

YOSHIMOTO ORTON-GILLINGHAM DYSLEXIA TRAINING
SPEECH BY
HER EXCELLENCY PROFESSOR THE HONOURABLE KATE WARNER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA, HOBART, TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2020

Good morning.

I begin by paying my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land, the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community, who have survived invasion and dispossession, and who continue to maintain their identity, culture and Indigenous rights.

Thank you Rosie Martin for inviting me to say a few words this morning. I was unable to attend the opening session yesterday due to Dick and I hosting an investiture ceremony at Government House, for people recognised in the Australia Day and Queen's Birthday honours lists. We normally have two very large investitures each year, but Covid-related gathering restrictions meant that this year over the past week we had no less than twelve smaller events.

A number of recipients were recognised for their longstanding devotion to community health and education – which of course are two areas directly related to your own work, through this inaugural Yoshimoto Orton-Gillingham Dyslexia Training week, and through Rosie's Speech Pathology Tasmania, organising body for the event.

I understand that there are some 30 teachers and parents attending, to intensively learn evidence-based skills for teaching literacy to your children and students.

I have a strong personal interest in young people and their education in all its aspects, through my work as Chair of the Advisory Committee of the Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment, a primary purpose of which is that young Tasmanians flourish through the transformative power of learning.

Earlier this month I attended the launch of the Underwood Centre's reports from their Review of Literacy Teaching, Training and Practice in Government Schools which highlighted among many things the need for early, timely and effective intervention in relation to children with learning differences.

After I became Governor, through the Underwood Centre, meeting Rosie Martin and my patronage of Connect 42, I have come to learn much more about literacy and its lack in Tasmania – that so many children fall through the cracks in the education system with the result that we have a functional literacy rate of 47%. There is now a groundswell of support on this island to change this and to strive for 100% literacy. As Rosie has often pointed out, the skills of literacy can be taught to all children and all learners, regardless of how complex their challenges.

I would like to congratulate you all, teachers and parents, for attending this course, and also your instructor-teacher Linda McKillop and to say thank you for accepting the challenge. Thank you Linda for qualifying as a Master Trainer so that you are able to teach others the Yoshimoto Orton-Gillingham approach to teaching reading, writing and spelling.

And on a personal note, thank you Linda for the support you have given to my grandson Ed; my daughter Meg cannot speak highly enough of your wonderful work. Apart from telling me how wonderful you are, Meg said, after explaining there were similar methods derived from OG:

- MSL (multi-sensory structured language) which Linda is teaching is the best;
- ALL teachers should be learning these methods.

It is wonderful that this course is now available here in Tasmania, avoiding the need to go the mainland to benefit from it and so making it more accessible to Tasmanian teachers, teacher assistants and parents.

And thank you too to Rosie, for inspiring so many to embrace the goal of 100% literacy.