

May Month Connections & Giveaways

Greetings members! Here we are once again, approaching the end of another strange, challenging year. If you were like me, you started off the 2021-22 school year with cautious optimism that surely this year couldn't be any more challenging than the previous school year. Fall of 2021 was okay, and then December hit and COVID cases began increasing, the Delta Variant showed up, and we went back into "Learning at Home" mode once again. The transition back to in-person learning has once again been difficult with masks, restrictions on cohorting, and absenteeism! Yes folks, we have experienced yet another COVID year and the finish line is in our sights. While you can always look back and think about what you could have done differently, I would like you to look back and see what you have accomplished in such a tumultuous year. Give yourselves a pat on the back and permission to focus on looking after yourselves and your own mental health as you take your well-deserved summer break. Please know that your diligence, extra work, and thoughtfulness has not gone unnoticed. As the executive of the NLTA SLP SIC, we often speak of our members in awe with what they are able to accomplish these days. Thank you for your dedication and creativity. And remember, we don't know how our students are feeling and what they have experienced over the last couple of years. Sometimes the best you can do is simply be their safe place.

Last year, the executive voted to provide members with the opportunity to join one of two online PL websites, speechpathology.com or speechtherapy.com. Given the success of this initiative and the uncertainty

that continues around COVID and Public Health Measures, this initiative has been continued for the next school year. We hope you were able to avail of this service!

Finally, in order to celebrate May Month, we had a province-wide meeting on May 19, 2022 with exciting giveaways. The Wheel of Names was created and the following six people won a \$50 gift certificate to their choice of TpT, Indigo or Peachie Speechie: Beth Anne Emmick, Kelly Harris, Judy Lawlor, Barbara Mercer, Sandy Crowley and Christine Champdoizeau. Congratulations to you all. We also introduced another contest, "Spread the Word". For this contest we encouraged you to share about your profession at your schools, via email or on social media. You folks responded so well to this contest. Stay tuned for the winners to be announced via email at the beginning of June as well as a compilation of entries. These ideas may inspire you for next May Month as well.

As you read this newsletter, please know how valued and valuable you are to the students in the Education System in Newfoundland and Labrador!

Sometimes the thing your students need most, right now, has nothing to do with what's on the lesson plan.

Anonymous

PL Grant Funds in Action

2021 Winner – Kelly Harris

Thank you to the SIC for the 2021 grant. Anyone who knows me knows how much I love to win! I used the funds to access many of the items I needed to support the PL I had taken advantage of through speechpathology.com and Marie Stirling's work.

During 2020-21 and into 2022, I had really worked hard at the development of my personal AAC skills. I have spent a lot of time preparing materials to support AAC, coaching parents and teachers and working directly with the students. I used part of the grant to purchase the **AAC Implementation Toolkit** by Speechy Musings. It has been very helpful for me to use as a guide throughout the AAC process. It also had helpful tips for use with parents and staff. It presents the information in a way that is easy to follow.

I had decided that I needed to update my approach to working on Apraxia of Speech. Over the past few years there has been an increase in the number of students with severe speech needs. I used some of the money to purchase a **large anatomical mouth teaching model**. I use playdoh to make the tongue movements more visible. For the students, seeing the giant model has made a big difference, especially with the dreaded vocalic /r/ and lateral lisps.

I invested in a set of **Recordable Buttons**. Some of the students I have been seeing over the past few years are just beginning to understand cause and effect. These buttons have been a fun way to work on this early skill across a number of activities. Some of the speech kids like recording messages on them for fun. I also purchased the "vintage style" memory game – **Simon**. I use the game as a quick reinforcer. Plus, it is helpful in trying to explain the power of Rehearsal and Self-Talk in helping memory. Students LOVE this game!

I have spent considerable time over the last two years of RTL trying to come up with an easier system for IRT teachers and myself to target a

variety of language skills in an easier way in our limited time together. I have developed almost 20 "theme boxes" that contain children's books for the literacy tie in, vocabulary and phonological awareness. I have included various materials for grammar, listening, theme-related games and even reinforcers/manipulatives. To support this initiative, I used some of the funds to purchase **several children's books** to fit the themes. I purchased the **Sentence Shuffle Fun Deck** from Super Duper for grammar practice. I bought two different TPT items for general language, listening and articulation: **Open Ended Mini Object Scenes for Speech and Language** by Anna Dee SLP and **One Page Picture Scenes for Speech and Language Therapy with Mixed Groups** by Stace Crouse. I have printed the scenes related to the themes and have them in the boxes. IRTs love these picture scenes and are using them to tie in writing goals as well. I purchased a **TPT Halloween WH Question with Visuals and Smash Mats** by Anna Dee SLP. This little activity set was worth the money and I have since purchased more. I purchased the **What's Wacky Fun Deck** by Super Duper and added small sets of these into the boxes based on the themes. I purchased **Dry Erase Pockets** so that some materials could be slipped into the sleeves for easy cleaning and to cut down on copying and laminating. I also purchased new stickers for reinforcers and these are in the boxes based on the themes like St. Patrick's Day, spring, ocean, etc.

The last thing I purchased was the **SLP Essentials Bundle** from Speech Therapy Plans. I purchased this in an effort to organize myself. Honestly, this is a work in progress. I expect to set myself up using this over the summer.

Thank you again for the support. I had spent a considerable amount of time trying to improve my practice through various PL sessions over the past several years. The grant money allowed me to purchase the physical things I needed to put what I learned into my daily practice.

Membership News

There are exciting things happening for some of our SIC members. Carol-Ann Dick, Angela Jacque and Allison Stark are all retiring in June. Wow! What an amazing accomplishment! There is so much for you to look forward to in the future, time to do what YOU want to do. Enjoy every second – you deserve it! We wish you the very best in your retirement.

We also have some members who are expecting their first child. Natasha Kapoor and Kimberlyn Cranford will both soon be first-time moms. Natasha is due early June and Kimberlyn in August. Let the learning, growing and fun begin! We know it will be such an amazing time for you both as you welcome your babes into the world. So much adventure awaits!

Professional Learning/Materials Grant

For the fourth year in a row, we are happy to offer a grant to SLP Special Interest Council members. Grant money may be used for professional learning or for the purchase of therapy materials. Please read on to learn how to **apply by June 21, 2022**.

The grant to be awarded is a maximum of \$500. Applications will be reviewed by the SLP SIC executive and eligible applicants will be randomly selected. Please consider the following guidelines:

- *Travel, accommodations and registration will be covered up to \$500; the fund does not cover the cost of meals.*
- *Funds will be awarded when proof of attendance and necessary receipts are received.*

- *Professional development must be in the area of speech, language and literacy, and/or be relevant to school-based speech-language pathologists.*
- *Applicants must agree to provide a short written summary of what they learned during their professional development. This summary will be shared with our members through our newsletter and social media.*
- *Funds must be used within one calendar year of the awarded date.*

Hurry and get your applications in **by June 21** before it's too late. This is an opportunity you won't want to miss!

Go to www.nlta.nl.ca/slp-pdgrant to submit your application.

Good luck to all applicants!