

I think computers are neat, and I am glad they invented them.

"Halloween Party" by CM

Dear B,

Please come to a Halloween Party at The Literacy Council from 2:00 to 3:00 PM on Wednesday October 27 as my guest. We'll play a game or two and have refreshments. Dress in a costume if you wish. I may wear a costume too.

Please let me know before Wednesday, October 20th, 1999.

Hope to see you there!

Your friend,

C

"WENT CAMPING" by MT

On Friday 13, 1999 we left to go camping at about 5:00 p.m. and we got there about 6:30 p.m. We put up our tents and then Dave, Robby, Peter, Ana and I made dinner and sat around the fire. I went to bed about 2:00 a.m. Sat. morning. On Sat. 14, 1999 we all had breakfast, then we washed the dishes and then we went to the beach and had fun. Then we went back to the campgrounds and played flashlight-tag. Then we made dinner and a bonfire I went to bed about 3:00 a.m. On Sun. 15, 1999 I went fishing for the day I came back to the campgrounds and packed to go home.

"MY BIOGRAPHY" by RG

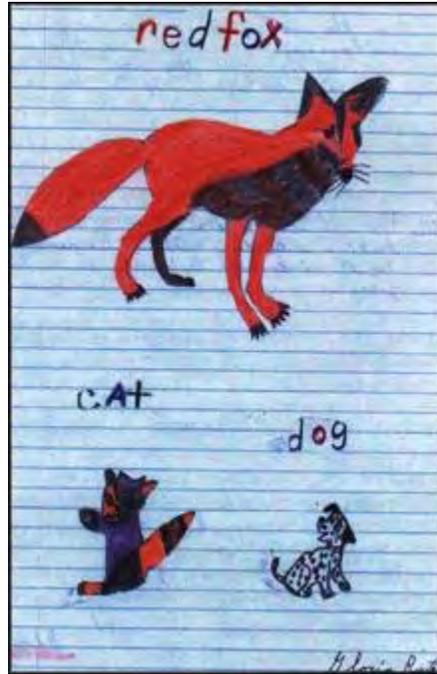
I was born in Jamaica. I had a normal childhood with my mother named Olga and my father Samwilal and four other sisters Paty, Blossom and Viviene. I graduated from High School in Jamaica. I then entered Canada in 1972. I got married in 1976. My husband and I have three wonderful babies, all girls. I must say as I write we are very happy with the way life has turned out. God has been good to me in more ways than one. I try to be active in my community by helping at the community center in my neighbourhood.

"MY BIOGRAPHY" by RJ

I am from the island of St. Lucia. I come from a family of eight sisters and five brothers. At the age of five I attended school. The first day of school I was not too happy because I did not have friends. After two weeks I met new friends and began to enjoy my first term at school. My teacher taught me how to read and write. Later in school I learned how to bake and cook and also different activities like cricket and volleyball. At the age of 14, I went and sat the common entrance examination but I did not pass my exam. They had to promote me to another standard which was standard six and that was the end my schooling.

I liked going to church, and participating in Bible study. Secondly I loved going to the beach and having fun with my friends and family. At the age of 18, I got pregnant with my first child. At that time I was living with my parents. Then I moved to my own house. At that time my boyfriend and I had to work to take care of our kids.

I left home in 1997 and came to Canada. My mother is taking care of my kids in St. Lucia. When I first came to Canada I got a job doing babysitting but I was not too happy. Then I had to move to another babysitting job. I hope to improve my education, get a better job and send more money for my family.



" My Biography" by SP

I was born on an island called St Lucia. I come from a family of ten; my parents have five boys and five girls. As a child I was very troublesome and I had a lot of fun running about and playing with my friends and family. My parents worked very hard to support all of us. My dad works as a truck driver and my mom was a farmer. At the age of 5 I went to my first school. It was a very good school to start with.

Growing up as a teenager, I went to High School and did exams. I wrote some good exams and some bad. I learnt more about school and different subjects. At the age of 17 I got my first job in a store and I liked it very much because I was proud to be able to help my parents with the bills in the house. Then I met my first boyfriend who I lived with for some years, then we had some disagreements so we broke up. Most of all what I liked as a teenager was to be with my friends and going out to meet other people. Also to know different places and to have lots of fun. Best of all is to go shopping with my mom and sisters.

As an adult when I was 27 years old, my mother passed away on a Christmas Holiday. It was the saddest day in my life and my family's. We had a lot of support from our friends and relatives. After that I decided to move on with my life, so I found a new job in a factory. I got a new boyfriend. Then I decided to go on a trip to a new country. My dad and boyfriend helped me with the money to go where ever I wanted to. I came to Canada to make a better life for myself and my family and try to further my education. While in Canada I've met lots of new friends from different places and have gone to many events. Sometimes on weekends I go to movies with a friend or I sit at home and watch a movie on the television. On Saturdays I go to church. Now I am very happy with the way my life is going. The best thing I want to do now is to try and help my family back home, especially my father, and to try and set the goal that I want.

"Snow" by NA

Yesterday the weather was very bad. Snow, wind and rain have been terrible. On Tuesday I went to a friend. We had lunch together. She made cookies. I liked the time we spent together.

Later I visited my friend from the Middle East. I was so happy when I saw her.

Today I am going shopping and then I will stay at home. All day today I have been very busy.

"Letter to my Sister" by NA

Dear Sister,

I am writing to you because I have not heard about your family for a long time. How do you feel after your surgery?

My family and I are doing well. I hope to see you soon.

I miss you.

Love, N

"My Life"by LW

I was born in the country of Jamaica. I have five sisters and six brothers. I went to school in my district.

My father died when I was three years old. My mother took care of us without a husband until we were able to take care of ourselves. God Bless her soul.

went to trade school to learn to be a carpenter at the age of fourteen. At the age of twenty I came to Canada to better my life. I met a pretty girl and we got married. We have two sons aged 27 and 23. The oldest one is married and the younger is still at home and going to school. I am working as a trailer mechanic and I am going to school to better myself.

This is my life. To God be praised.

"My Job" by FR

- I. would like to learn how to read and write English to with my job. I need to write to be able to read orders .Then I need to write down the orders that are done.
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