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**Save the Date!**



**MABIDA**

**Annual Dinner  
& Business Meeting**

Honoring Dr. Maryanne Wolf

**Friday, September 25,**

**6:00 pm**

**at the MIT Faculty Club,  
Cambridge, MA**

**IDA 60<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Conference**

**November 11-14, 2009**

*For more information visit  
our web site at*

[www.dyslexia-ma.org](http://www.dyslexia-ma.org)

**President's Message**

Greetings! I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer as we all prepare to move into what will almost certainly be an inspiring and productive fall. First, I would like to alert you to two important 'Save the Dates': the first is our upcoming Annual Dinner on September 25 honoring Dr. Maryanne Wolf—I hope to see many of you there! The second is the National IDA conference on November 11-14 which is in Orlando this year—this conference promises to be one of the best!

As usual, we have had a busy last few months. Our goals for this year have continued to focus on our primary mission of disseminating information about dyslexia to parents, educators and related professionals. As was the case last year, we have continued to focus on early identification as it is appearing to be more and more critical for the most effective intervention.

Our confidence in how to best use the technology available to us is growing each month. Hopefully you have had a chance to visit our website at [www.dyslexia-ma.org](http://www.dyslexia-ma.org)! Special thanks to Paul Evenson who has volunteered to help us in maintaining it and enhancing its look and feel. I hope that you all received the first email version of our newsletter through Constant Contact that went out in June (many thanks to Sasha Yampolsky for putting this together). If you did not receive this e-Newsletter, please be sure to send me your email address at [MABIDA@comcast.net](mailto:MABIDA@comcast.net) so that we can add you to our Constant Contact mailing list. We are being more and more successful in our outreach to members and people interested in dyslexia as we continue to increase the number of 'hits' on our website (9,893 since January!) as well as to receive many calls and e-mails seeking referrals for evaluation and intervention. We are very happy to answer questions and send referral lists.

*... continued on p. 2*

**Free Service For Members: Review of Your Child's or Your Own Psychological, Educational or Neuropsychological Evaluation**

Want help making sense of the information? IDA members who are interested in speaking with a dyslexia professional regarding testing results for your child or yourself, please call 617-650-0011 or send an email to: [MABIDA@comcast.net](mailto:MABIDA@comcast.net).

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## President's Message, continued

This spring we held an extremely well received workshop at the World Trade Center delivered by Joan Sedita entitled "Keys to Literacy: Comprehension and Vocabulary Strategies". Many thanks to the law firm of Seyfarth Shaw LLP for graciously offering us the space and helping with the on-site organization! We have also had the opportunity to reach out to parents by presenting to two PACs (Billerica and Foxborough) and are planning more presentations in the fall. If your local PAC would be interested in having someone come out to speak about issues related to dyslexia and other reading issues, please have them contact me at [MABIDA@comcast.net](mailto:MABIDA@comcast.net).

In June we held our first Volunteer Tea to meet and talk with many of the members of MABIDA who have expressed an interest in becoming more involved with the Branch. Thanks to our Board members, Sarah Wolf, who helped to organize the tea, and Sara Byruck, who very generously provided her home and refreshments to make this a very successful event. We are particularly hoping to enlist the help of the volunteers in disseminating our brochure on early identification of children who are at risk for reading difficulties to local libraries, pediatricians' offices, and pre-schools.

This summer we also inaugurated a new (and for us very exciting) service for members of MABIDA—we are offering to meet with parents to help them interpret any evaluations that they have received on their children. This service is also available to adults with dyslexia.

Our Western MA region has continued to be busy holding events to help train teachers and to disseminate information about dyslexia. A description of the activities in that part of the state can be found in this newsletter.

Again, I want to acknowledge the incredible dedication of our Board members who have given so generously of their time to make these events happen. We are also looking forward to a very active year with the new group of volunteers. We encourage you to remain active members in the organization and recruit others who are interested in our mission. If you would like to join our volunteer group, please contact Sarah Wolf at [sarahpwolf@comcast.net](mailto:sarahpwolf@comcast.net).

Keep up all the good work that you are doing!

Pam Hook,  
President

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## MABIDA Sponsors Comprehension Workshop with Joan Sedita



Joan Sedita presented the Key Three Routine at a one-day workshop in Boston on March 6, 2009. This workshop was graciously hosted by Seyfarth Shaw LLP, the law firm of MABIDA Board Member Kent Sinclair.

The Key Three Routine is a methodical program for teaching comprehension in grades 4 through 12. The program introduces three key skills essential to developing efficient

comprehension skills: identifying and stating main ideas, taking notes, and summarizing. Workshop participants from across the state practiced the five activities of the Key Three Routine. Sedita's approach to these critical elements demonstrates how to provide students with scaffolding to heighten cognitive function and retention. Even experienced educators benefited from active participation in lessons as they learned to apply the Key Three methods.

The Key Vocabulary Routine promotes vocabulary development through wide reading, multiple exposures to words and linking new words to background knowledge. We had lively discussions as Joan introduced the five steps of the Key Vocabulary Routine: previewing, making connections, direct instruction in selected words, word learning strategies, and promoting word consciousness.

One teacher, who characterizes himself as "too restless to sit in a classroom," said that he got more from one day with "the Key Three Routine" than he had gleaned in all of his education courses.

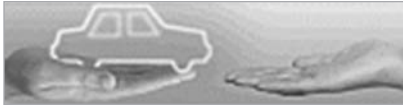
For some fun vocabulary activities at home, you might want to try out two websites recommended by Joan Sedita. [www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com) is an online dictionary of etymology. Another site, [www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com), is an online vocabulary game. For each answer you get right, they will donate 10 grains of rice to the United Nations World Food Program.

## MABIDA Continues to Offer Training scholarships

MABIDA is pleased to announce the continuing availability of a scholarship for Orton-Gillingham based multisensory structured language training.

This scholarship is open to any person with an undergraduate degree, who is interested in being trained in Orton-Gillingham or some program based on Orton-Gillingham principles. The awarding of the scholarship will be contingent upon acceptance into a recognized program. The training must include a supervised practicum. The MABIDA Scholarship will cover the cost of training up to the value of \$1,500.

## Turn Your Vehicle Donation Into Dollars For Dyslexia



IDA has partnered with IAA/Auto-Donation.com, one of the largest and most well-respected

charity auction organizations to help us manage our vehicle donation program. We can accept most vehicles whether they run or not. We'll arrange to have your vehicle picked up free of charge. You may be eligible to receive a charitable contribution tax deduction on your 2009 itemized Federal tax return and **IDA receives up to 80%** of the proceeds toward our mission! For more information, visit [www.dyslexia-ma.org](http://www.dyslexia-ma.org).

## Thank you to the Boston Housing Authority!

MABIDA would like to thank the Boston Housing Authority (BHA) for their recent donation of almost \$500 to support our mission. BHA employees donated money each week for "dress down day" and then chose to donate the money to MABIDA. Their donation will be used towards a scholarship for an individual being trained in multisensory structured language instruction. Thank you again!

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL  
DYSLEXIA AWARENESS MONTH

A graphic featuring three white paper cutouts of stylized human figures holding hands in a circle, set against a dark background. The figures are of varying heights, with the tallest in the center.

*"Crossing the reading bridge a different way"*  
Visit [www.dyslexia-ma.org](http://www.dyslexia-ma.org) or call 1-617-650-0011  
for more information.

## Western Mass Region of the Massachusetts Branch of the International Dyslexia Association

July 2009

The Western Mass Region serves members from the New York border east to Worcester County, south to Connecticut and north to Vermont and New Hampshire. This varied part of MA has many different needs in working with children and adults with learning differences. Members are encouraged to visit the MABIDA website for information about area conferences and workshops, learning disability information sheets, or news from the National IDA. The Regional Representatives, Laurel Lussen and P.K. Sanieski, will be presenting a workshop, entitled, "Put Yourself in the Shoes of a Dyslexic", to the Longmeadow PAC on November 4th. It is an interactive learning disabilities simulation workshop. They and other members of MABIDA are available for presenting a variety of options for teacher professional development or to parent organizations. Suggestions from members about ideas to help parents, teachers and students or volunteers to help MABIDA are always welcomed. Contact us, we want to hear from you.

[llussen@lindenhs.org](mailto:llussen@lindenhs.org)

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## Send in your nominations for the Alice H. Garside Award.

*Complete the ballot below.*

Since 1985, NEBIDA and now MABIDA has honored individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the field of dyslexia and to our Branch. The Award is presented at our Annual Dinner Meeting in September.

Do you know someone who deserves special recognition? We would like to hear from you. Please read below, complete the form and return it to the address on the bottom by May 10, 2010.

### Selection Criteria:

Exemplary leadership, service, or achievement in the field that directly or indirectly furthers the mission of the Massachusetts Branch of the International Dyslexia Association.

I nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for the 2010 Alice H. Garside Award.

### Information on Nominee:

#### Contact Information

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/position: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Biographical Information

Briefly describe the nominee's qualifications — exemplary leadership, service, or achievement — and the reasons you are nominating this individual for the Alice H. Garside Award.

**Please return to: MABIDA, PO Box 562, Lincoln, MA 01773 by May 10, 2010.**

## Linden Hill School and Summer Program



### Linden Hill School

**Congratulates Dr. Maryanne Wolf**  
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# Early Identification of “Red Flags” for Reading Acquisition: Differentiating Dyslexia from Specific Language Impairment

By Pamela E. Hook, Sasha Yampolsky and Alyson Rodman

Identifying and intervening with young children at risk for reading failure is critical for the development of reading proficiency, particularly reading fluency. While it is sometimes difficult to predict with a high degree of reliability which young children will develop reading difficulties, nearly 75% of poor readers in 2nd grade have an early history of spoken language deficits (Catts, 1999). While parents, teachers, and health professionals can often spot health problems, few are trained to identify the ‘red flags’ of reading disabilities. This can have far-reaching implications – research indicates that 65% of children at risk for reading difficulties in kindergarten will continue to read with difficulty throughout their school years if they do not receive early and appropriate intervention.

This is not to say of course that older students cannot learn to read accurately with appropriate instruction; however, the lack of early intervention often results in slower, dysfluent reading that continues to hinder efficient reading comprehension in the later grades and as adults.

Some of the most common ‘red flags’ in young children at risk for reading difficulties are:

- Delays in speaking or understanding language,
- Limited vocabulary,
- Trouble following directions,
- Difficulty with word retrieval,
- Problems sequencing sounds in words,
- Difficulty rhyming words or hearing sounds in words,
- Difficulty learning letter names,
- Recurrent ear infections,
- Family history of reading difficulties.


The reason that all of these are considered to be ‘red flags’ for reading difficulties lies in the relatively complex relationship between oral language and reading. Although all aspects of oral language influence reading, certain components are more directly related to word identification while others are more directly related to reading comprehension. Problems related to word identification involve underlying processing disorders such as phonemic awareness, rapid naming and orthographic memory (memory for letter patterns). Those related to reading comprehension involve more general oral language comprehension problems connected to meaning and grammar. These problems can be found in isolation or can overlap creating more complex reading issues. For example, difficulties with word identification will certainly affect comprehension and difficulties with oral language comprehension, such as a limited vocabulary, can affect word identification.

Reading problems primarily related to word identification are often associated with a diagnosis of dyslexia. In contrast, reading comprehension issues related to more broadly based language difficulties are often associated with a diagnosis of specific language impairment (SLI) in the pre-school years or language learning disability (LLD) in the school age years. Although both categories of impairment (dyslexia and SLI/LLD) involve language processing disorders that affect reading, they should remain distinct because intervention for students with these diagnoses will differ.

Other types of language-related reading difficulties are found in children who have not had environmental opportunities to learn standard English. Children with limited knowledge of standard English may speak a non-standard dialect or speak English as an additional language (English language learners-ELL) or may come from a linguistically impoverished environment and have never been exposed to adequate language input. Although these students would not be considered to have a disability, when confronted with text in school, they may struggle

... continued on p. 6

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# Early Identification of “Red Flags” for Reading Acquisition (cont.)

Regardless of the cause of the reading difficulties, early identification and intervention is essential. Following are some guidelines for oral language development to help screen for possible ‘red flags’. Parents, teachers and health care workers who can recognize the red flags, refer for formal testing, and make arrangements for the necessary intervention are greatly helping young children gain the foundational skills they need to be good readers. Thus, disseminating this information will help to ensure earlier intervention.

Following are milestones that can be used to determine if children are on track for acquisition of phonological awareness and oral language and additionally, therefore, for reading.

## Developmental Milestones for Phonological Awareness Acquisition (more related to word identification and dyslexia) Adapted from Crumrine (2002)

### Pre-school

- Rhyme: plays with words and nonsense words that rhyme
- Syllables: implicitly segments words into syllables as in chants and songs, claps to syllables

### Kindergarten

- Rhyme: recognizes, completes, and produces rhyming words
- Concept of Words: identifies words in a sentence
- Syllables: blends, segments, counts, and deletes syllables
- Beginning Sounds: matches and isolates beginning sounds
- Onset and Rime: blends /t/ + /ake/
- Phonemes: (2 to 3 sounds) blends and segments

### First grade

- Syllables: deletes final syllable
- Phonemes: (3 to 5 sounds) blends, segments, deletes initial or final, substitutes phonemes

### Second grade

- Syllables: deletes a medial syllable
- Phonemes/Blends: (5 to 6 sounds) blends, segments, deletes or substitutes embedded phoneme in a blend

## Developmental Milestones for Oral Language Acquisition (more related to reading comprehension and LLD) Adapted from Shipley, K. & McAfee, J. (1992).

### Ages 2-3

- Speech is 50% to 75% intelligible
- Requests items by name
- Names everyday objects
- Follows simple directions and answers simple questions
- Points to pictures in a book when named
- Asks 1- to 2- word questions

- Uses 3- to 4- word phrases
- Understands why, who, whose, and how many

### Ages 3-4

- Speech is 80% intelligible
- Can tell a story
- Engages in long conversations
- Understands differences in meanings (stop-go, in-on)
- Has a sentence length of 4-5 words
- Frequently asks questions
- Begins to follow directions like “put the truck under the table”
- Tells 2 events in chronological order
- Consistently uses regular plurals, possessives, and simple past tense verbs

### Ages 4-5

- Uses sentences of 4 to 8 words
- Uses grammatically correct sentences
- Pays attention to a story and answers simple questions about it
- Recognizes 1 to 3 colors
- Talks about experiences at school, at friends’ homes, etc.
- Accurately relays a long story
- Speech is usually intelligible to strangers
- Answers complex 2-part questions

### Ages 5-6

- Names 6 basic colors and 3 basic shapes
- Knows common opposites like “big/little”
- Understands “same” and “different”
- Sequentially names days of the week
- Asks questions for information
- Uses all types of sentences, for example “let’s go to the playground after we eat”
- Follows 3 part directions
- Uses past and future tense appropriately
- Uses appropriate grammar in most cases
- Accurately relays a story

### References

- Catts, H. W., & Kahmi, A. G. (Eds.), (1999). *Language and reading disabilities*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Crumrine, L. (2002) Mass. DOE, Baystate Readers Initiative/ Phonological Awareness and Phonemic Awareness
- Shipley, K. & McAfee, J. (1992). *Assessment in speech-language pathology*. San Diego, CA: Singular Publishing Group, Inc.

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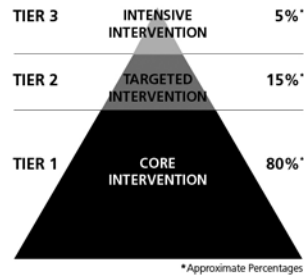
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