

# Martha Kovack, MEd

marthaLkovack@gmail.com

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## Introduction

Martha Kovack, MEd, is a member in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers and is a certified Orton-Gillingham and Practical Linguistics Teacher with the Canadian Dyslexia Society. She is currently a literacy coach with the Ontario International Dyslexia Association, an English Language Arts sessional instructor for the Early Childhood Education program at Georgian College (Ontario), and has taught English Language Arts Methods for the Faculty of Education at Brandon University (Manitoba) since 2020. For sixteen years, Martha was an Early Literacy Specialist with the Ontario Early Years system. Through her private practice, Martha also provides structured literacy training for K-8 teachers, consultants, and administrators to help bring evidence-based, reliable, and valid research about beginning reading instruction into practice. She is the creator of [www.LetsGetReadingRight.com](http://www.LetsGetReadingRight.com).

## Education

### UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, VANCOUVER

- Master of Education in Early Childhood Education
- Final Capstone e-Portfolio: <https://marthakovack.wixsite.com/easingtheflow>
- Final average: 92%

### BROCK UNIVERSITY, ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO

- Bachelor of Education (Primary/Junior Qualifications)
- Bachelor of Arts, Child Studies, with Distinction
- Dean's Honours List – 80% average in senior-level courses

## Work Experience

### BRANDON UNIVERSITY, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, BRANDON MANITOBA

*Sessional Instructor for English Language Arts Methods (Early Years - K-4)* Fall 2020, 2021, 2022

- Wrote *English Language Arts Methods (Early Years)* course curriculum content
- Prepared and facilitated lectures via distance learning using Zoom platform
- Completed grade books and learning assessments in a timely manner
- Created a sense of belonging and engagement making synchronous classes more personal
- Inspired, motivated and challenged students to strive for academic excellence and integrity

### ONTARIO INTERNATIONAL DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION, August 2021- present

*Coach for IDA's Structured Literacy Course (K-8 teachers from Toronto & Durham School Boards)*

- Prepared/organized meetings and provided demonstrations of structured literacy activities
- Provided clarification/answers to questions about course content and motivated teachers to try new strategies

### GEORGIAN COLLEGE, BARRIE ON (5 years)

*Sessional Instructor for Language Arts and Student Monitor, Jan 2018 – present*

- Wrote *Language Arts* course curriculum for *Early Childhood Education* program
- Facilitated weekly interactive online classes and group discussions using WebEx/Zoom platforms
- Completed grade books, learning assessments, and exams on a timely basis
- Demonstrated a passion for play-based learning and teaching, and engaging students in the learning process by providing individual attention to students (*Faculty Evaluations available*)

- Completed “Foundations” Post-Secondary Teaching and LOTTR (Learning to Teach Online Remotely): <https://www.georgiancollege.ca/ctlae/faculty-professional-development/multi-part-series-descriptions/#foundations-series-description>

#### **PRIVATE PRACTICE, SOUND READERS, BARRIE, ONTARIO**

*Literacy Specialist (SoundReaders.com) Jan 1997 – Present (25 years)*

- Hired by school boards, teacher federations, literacy organizations, libraries, indigenous communities, and early years programs to develop/facilitate science of reading and structured literacy professional development
- Interviewed, trained and coached volunteer teachers and parents with the *Scottish Rite Learning Centres for Children* to assist them in tutoring children using structured literacy approaches
- Designed and facilitated play-based early & family language/literacy training for teachers and families to assist them in implementing science of reading approaches to learning to read
- Created, produced, and distributed early literacy games and other resources for families and teachers to help them implement evidence-based activities to improve reading achievement
- Assesses and continues to provide dyslexia intervention privately (K-6) using Orton-Gillingham/Structured Literacy approaches to reading instruction (2009-present)
- Created website for teachers to support equal and efficient access to print: <https://www.letsgetreadingright.com/>
- Consulted regularly with psychologists, reading specialists, speech and language pathologists, and leaders within reading organizations and universities to share science of reading information, and to discuss ideas for research into practice in balanced ways

#### **ONTARIO EARLY YEARS - E3 COMMUNITY SERVICES, COLLINGWOOD, ON**

*Early Literacy Specialist, Jan 2002 – March 2018 (16.3 years)*

- Modelled and implemented evidence-informed oral language and literacy activities within schools, childcare centres, resource teacher programs, Ontario Early ON Centres, indigenous communities, college/university courses, libraries, adult learning centres, etc.
- Created and facilitated the **Early Literacy Leaders Initiative (ELLI)** (see <http://marthakovack.wixsite.com/elli>), an innovative “professional learning community that comes together over time with shared interests and passions to engage in the process of collective and collaborative learning” (2013, Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research, p. 18)
- Developed and produced a series of well-respected early learning video clips, booklets, language and literacy provocation play bins, and other resources based on science of reading
- Increased quality of early years professional interactions with children by providing consultations and demonstrations of playful activities based on Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years
- Collaborated with the Ontario Early Years Data Analysis Coordinator to implement the Early Development Instrument (EDI), including co-facilitating training
- Co-authored the Early Literacy Specialist (ELS) Best Practice Guide for the Provincial Association of Early Literacy Specialists
- Developed relationships with community partners as a member of Simcoe County's Early Learning Professional Development Committee, the Early Intervention "Early Screening Matters" committee, the Father Involvement Initiative committee, and the Road to Reading event committee (chair), as well as the Provincial Early Literacy Specialist Best Practices Committee

#### **SIMCOE MUSKOKA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD, SIMCOE COUNTY, ONTARIO**

*Primary School Teacher, Sep 1990 – Sep 1995*

#### **SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD, MIDHURST, ONTARIO**

*Primary School Teacher, Sep 1997 – Jun 1999*

## Qualifications Summary

- Certified Member in Good Standing with the Ontario College of Teachers (1990-present)
- Certified Practical Linguistics Teacher (Specialist: Orton-Gillingham/Multisensory Language and Structured Literacy), Canadian Dyslexia Society (2014-present) under tutelage of Evelyn Reiss, Fellow of the Orton-Gillingham Academy
- Certified Tutor and Senior Mentor in Structured Literacy with the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada Learning Centres for Children (2014-2017)
- Mental Health First Aid Certification with the Mental Health Commission of Canada (2018)
- Hanen Program Certified Trainer: Learning Language and Loving It - Encouraging Language Development in Early Childhood Settings (2013-2016)

## Recent Training

- International *Developmental Language Disorder* (DLD) Research Conference (September 19-21, 2022)
- Right to Read Symposium: Breaking Down Barriers to Education Equity (International Dyslexia Association). (March 25, 2022)
- The Reading League Annual Conference; Bringing the Science of Reading to Light (October 20-21, 2022)
- Recent Advances in Understanding Word-Level Reading Problems: Delving Deeper into Assessment and Intervention full day webinar with Dr. David Kilpatrick (May 18, 2021)
- Sounds-Write Symposium 2021 online conference (May 23-28, 2021)
- Amplify Science of Reading Virtual Symposium 2021 (March 4, 2021)
- Voyager Sopris Learning 2020 Literacy Symposium online conference (June 18, 2020)
- The Reading Teachers Top Ten Tools Course (Summer, 2020) - currently a coach for this program
- LOTTR (Learning Online to Teach Remotely) series training at Georgian College, Barrie ON (2020)
- Mental Health First Aid Certification  
Mental Health Commission of Canada (2 days) (May 2018) Georgian College, Barrie ON
- *Foundations* Post-Secondary Teaching Series  
Centre for Teaching and Learning, Georgian College (2018) Georgian College, Barrie ON
- Supporting International Students  
Centre for Teaching and Learning, Georgian College (May 2018) Georgian College, Barrie ON
- Make the Connection (0-1 and 1-2) Group Leader Training  
(The Psychology Foundation of Canada) (3 days) (June 2017) Toronto ON
- Infant Mental Health Promotion 6th National Institute - Expanding Horizons for the Early Years  
(12 hours) (April 27/28, 2017) Toronto ON
- Kids Have Stress Too! PreK/Kindergarten Program (6 hours) Psychology Foundation of Canada (May 2016)
- Infant Mental Health Community Training Institute (35 hours) and Infant Mental Health Promotion, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto (2015)
- Speech Services Niagara Conferences (11 years, Fall 2003 - 2014)
- We're Stronger Together Early Learning Conferences (Spring, 2012-2017)
- Connecting Language and Mental Health in the Early Years conference with Dr. Chaya Kulkarni, Peterborough ON (May 2014)
- Learning Language and Loving It (Hanen.org) training, Toronto ON (December, 2013)
- Completion of theory and techniques of the Lindamood Phoneme Sequencing® (LiPS®) Program (2012)
- Advanced Morphology with Ron Yoshimoto, M.Ed., M.S.W., F/AOGP, Director of Teacher Training, Department of Education, Hawaii, USA (2012)
- Working Memory, Learning, and Language with Dr. Lisa Archibald, Assistant Professor in the School of Communication Sciences and Disorders at Western University, London, ON (2012)

## Memberships

- Ontario College of Teachers
- The Reading League
- International Dyslexia Association

## Professional Certification

- Member in Good Standing with the Ontario College of Teachers
- Certified Practical Linguistics Teacher (Specialist: Orton-Gillingham/Multisensory Language, and Structured Literacy), Canadian Dyslexia Society (2014-present)
- Certified Tutor and Senior Mentor in Structured Literacy with the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada Learning Centres for Children (2014-2017)

## Professional Experience

- Connected North – Nunavut: Structured Literacy workshop for 47 teachers throughout Nunavut (Feb. 2023)
- Niagara Catholic District School Board: The Science of Reading and Effective Reading Instruction presentation for 300 junior/intermediate/special ed, etc. teachers (October 2022)
- Ontario International Dyslexia Association: Grade One Daily Structured Literacy Schedule 90-minute Block webinar presentation (September 2022): <https://www.idaontario.com/grade-one-daily-structured-literacy-schedule-90-minute-block/>
- Toronto Catholic District School Board: Kindergarten workshop for 60 DECEs (September 2022)
- Toronto Catholic District School Board: Introduction to Structured Literacy 8-hour Course for Consultants (Spring 2022)
- Wellington Catholic School Board: Introduction to Structured Literacy course for consultants (Spring 2022)
- Ontario International Dyslexia Association: Coach for Structured Literacy Courses (2021/22; 2022/23)
- Brandon University: English Language Arts Methods Sessional Instructor at Faculty of Education (Manitoba) (2020-2022)
- Georgian College: English Language Arts Lead Sessional Instructor for the Early Childhood Education program (Barrie/Orillia, ON) (January 2018-present)
- Ottawa Elementary Teachers Federation: Structured Literacy workshop for 500 members (Feb. 2022) (97% of evaluations were 5/5 - available upon request)
- Orton-Gillingham/Structured Literacy Courses for teachers and administrators in private practice. Ongoing facilitation of introductory 8-hour intensive courses in Orton-Gillingham and structured literacy approaches to learning to read (2018-present)
- Georgian College Student Monitor for the Early Childhood Education Program (Barrie/Orillia, ON) (January 2018 - 2020)
- Springwater Libraries (Ontario) staff training in structured literacy (Spring, 2021, Fall, 2022)

- Simcoe County Elementary Teachers Federation: Structured Literacy/Science of Reading presentations (April, August, November 2021)
- Waterloo District Elementary Teachers Federation: Structured Literacy/Science of Reading workshop for 500 DECE and K teachers at the (November 2021)
- LATA BC (Learning Assistance Teachers): Structured Literacy/Science of Reading workshop for 90 educators at the Annual Virtual Conference 2020 (October 2020)
- Simcoe County Ontario Early Years: Early Literacy Specialist  
More than 4 000 workshops for over 20 000 teachers, early learning practitioners, parents (January, 2002 –2018)
- Chatham-Kent Child Care and Early Years  
What is your Superpower? Early Literacy Workshops for early childhood educators (October 4/5, 2019)
- Sevenoaks Academy Private School (Barrie ON): Introduction to Orton-Gillingham Approaches for teachers (January 2019)
- Gan Nitzanim Child Care Centre: Getting Literacy into Play workshop for childcare practitioners (November 2017) Thornhill, ON
- Kitiganik Elementary School, Rapid Lake, Quebec: Multisensory Structured Language workshop for 14 teachers (August 2016)
- Durham Catholic District School Board DECE Local  
Multisensory Structured Language workshop for 30 DECEs (May 2016) Oshawa ON
- Umbrella Child Care School Age Conference  
Getting Literacy Into Play workshop for Early Childhood Practitioners (November 2015) Scarborough ON
- Lambton County Sowing the Seeds for Literacy Conference  
Keynote Speaker for 200 kindergarten teachers, early learning professionals, librarians, and speech-language pathologists: Getting Literacy into Play: Making Every Moment Count (February,2015) Lambton College, Sarnia ON
- E.P.I.C. Private School Professional Development days:  
Keynote Speaker for all staff Phonemic Awareness Training (February, 2015) (September 2015) Toronto ON
- Communicative Disorders Association of Canada (CDAAC)  
Keynote Speaker for Communicative Disorders Assistants at their annual conference Chit Chat with Children - Encouraging Personal Narrative (November, 2014) Toronto, ON
- Grand Erie District School Board, and Brant County Ontario Early Years  
Keynote Speaker for 60 Kindergarten teachers and early learning professionals  
Phonological Awareness and Alphabet Play Brantford ON, (November 2013) (November 2014)
- Durham Region Spring Into Literacy Conference  
Keynote Speaker for 150 kindergarten teachers, early learning educators, librarians, speech-language pathologists: Getting Literacy into Play: Making Every Moment Count (March, 2014) Whitby, ON

- Claremont Private School Conferences, Toronto ON  
Phonemic Awareness Workshops, 100 Teachers and Parents  
(February 2013) (February 2014)
- Kitigan Zibi Kikinamadinan School, Maniwaki, Quebec  
Full-day workshop for 15 K-5 teachers (August 2010)
- LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) Full-day workshop for 25 early learning practitioners, Brampton, ON (December 2010)
- LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) Half-day workshop for 12 early learning practitioners, Mississauga, ON (December 2009)
- Halton District School Board: For the Love of Literacy Conference presentation  
140 K-3 teachers (April 2006) (April 2009) Burlington ON
- International Dyslexia Association's 59th Annual Conference: Seattle, Washington  
30 primary school teachers and tutors, Washington State Convention Center  
(October 2008)
- Maryborough Public School (Moorefield, ON): Workshop for 25 kindergarten parents/teachers (June 2008)
- Monsignor Michael O'Leary Elementary School (Bracebridge, ON): Workshop for 30 primary/junior parents  
(June 5, 2008)
- Simcoe County Early Literacy Conference, Geneva Park Conference Centre  
Workshop for 65 early learning practitioners (May, 2008)
- Hamilton Wentworth 2008 Annual LINC/TESL Spring Conference  
Workshop for 25 English language learner teachers (February 29, 2008)
- Hamilton Wentworth Kindergarten Teachers Association: Workshop for 40 K teachers (November 2007)
- Moose Cree Education Authority, Moose Factory Island, ON: Keynote Speaker for 15 early learning teachers  
(January 2007)
- Oxford County Early Literacy Conference, Woodstock, ON: Keynote Speaker for 120 early learning teachers  
(November 2006)
- Markdale Ontario Early Years Centres, Markdale, ON: 30 Early Learning Practitioners (Apr./06)
- Chatham-Kent Ontario Early Years Centres, Chatham, ON: Keynote Speaker for 80 Early Learning teachers  
(May 2005)
- The Toronto Public Library Keynote Speaker for 150 Reading and Homework Help Tutors  
(November 1999) (February, 2005)
- Muskoka Family Focus Conference, Keynote Speaker for 40 Early Learning Practitioners  
(February 2005) Gravenhurst, ON
- Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools, Workshop for 60 K-3 teachers: (October 2003) Ancaster, ON
- York University, Toronto ON: Guest lecturer for 60 teacher candidate & psychology students  
(February 2000) (October, 2001)
- George R Allen Elementary School, Hamilton ON: Workshop for 40 K-3 teachers (October 2001)
- York Catholic DSB: St. Bernadette's Catholic Elementary School, 20 K-3 teachers (January 2001)
- Simcoe County Children's Aid Society, Barrie ON: 80 foster parents (October 2000) (October 2001)
- Simcoe County District School Board Curriculum '98, '99', '03 Conferences, Collingwood ON  
Workshops for 200 K-3 teachers (April 1998, 1999, 2003)
- Simcoe County District School Board, Midhurst ON  
18 Phonemic Awareness Workshops for 700 K-3 teachers (March – May 1999)
- Simcoe County District School Board, Midhurst, ON  
60 workshops for 750 parents at 30 different schools: Alliston, Barrie, Beeton, Bradford, Collingwood,  
Creemore, Innisfil, Midland, Orillia, Stayner, Tottenham, Wasaga Beach  
(January 1998–December 2001)
- Frontier College Reading Circle Conference, Workshop for 80 Reading Circle facilitators  
(May 1999, April, 2000) Toronto ON
- Andrew Hunter School/Baxter Elementary School, Barrie/Baxter ON  
Implemented peer tutoring program with 500 Students in 27 classes  
(November 1999, 2000)
- Georgian Literacy Collingwood, ON  
4 Workshops for 80 adult tutors (October 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001)