

Current Interest

~ April 2003 ~

Guthrie Clinic Bridges Gap Between Language And Literacy

Meet Jordin, a six year-old client at the Guthrie, Oklahoma, Scottish Rite Clinic. Like so many clients who attend the clinic, Jordin as a preschooler experienced difficulties in acquiring speech and language, which also had a negative effect on his learning to read. Typically, children with speech and language disorders are at risk for reading problems. They don't understand the link between spoken and written language or the knowledge that the sounds we hear can be transformed into symbols we see in the forms of letters, words, and symbols.



Jordin was initially diagnosed with articulation and language problems. Because of that, his reading readiness skills, including phonological awareness, have been closely monitored. In many cases, once a child has demonstrated progress in speech therapy, it is perfectly natural to take them into reading readiness activities. A client's previous work in articulating sounds correctly can then be used as a springboard to talk about sounds as they relate to reading development.

Reading readiness is an integral part of the work the clinic accomplishes with its young clients, and it is crucial for academic growth. Activities foster the child's ability to become adept with sequencing the alphabet as well as to demonstrate flexibility with the sound patterns of our language.

Long ago, Scottish Rite Masons recognized the importance of linking language and literacy together. We are thankful for their insight, which has led to many academic success stories for the young speech and language clients like Jordin.

Reprinted from the *Oklahoma Scottish Rite Mason* (Oct. 2002)