



School Literacy and Culture

Mission:

As one of Rice University's longest-standing educational outreach program, School Literacy and Culture promotes effective teaching through professional development initiatives that emphasize reading and writing, culture, child development, and research.

School Literacy and Culture

- Brings Rice University's "Unconventional Wisdom" to early childhood educators through an approach to literacy that promotes creative thinking and problem solving while addressing early literacy skills.
- Creates and sustains teacher leaders through classroom-based mentoring and monthly seminars that bring together teachers from diverse settings including public, private, and charter schools and Head Start centers.
- Promotes excellence in early education by extrapolating current early literacy research into classroom practice.

SLC programming ranges from single session workshops for teachers of very young children to year-long mentored residencies with elementary school teachers to arts integration seminars with teachers of middle and high school. Our most widely recognized programs are Classroom Storytelling, the Rice Oral and Written Language Lab (the Rice OWL Lab), and the Early Literacy Leadership Academy (ELLA). We also have programs for parents, administrators, and K – 12 students.

More information is available at literacy.rice.edu.

Current Students and Projects:

This year, SLC is working closely with three Community Bridges. The first of the three is Magen Essenstat. Magen is a junior majoring in English and minoring in Poverty, Justice, and Human Capabilities, and Anthropology.

Magen is currently helping in promoting the mission of SLC, especially through her work with their Early



Literacy Leadership Academy (ELLA). She uses her skills from her studies as an English major to compile several reports and complete online research on a variety of topics related to ELLA. Magen took an informal document completed by 40 teachers, collated the data, identified gaps and inconsistencies in the measure, and created a new interactive document that will allow teachers to refine the information for both consistency and tracking. Magen has been very active in determining which final projects will be completed by ELLA teachers for our culminating event in May. This will guide the creation of our summative booklet-style report.



The second fellow, Cassy Gibson is another fellow assigned to SLC this year. Cassy is a junior majoring in English and minoring in Biochemistry and Cell Biology.

Cassy's project is focused on expanding the mission and goals of SLC to a broader audience through multimedia resources. This includes mission-relevant feedback for funders in the form of infographic texts, electronic parent resources that expand the Oral and Written Language Laboratory experience outside the classroom, and expansion of SLC's website's engaging multimedia content for parents, teachers, and funders alike.

The third fellow, Isabel Patten, is the final fellow working with SLC this year. Isabel (Izzy) is a sophomore majoring in Sociology and Policy Studies.

As a School Literacy & Culture Program Intern, Izzy splits her time between the SLC office and the Rice Oral and Written Language Laboratory--also known as the OWL-Lab. While at the OWL-Lab, she assists the room's teacher-leader in order to set up the



classroom and lessons for the day. She also acts out stories, plays, does projects with, and talks to different groups of English-speaking and ESL preschool students as they rotate in and out of the classroom. She also facilitates activities for the parents and family members of the children and is currently working on a pamphlet for prospective OWL-Lab families detailing the lab's parent integration program. Izzy works on this final project at the SLC office, where she also synthesizes research and assists in the day to day activities of the non-profit.

Who should apply?

- Rice students interested in the education of young children (aged 2 to second grade). Developmental psychology and sociology students have enjoyed this type of position in the past.
- Rice students interested in the fields of applied math and statistics or those seeking practice research experience in data analysis. The successful intern candidate should be self-motivated and enjoy making autonomous decisions.
- Rice students will excellent written and oral communication skills who are interested in non-profit work, education, or non-profit management.

Who should not apply?

- This would not be an ideal placement for a student who is hoping to work directly in the Fifth Ward

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