

Supercharged Storytimes for All

OCLC respectfully requests \$249,000 toward an LB21 project to expand the [Supercharged Storytimes early literacy curriculum](#) and then deploy it nationally by (1) offering a free self-paced online course for all library practitioners to access, (2) training 100 facilitators to lead learning cohorts in their libraries, using the online course, and (3) training up to 20 expert online trainers to deliver the curriculum across 3-6 state and regional systems. As a result, storytime practitioners across the US will know how to intentionally incorporate research-based concepts that promote literacy outcomes in young children.

Project partners include PLA's [Project Outcome](#) team and early childhood literacy expert Saroj Ghoting; the project will also draw on expertise from the [Every Child Ready to Read](#) Oversight Committee, and continuing education coordinators and directors at supporting state libraries, including New York (Karen Balsen) and Minnesota (Jen Nelson), and the Southeast Florida Library Information Network (SEFLIN; Jennifer Pratt).

Statement of Need: Building on Research, Pilots and New Tools

While Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR) prepares library staff to educate parents and caregivers about their role in supporting early literacy, there isn't a widely accessible and sustainable training focused on enhancing storytime practitioners' abilities to plan and implement library storytimes using the most up-to-date research. In 2014, OCLC received IMLS funding to pilot a program based on existing University of Washington iSchool [Project VIEWS2](#)'s research about the development of early literacy concepts in young children through library storytimes. In partnership with the Washington State Library, OCLC piloted Supercharged Storytimes, an online program that strengthened library practitioners' knowledge, skills and confidence with a practical, research-based approach to planning and implementing library storytimes that promote literacy outcomes. The pilot was delivered through WebJunction's learning platform and reached 550 practitioners in six selected states. Since its completion, numerous other state library agencies and regional systems have expressed great interest in offering Supercharged Storytimes to their constituent libraries.

Using the available body of knowledge, the pilot focused on two of eight foundational early literacy concepts (alphabetic knowledge, phonological awareness) developed by VIEWS2. Since the pilot, more material has been developed, and VIEWS2 has worked with Ghoting to align these concepts to complement, but not depend on, ECRR training.¹ Also, concurrent to the pilot, PLA created its Project Outcome evaluation tools, including surveys for early literacy programming. The Supercharged Storytimes pilot curriculum needs to be expanded to fully cover the six other concepts (communication, comprehension, language use, print concepts, vocabulary, writing concepts) and to include instruction on using Project Outcomes tools. Given the interest level in this training from libraries of all sizes, there is a need to expand not just the Supercharged Storytimes curriculum, but the delivery modes as well.

Project Design and Work Plan

This project is designed to meet the need for accessible, affordable and relevant professional development for storytime practitioners. It will expand the Supercharged Storytimes curriculum and develop three new sustainable delivery channels to reach the widest possible practitioner audience.

1. **Expand the Supercharged Storytime curriculum to**
 - a. cover the breadth of all eight early literacy concepts and align with ECRR;

¹ *Supercharged Storytimes: An Early Literacy Planning and Assessment Guide* (K. Campana, J.E. Mills and S. Ghoting, 2016).

- b. introduce PLA Project Outcome program evaluation tools and methods to improve the measurability of the impact of Supercharged Storytimes on children;
 - c. update content, structure and activities for a fully online, instructor-led training using the expanded curriculum; this will be free and downloadable so that it can be adapted and used by other experienced trainers or library training organizations.
2. **Conduct an online train-the-trainer program** to prepare up to 20 experienced online trainers to deliver online or blended-format Supercharged Storytime training using WebJunction or their own learning platform; evaluate curriculum and readiness of trainers via select interviews and survey.
 3. Use the expanded curriculum to **create a free self-paced online course** for practitioners to access anytime, from anywhere. Course will include self-assessment for learners.
 4. **Create and deliver an online facilitator training program** to train 100 library facilitators to lead in-person learning circles/cohorts of storytime practitioners at their libraries using the Supercharged Storytimes self-paced course. Evaluate readiness of facilitators via survey.

National Impact

This project will lead to the following outcomes:

1. *State and regional system trainers and consultants* will be prepared to offer Supercharged Storytimes training statewide or regionally through online or blended formats that can reach libraries of any size or location.
2. *Library staff facilitators* will be prepared to effectively lead local practitioner groups for cohort learning and peer sharing of Supercharged Storytime concepts and methods.
3. *Library staff*, after completing the training, will have enhanced methods to promote early literacy skills in young children through storytimes that are complementary to ECRR, and will be better equipped to measure and articulate the impact of their library storytime programming as it contributes to advancing early literacy in their communities.

Diversity

By working with SEFLIN, which includes the Miami-Dade system, and the NY and MN state libraries, and through the various formats of training delivery, this project will enable thousands of library practitioners to be introduced to the Supercharged Storytimes method. Libraries in both highly urban areas and small and rural communities will be oriented to the early literacy concepts of the Supercharged method. By making the training online and free of charge, libraries in under-resourced communities can easily access Supercharged Storytimes training.

Budget

To realize the project over the period of October 2017–September 2019, OCLC seeks \$249,000 to support salaries and fringe benefits for OCLC staff (Betha Gutsche, Kathleen Gesinger; \$200,000); contracts with Saroj Ghoting and PLA's Emily Plagman (\$27,000); travel to disseminate and promote project tools at a national conference (\$2,000) and indirect costs (\$20,000). OCLC will contribute an additional \$76,000 in cost share to supply the rest of the WebJunction project team and the learning platform (Moodle). Total project costs are \$325,000.

Our project partners and state and regional supporters have enthusiastically joined together on this proposal to support library staff as they learn to intentionally implement research-based methods to improve the effectiveness of their early literacy programs. We are grateful for the opportunity to propose this project, and look forward to your review.