

## Learning How to Read: Free Online Materials for Children and Adults

SEPTEMBER 16, 2021 BY MONICA GORDON-PERSHEY



For some children and adults with autism or other special needs, learning how to read can require time, patience, and support. Many caregivers, including parents and family members, teachers, tutors, and speech-language pathologists, can contribute to teaching children and adults to read. One of the questions that caregivers may ask is, “Where can I find good materials for teaching reading and easy, step-by step instructions?”

Two Northeast Ohio educators have responded to that question by creating easy to use, information-rich websites for teaching reading. One educator, Lori Josephson, M.A., LLC, is a reading specialist and learning disabilities expert whose online materials are geared towards parents and teachers helping younger children learn to read. The other educator, Tom Gilbert, is a specialist in working with persons with intellectual disabilities, developmental disabilities (including autism), and multi-handicapping conditions. Tom’s online materials are designed for teens and adults who are embarking on their literacy journeys for the first time or who are returning to the process of learning to read that they began when they were younger.

Lori’s materials are online at [Lorijosephson.com](https://lorijosephson.com). In her 40+year career, she has taught hundreds of children to read and to succeed in school and has provided instruction to teachers at over 500 professional development workshops. Lori’s efforts focus now on her web-based outreach and on being a new grandmother! Her website is packed with teaching materials, informational articles, and links to videos, podcasts, websites, and social media sites. Lori is constantly growing her website. Her blog offers educational tips for parents and teachers, along with explanations about how to make complicated processes seem simpler – not only teaching kids to read but navigating the complexities of schools’ special education processes. She helps families to not only “cope,” but to “thrive,” by offering sincere advice through her “Slow Down, Take Heart” pages and her pledge to respond to everyone who contacts her for information and advice. Lori also moderates the Facebook Group “Science of Reading – What I Should Have Learned in College” that has over 113,000 members. Contact Lori via the links on her website and on Facebook.

Tom Gilbert, M.A., has devoted his career to education and advocacy for persons with special needs, most notably adults with intellectual disabilities. Tom is employed by NCC Solutions, an agency based in North Royalton that serves persons with developmental disabilities by providing group residential homes and day programming. His website, [LiteracyforAnyone.com](https://literacyforanyone.com), is the culmination of his 32 years of experience. He has devoted over 10,000 hours to teaching and tutoring more than 50 individuals during one-to-one reading lessons. Some of Tom’s students started their tutoring sessions without being able to read or with having little previous reading instruction. With his guidance, many have become readers. Tom’s website offers a user-friendly bank of literacy curricular and instructional materials, often designed in a words-and-pictures format. Teachers and readers can start by reading the illustrated sentences and then, as the words are learned, remove some of the pictures so that the learners are reading just the words. Tom’s materials are adaptable to any creative ways that teachers and learners want to use the materials and can be formatted to large print. The site also includes Tom’s blog, demonstration videos, and links to informational articles. Tom welcomes anyone to contact him by email at [thomasgilbert2052@yahoo.com](mailto:thomasgilbert2052@yahoo.com) or by phone at 216-644-6495.

The most important thing to remember is that it is never too late for any child or adult to learn to read or to become a better reader. Learning to read is a life-long process! We are all learning more about reading all the time. Tom Gilbert often says, “I’m a great-grandfather and I am still learning to read!” Here’s to a successful journey for all and happy reading!

[f Share](#) [x Share](#) [in](#) [0](#)

RECEIVE OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

[SIGN UP](#)

RECENT POSTS

[Nolan’s Story](#)

[Why I Care About Speech Therapy](#)

[What’s Your Why?](#)

[Opportunities in Communication](#)

[A Great Definition of Vocation](#)

### ABOUT MONICA GORDON-PERSHEY

Dr. Gordon Pershey is a Professor in the Communication Sciences and Disorders Department at Cleveland State University. She is licensed by the state of Ohio as a speech-language pathologist and holds a Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association.