



Idak • Learning Disabilities Association of Kingston

The right to learn, the power to achieve

817 Division St. Unit 108 K7K 4C2 (Phone) 613-546-8524

Website: www.ldakkingston.com E-mail: ldak@ldakingston.com

Spring 2019 Newsletter

SUMMER CAMPS FOR YOUTH WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES COMING IN JULY

READING AND ROBOTS ROCK

Offered in Partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Kingston & Area
and Funded by the Community Foundation for Kingston and Area

Reading and Robots Rock will offer campers all the activities of a fun week-long summer camp with additional programming to support reading and social skills. Designed for youth ages 8 to 12, these camps will focus on building reading and teamwork skills. Along with games, sports, swimming and outings, this camp will provide two hours per day in which campers will work together and individually on reading and robot programming activities. A very popular focus will be on building, programming and operating robots, which requires reading and following instructions, communicating and working together, and deciding how to program the robots. Additional reading activities will be tailored to enhance individual participants' reading skills as identified through an intake assessment. These camps are designed to provide a supportive environment in which kids can have fun while gaining new skills.

Bursaries to offset camp fees will be available for eligible families for up to the full amount of the fees.

Dates: July 8-12 and July 15-19

Location: Boys & Girls Club of Kingston & Area Robert Meeks Centre at 559 Bagot Street (downtown)

Registration will open March 18th.

Register online at bgckingston.ca and find more information about the camps.

Information Via Phone: LDAK 613-546-8524 Boys and Girls Club 513-507-3306



Boys & Girls Clubs
of Kingston & Area



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Community Foundation
for Kingston & Area

GROUPS AND MEETINGS

LDAK Annual Meeting

The LDAK Board of Directors invites all members and, anyone else interested, to our Annual Meeting to take place on:

Wednesday May 22nd 817 Division St 6:00 pm

The proposed slate of officers for 2019-2020:

President	Djenana Jalovcic
Past President	Gail Eaton-Smith
Vice President	
Treasurer	Pat Dudley
Recording Secretary	
Member-at Large	Helen Simson

Further written nominations will be accepted at the LDAK office until 21 days before the Annual Meeting

The Reading Clinic

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL, CHANGING FUTURES SINCE 2001

www.thereadingclinic.ca

Specialists in Dyslexia and Learning Disabilities

Yes! Reading, Writing, and Math Programs

Daily Intensive Instruction Available

Twice Weekly After School Sessions Available

299 Concession St. www.thereadingclinic.ca

Contact: The Reading Clinic 613-547-5179 jennifer@thereadingclinic.ca



KINGSTON'S ADHD PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

Our group supports parents who have children with ADHD in the Kingston and surrounding area. We are a not-for-profit parent to parent support group.

OUR MISSION: *"To better the lives of children and Families living with ADHD"*

Monthly Support Meetings (Nov-June) **Yearly** ADHD Awareness Campaign (June)
denise@adhdsupportgroup.ca 613-389-3894 www.adhdsupportgroup.ca

Quintilian Social Club

An opportunity to meet new friends and practice social skills in authentic social situations.

Grades 3+ **Contact Laura DeSousa, Director of Programming 613-542-0400**



SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships Available to Students with Learning Disabilities

The Justin Eves Foundation:

595 Bay St., Ste 1202, Toronto, ON M5G 2C2 Phone: (416) 586-0085

Fax: (416) 586-1480 Website: www.justinevesfoundation.com

Justin Eves Foundation Scholarship: For students with learning disabilities attending college or university

⇒ Deadline **June 30, 2019** for the 2019-2020 academic year.



LDA of Ontario:

365 Evans Ave., Ste. 202, Toronto, ON M8Z 1K2 Phone: (416) 929-4311 Fax: (416) 929-3905

Website: www.LDAO.ca

Roy Cooper Scholarship:

LDAO offers an annual \$1,000 scholarship award in memory of Roy V. Cooper, whose volunteerism within his own chapter community and the LDAO is recognized.

The scholarship recognizes an Ontario high school student who has a documented Learning Disability and/or ADHD who will be attending a postsecondary institution in the upcoming school year. The student must be pursuing a bachelor of engineering or a bachelor of science in a physical sciences discipline (please note: physical science do not include social sciences or technology majors).

⇒ **Deadline for applications to be submitted to local chapters is June 14, 2019**

⇒ **Application form available at Online Scholarships Resources:**
ldakingston.com>Resources>Scholarships



NEADS National Student Awards Program:

www.neads.ca/en/about/projects/ete2/scholarship/

⇒ National Directory of Financial Assistance Programs for Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities posted by the National Educational Association of Disabled Students

⇒ **Deadline May 15**

What is Balanced “Triangulated” Assessment and Why is it Essential to Meet the Needs of ALL Students?

Assessment continues to play an essential role in student learning. Yet it struggles to keep pace with a fast-changing world. The internet has placed knowledge at students’ fingertips. So the focus of curriculum, everywhere, is shifting from an emphasis on factual knowledge to a balance of essential skills, competencies, and conceptual understanding. These changes in the focus of learning demand a rethinking of assessment. It can no longer focus on the memorization of content. 21st century assessment must involve an appropriate balance of what I call “write, do, and say evidence” - in other words, triangulation. Many provincial policy documents are now requiring that teachers “triangulate assessment” by including observations, conversations, and products in their assessment routine. And so the rich and varied methods that have characterized assessment in the primary grades need to become the norm, not the exception, in all classrooms through to graduation.

Yet for many teachers—and many parents—once children are able to read and write, assessment is only considered “rigorous” if it involves gathering written evidence of student learning. Observing students while they demonstrate skills, or engaging them in conversation during the learning process to reveal their understanding, are rare occurrences in the junior, intermediate and secondary classrooms that I visit. And herein lies a huge problem for students with learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders. All too often, these students know, understand, and can do far more than written tests reveal. The result? Invalid data about student achievement.

Think about how pervasive assessment through observation is in our lives outside of school. Maybe you play golf? If so, I’ll bet lessons you’ve taken involved video analysis of your swing. Been to a hockey, football or soccer game lately? Rest assured coaches and players spent hours viewing video footage of previous games to help improve the team’s play. Even The Royal Conservatory of Music now makes extensive use of student video performance, both to instruct and to celebrate excellence. These examples highlight the importance of using video to observe and digitally capture a student’s performance, and then providing feedback in order to improve subsequent performance. How pervasive is video evidence in K to 12 classrooms? In my own work as an education consultant, I struggle to find examples.

And what about conversation? When we listen to students engaged in conversation related to their learning, we literally “see into their thinking”. We learn about their level of understanding, their misconceptions, their tolerance for other perspectives and points of view, their ability to listen to and build on the ideas of others, their ability to answer questions....I could go on. And if we videotape these conversations, then we have rich evidence of learning as the basis for providing feedback that will lead to improvement.

Gathering, analyzing and sharing digital evidence of observations and conversations is, I believe, the future of educational assessment. From my perspective, after almost forty years in education, I haven’t seen another innovation that holds greater promise for improving the learning of ALL students, but especially for those exhibiting learning disabilities.

Understandably, a change of this magnitude causes anxiety. Here’s an example of the questions I’m hearing most frequently from teachers:

What are the benefits of observations and conversation?

What is Balanced “Triangulated” Assessment and Why is it Essential to Meet the Needs of ALL Students?

Isn't observation and conversation more subjective than written assessment?

What does observation and conversation look like in subjects like math and science?

How do I involve students in these kinds of assessment?

How do I find the time to observe and talk to all my students?

How do I convince parents to accept assessment based on observation and conversation?

How many observations and conversations do I need for each student?

Let's examine two of these questions:

First, “What are the benefits of using conversation and observation to assess student learning?”

There are two main benefits, and both relate to the quality of assessment evidence we seek to gather:

First, many of the essential skills that we teach can only be assessed appropriately by either talking to students or observing them as they demonstrate their learning.

Second, since many students struggle with written communication, if we rely on it as our primary method of assessment, we run the risk of drawing erroneous conclusions about student learning.

Both reasons are concerned with the concept of validity. Validity, at a simple level, answers the question, “Does this assessment task actually provide evidence of the learning I'm looking for?”

With respect to the first point, if a learning outcome or expectation states,

“Students will investigate the interdependence of plants and animals within specific habitats and communities”

a written test or report is of questionable validity. Instead, if the teacher creates an authentic task that provides students with a hands-on opportunity to investigate the interdependence of plants and animals within specific habitats and communities, she can then talk to them and observe them as they demonstrate, in the moment, skills of scientific investigation. And with today's tablets and smartphones, she can record a sample of each child's actions and comments.

The second point identifies a common assessment scenario:

Jack and his parents have recently moved. According to his age, he is enrolled in Grade 4 at his new school. Although exceptionally bright, curious, and eager to learn, Jack has a learning disability. He is reading far below grade level, and has great difficulty committing his thoughts to paper or typing them on a

What is Balanced “Triangulated” Assessment and Why is it Essential to Meet the Needs of ALL Students?

screen. Midway, through the first term, he was required to write a science test about rocks and minerals. Jack failed the test. Upon consulting Jack’s Student Record, Mr. Brooks, his teacher, is reminded that Jack is reading at a grade 1 level. And yes, there were words on the test such as “igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic”. So in reality, this wasn’t a Science test for Jack—it was a Reading test.

Concerned about the validity of the test score, Mr. Brooks sits down with Jack and says, “Jack, I’m pretty sure you know plenty about rocks and minerals, especially since you were so interested when we went on the field trip to the quarry. So let’s have a chat and you can show and tell me what you know.”

Using rocks and mineral samples, Mr. Brooks helps Jack recall his fascination during the field trip, as well as during class when students were examining the properties of similar samples. Throughout the chat, Mr. Brooks captures evidence of Jack’s knowledge and understanding with the video camera feature of his tablet.

By taking a balanced approach to assessment—triangulating evidence—Mr. Brooks becomes acutely aware of the problems and limitations associated with assessing Jack’s learning by relying too heavily upon written evidence.

Here’s a second question from the earlier list:

“Isn’t observation and conversation more subjective than written assessment?”

First of all, it must be said that measurement error occurs every time we assess student learning. We can never have 100% confidence in the conclusions we reach about learning. Ruth Sutton put it best in 1991 when she wrote:

“It is worth noting, right from the start, that assessment is a human process, conducted by and with human beings, and subject inevitably to the frailties of human judgement. However crisp and objective we may try and make it, and however neatly quantifiable may be our results, assessment is closer to an art than a science. It is, after all, an exercise in human communication.”

(Assessment: A Framework for Teachers, Ruth Sutton, 1991)

Ruth is talking about “reliability” which is a measure of the confidence we have in the data we are gathering. So, as I’ve said, no assessment is 100% reliable. But reliability is not always of critical importance. The purpose of formative assessment, which includes assessment for learning and assessment as learning, is to improve learning, NOT to evaluate the quality of learning. And for formative assessment to be truly effective, it needs to be responsive to the differing needs of students. And as soon as we begin to differentiate formative assessment to further the learning of students who have differing needs, reliability goes out the window. And that’s just fine!

There are times, of course, when reliability is important. When our assessment purpose is summative - end - of - unit, end - of - term, end - of course - we need to be seriously concerned with reliability. Why?

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Because we must have confidence in the judgements we make about whether students are proficient with respect to essential knowledge, understanding, and skills.

Enter today’s handheld technologies. The increasing availability of smartphones and tablets provides a solution to the problem that has been holding educators back for years– the poor reliability of their observations. Today, teachers (and their students) can quickly and easily create a permanent “in the moment” digital record of their learning that can just as simply be stored, reviewed, evaluated and shared. A reading teacher, for example, can use her tablet to capture brief samples of each child reading at key points during the school year in order to track improvement , adjust her instructional plans, and share with parents the progress of their children.

Too many teachers gather too much assessment evidence in some areas, and too little in others. In other words, their assessment plans are inefficient. Many teachers also believe that they are the only assessors in the classrooms. By making effective use of today’s digital devices, teachers are able to empower students to become highly effective monitors of their own learning. Teachers need to learn how to have all students become reliable, autonomous assessors of their own performance, as well as independent adjusters of their own performance. Never before have teachers had the tools to accomplish these goals. But the increasing availability of handheld technologies, in the form of smartphones and tablets, coupled with evermore access to high-quality software suites and apps, means today’s teachers have this missing piece of the assessment puzzle.

From: LDAO Communique Spring/Summer 2018 By: Damian Cooper

Cooper, Damian. Talk About Assessment: Strategies and Tools to Improve Teaching and Learning, Nelson Education, 2007

Cooper, Damian. Talk About assessment: High School Strategies and Tools, Nelson Education, 2010
VOCAL 101, online course, <https://www.wavelearningsolutions.com/vocal>

Kingston Frontenac Public Library & Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA)

CELA provides over 500,000 titles in accessible formats for library patrons with reading barriers such as a learning disability or low vision/blindness. The collection includes materials for kids and teens in both French and English. Membership in CELA is free with a Kingston Frontenac Public Library card and also includes the option to join Bookshare. CELA resources can be read using a variety of technology and devices. Free and low-cost apps are available for iOS and Android devices and audiobooks can be downloaded from the CELA website.

Contact Jillann Rothwell at the Kingston Frontenac Public Library to register jrothwell@kfpl.ca

For more information visit www.celalibrary.ca and www.Bookshare.org

L. D. A. K. EXECUTIVE

2018 - 2019

President	Djenana Jalovcic
Past President	Gail Eaton-Smith
Vice President	
Treasurer	Pat Dudley
Secretary	
Member	Helen Simson
at	
Large	

RESOURCE CENTRE HOURS

Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday

11 am—3 pm

(or by appointment)

Resource Centre Co-ordinator

Lana Greenwood

Disclaimer

THE LEARNING DISABILITIES ASSOCIATION does not endorse or recommend any of the facilities listed or any of the methods, programmes, products or treatments offered by such facilities.

Our aim is to keep the community informed about services and facilities that are available to people with learning disabilities.

We urge consumers and service providers to review carefully any programmes and services listed in order to select those which will meet most appropriately the identified needs of the person with learning disabilities.

Membership Application

We encourage all individuals interested in learning disabilities to become a member of the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO), and by doing so automatically become a member of Kingston chapter (LDAK). Visit the LDAO website for further information and benefits of memberships, and a secure online application form.

See <http://www.ldao.ca/about/membership/>

If you wish to use cash or cheque, print out the online form and submit to us directly at our address (below) and we will submit your application to LDAO.

Learning Disabilities Association Kingston
817 Division St. Unit 108
Kingston, ON K7K 4C2

Be sure to check out our website at www.ldakingston.com and find us on **Facebook** for current news!

Like us on Facebook!

Interesting Resources

Teaching LD www.teachingld.org

TeachingLD is a service of the **Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD)** of the **Council for Exceptional Children**. DLD is the largest international professional organization focused on Learning Disabilities. The purpose of TeachingLD is to provide trustworthy and up-to-date resources about teaching students with Learning Disabilities.

Integra Program www.childdevelop.ca

An accredited Children's Mental Health Centre located in Toronto, dedicated to helping children and adolescents who experience social, emotional and behavioural problems related to their learning disabilities. Free tips sheets available under Resources.