

The Reader

People, Words & Change

September 2025



Adult literacy,
one-on-one.



The Reader is the quarterly newsletter of People, Words & Change. We welcome stories and articles by our learners.

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Feedback on the manner in which PWC provides its services to people with disabilities, and any other services, is encouraged and appreciated.

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Ontario



Power of Words Breakfast 2025



Every year for 16 years, PWC has marked International Literacy Day, September 8th, with the Power of Words Breakfast Event. Over 80 learners, tutors, community partners, supporters, elected officials, and friends of PWC celebrated and mingled with like-minded supporters of literacy. The room was abuzz with people chatting, enjoying a delicious hot breakfast catered by The Newport Restaurant, and checking out the over 60 books to be won in PWC's annual book draw!

We were privileged to have the husband/wife duo of Ben Hoskyn and Sarah Lussier open the event with an original song that Sarah composed during the pandemic titled *Mon ami le fantôme*. Board President, Margaret MacDonald, next talked about some of the struggles and successes of PWC's past year. The always entertaining and full-of-energy Jeff Larocque returned as our emcee.

Next we heard from four of our learners – many of our attendees say that this is the highlight of the event as we are able to put faces, names, and personal stories to what PWC does. Cicilia, Basherah, Feng, and Yacine spoke about the circumstances surrounding their coming to PWC and their experiences in the program. We heard stories of not knowing how to read at all to now reading forms, street signs and understanding emails; we heard stories of gaining confidence to find employment after working on writing and computer skills at PWC; and we heard stories of the personal touch and impact our tutors had on our learners.

The keynote speech was given by Matthew Pearson, Assistant Professor at Carleton University's School of Journalism and Communication. His presentation was timely and impactful. He spoke of the importance of the media in our lives and asked the audience to reflect on how they access news in this day and age. Having media and digital literacy skills are so important in order to discern biases (intentional or unintentional), misinformation, disinformation, and meaning in news stories. Matthew kept the audience interested and didn't just speak to us, but asked us to actively engage and participate in the discussion.

A special thank you to PWC Executive Director Dee Sullivan, the staff at PWC (Karen and Shaniece), and all the volunteers who helped out before, during, and after the event to make things run smoothly!

Our Breakfast would not be possible without the generosity of our Sponsors – their commitment to PWC and literacy in Ottawa is greatly appreciated. Our annual book draw is also made possible by the generosity of many authors and publishers who donated the books. Hats off and "thank you" to you all!



Power of Words Breakfast 2025

Sponsors and Donors

POWER OF WORDS BREAKFAST 2025

We would like to thank our sponsors for their generous support:

CUPE

**Eastern Ontario Training Board, LiUNA!, ROVLN,
Paterson & Company, Character Creative,
Councillor Rawlson King, Dencs Team/CIBC Private Wealth,
Todd Henry RBC Wealth Management/RBC Dominion Securities
Perfect Books, Books on Beechwood, McCay Duff LLP,
Cooperator's Insurance Josée Brisson,
ABFK, MPP Lucille Collard**



Thank you to the publishers and authors who donated to our Book Draw!

Barbara Fradkin

Browntrout Publishing

ECW Press

Greystone Books

HarperCollins Canada

Nimbus Publishing

Penguin Random House Canada

Raincoast Books

Sam Laprade & Caroline Phillips

Steve Burrows

Brenda Chapman

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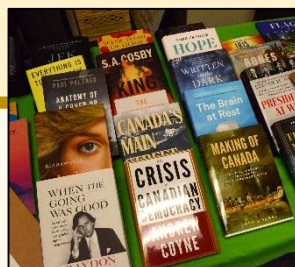
Firefly Books

Hachette Book Group

Lance Valcour



Sutherland House Books



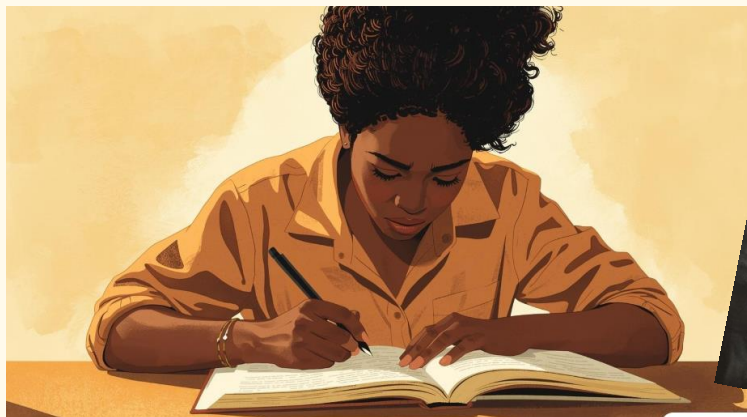
Power of Words Breakfast 2025

Power of Words Breakfast Speech – Cicilia

Hi, my name is Cicilia. This is my story with PWC. When I came to PWC, I did not know how to write and read. I could not understand what my lawyer sent to me. Karen showed me how to use my cell phone to read messages to me and I record myself so that I can send it to my lawyer.

We have been practicing writing and reading. I saw myself changing. I was able to read street signs and fill in forms and a grocery list. I was happy. I took a test and I passed. When I received my certificate, I called my brother and he was so happy for me. He told me he had seen a lot of change and told me, “Don’t give up. Keep going.” His words made me happy.

Everybody sitting here has a dream. We should not give up. Keep going. Thank you to everyone.



Power of Words Breakfast 2025



Power of Words Breakfast Speech - Basherah

Hello everyone, my name is Basherah. I am 49 years old, and I was born in Ottawa. I graduated from Algonquin College in 1998 from the Executive Office Administration three-year program. After college, I gained a lot of office experience and was happy, but I decided to take a different job working from 2001 until 2007 as an internet help desk agent at Convergys Management Corporation. I got married in 2001, and I eventually left my work to stay home with my children in 2007. Fast forward to 2022 when I decided that I needed to upgrade my skills by coming here to PWC in June 2023 and learning the Microsoft Office Suite.

First, I worked on the Beginner and Intermediate Modules where we focused on Microsoft Word. I received a certificate in June of 2024. I was familiar with the Microsoft Office program in the 90's, but a lot has changed since then. Since starting at PWC I've had the opportunity to further expand my knowledge. After getting comfortable with the new changes, I was able to gain valuable skills that helped me in my job today. For example, in Microsoft Word I learned letter writing and how to create posters.

The second Module was Excel. The Excel Modules gave me experience in creating spreadsheets comfortably and more effectively carrying out data organization, calculation, and reporting.

The third Module, which was PowerPoint, proved to be helpful because it improved my presentation skills. I am also more confident at speaking in public and have the ability to relay information clearly using slides and images.

The last Module was the Job Skills Module. This unit was helpful because I am now able to understand how job searches work online. With that module, I noticed that I need to practice my typing skills, and here at PWC they have that available to whomever would like to upgrade their typing skills. It has helped me because I work in an office where there is a lot of typing.

I am grateful for the opportunity that PWC has given me because I learned the skills that help me be more efficient at my workplace. I was out of school for a little while, but once I came here and got my foot in the door, it was smooth sailing. I recommend this program to anyone that needs to upgrade their computer skills.

Thank you for listening.

Power of Words Breakfast 2025

Power of Words Breakfast Speech - Feng

Good morning, everyone. I'd like to start by thanking PWC for having me here. You know, when Karen first asked me to do a presentation, I said no because public speaking is pretty scary. But the second time, Karen sent me what I thought was just a breakfast invite. I said yes, thinking I was just coming to eat—and surprise—here I am speaking! So the second time is the charm, and I'm really glad it works out this way."

"When I immigrated to Canada about ten years ago, I feel nervous because everything is new. I have a lot to learn—not just the language, but how to truly feel at home. PWC is the place where I learn not only English, but also confidence. They remind me to keep trying—just like Karen did with me—and step by step, I find my voice.

I also want to highlight the amazing volunteers who are my teachers. They don't just help me with English—they teach me about local life, how to integrate, and how to feel that I belong here. It's not only language lessons; it's life lessons. And that makes a huge difference for me.

So, to any newcomers who feel nervous, I want to say: keep going, keep trying, and find people who support you. Thank you to PWC for being that support for me, and thank you all for listening today.

Power of Words Breakfast Speech - Yacine

I'm truly honoured to stand here today and express my deepest gratitude to PWC and to my incredible tutor, Nadia.

When I first arrived in Canada just a few months ago, everything was new — the culture, the language, and the professional environment. I knew I wanted to work in customer service, but I also knew I needed to improve my English skills to feel confident and capable in the workplace. Thanks to PWC, I was able to do more than that. Nadia, your patience, encouragement, and dedication made a huge difference in my journey. You helped me strengthen my reading and writing skills, and more importantly, you helped me believe in myself.

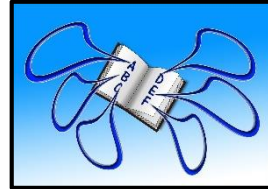
I now have a full-time job — a goal I once thought would take much longer to achieve. This experience has not only helped me overcome my weaknesses, but it has also given me the confidence to take initiative without fear. I feel empowered, and I'm excited for what's ahead.

Thank you, PWC, for creating such a welcoming and supportive space for newcomers. And thank you, Nadia, for being such a wonderful guide. I will carry everything I've learned with me as I continue to grow in my career and in my new life here in Canada.

PWC Learners Write

When I was a child, my mom and I would travel to Egypt to meet our cousins. One of my cousins only spoke German, and so I found it hard to communicate with her. In order to break the language barrier, I thought it would be a great idea to enrol in a German course at university. Learning German has equipped me to efficiently communicate with my cousin. Learning another language gives you the opportunity to travel, find a job, and meet new people.

-Miriam



Johan shares some of his thoughts on Spring.

SPRING IS SPRUNG

The reasons why:

1. Buds are on the trees.
2. More birds are singing.
3. The air is warmer.
4. The days are lengthening.
5. The National Hockey League playoffs are on.

THE NATIONAL HOCKEY LEAGUE PLAYOFFS?

Yes. You know: *nail-biting, floor-pounding, ceiling-contacting, hair-raising, hair-splitting, hair-pulling, edge-of-seat-sitting, prayer-producing* (This includes those who are neither pious nor devout.), *nerve-wracking, friendship-ending, friendship-starting...*

Is that all to Spring? Not at all. There is also:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Barbeques | <i>Mowing the lawn</i> |
| • Picnics | <i>Digging up Dandelions</i> |
| • Hiking | <i>Digging up weeds</i> |
| • Walks in the park | <i>Washing the automobile</i> |



PWC Learners Write

Carole wrote a descriptive paragraph about this picture.



The Lush Garden

This lush garden is situated in the heart of Ottawa's Capital in the Experimental Farm. It is so amazing. Walking along the narrow cobbled pathway, you can see all kinds of different flowers of all colours: red, yellow, blue, orange, white, and all kinds of bushes. You can walk along the pathway and smell the wonderful aroma. You will also see the annual flowers, like petunias that are all kinds of colours. The bushes have been trimmed to look very artistic.

This walk is very therapeutic and refreshing. It's worth going there at least once in the summer months.

-Carole

PWC Computer Lab Learners Create

Formatting Practice

Omasan and Walid practice using bold and italics, alignment, changing font colour, size, and style, and creating numbered and bulleted lists.

Happy birthday

How are you doing today? Hope your day is fine and perfect. Just want to check up on you.

1 I am up

2 who is up

3 he is up

4 am I to go up

- Stay alive
- Stay alert
- Stay in doors
- Stay in the car

WELCOME HOME

-OMASAN 4/9/2025



Come back after holiday

Today I came back after 3 weeks of holiday.

My name is Walid.

Living in Ottawa.

I am happy to continue my training class in computer.

I will start today Exercise 15 Creative Writing.

- I will use the **Bold letter**
- I will use **one font color**
- Title centered
- Underline
- Italics

Walid

Date 07 August 2025

Worksheet: Fall Verbs



Complete the sentences with the correct form of the following fall verbs. You might have to add "s" or change it to the past tense.



harvest – fall– hibernate– take– wear –
wear– travel– spend– celebrate– jump

1. In autumn, the leaves _____ from the trees, creating colourful carpets on the ground.
2. After the parents raked the leaves, their children _____ into the pile of leaves and had a great time playing in them.
3. Last weekend, the farmer _____ ripe apples, pumpkins, and other crops from his field.
4. People _____ warm sweaters and scarves to stay cozy in the cooler weather.
5. Hallowe'en is a day when kids _____ costumes and go trick-or-treating for candy.
6. Some animals _____ for the winter, while others gather food to prepare for the cold months.
7. Mary loves nature, so she _____ long walks in the woods to enjoy the fall colours.
8. Families _____ Thanksgiving together, sharing a delicious meal and expressing gratitude.
9. Every fall, John _____ to the countryside to admire the changing colours of the leaves.
10. As the days get shorter, we _____ more time indoors, sipping hot cocoa by the fireplace.

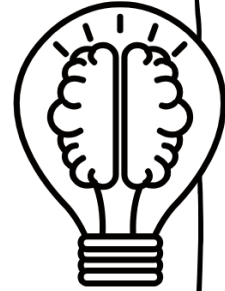


Grammar and Spelling Corner

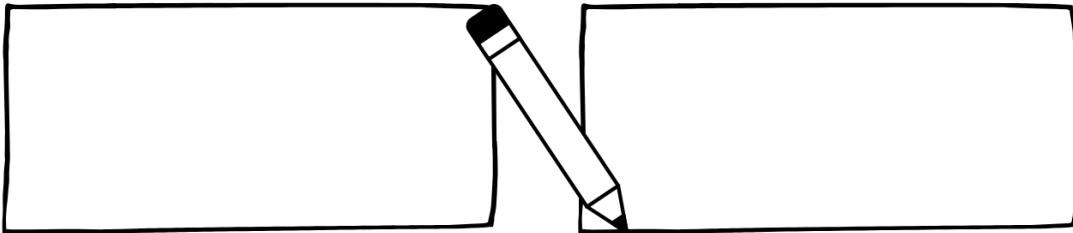
SW

Words

Instructions: Complete a brainstorm of words that start with 'sw'



Instructions: Draw two pictures of words that start with 'sw':



Instructions: Write 3 sentences using words that starts with 'sw':

Instructions: Fill in the missing vowels for these 'sw' words:

sw _ m



sw _ ng



sw _ _ p



sw _ n



sw _ pe



sw _ _ t

Community Events

We share a space with Serenity Renewal for Families at Heartwood House and we'd like to share an upcoming fundraiser they are having. One of their Board Chairs, in his earlier years, sang opera and after retiring, he took a course in cabaret. He has performed his show in Mexico, will be doing two nights in New York in September, and then presenting in the Sanctuary in Heartwood House on October 5th. Doors open at 2:00, performance at 2:30 p.m.

If interested you can donate through Serenity Renewal's website <https://www.serenityrenewal.ca/help/donate/> or call 613-784-9754.

 **Serenity Renewal
for Families**

Minimum Suggested
Donation: \$50

ROBERT RYAN AND MICHAEL FERRERI IN
SONGS FROM
The Heart

Directed by Sue Matsuki

Having made a big splash in Puerto Vallarta Mexico and having just made his NYC debut at the iconic Don't Tell Mama cabaret theater, Robert is thrilled to bring his show to his hometown of Ottawa. Robert has a special place in his heart for Serenity Renewal for Families having served on the board for many years. Robert will be accompanied on the piano by the renowned international music director Michael Ferreri. The show is a delightful blend of poignant ballads, tender folk songs and unexpected Broadway gems.

"With his new show "Songs from the Heart" the fourth wall of Robert's heart has crumbled to dust. He now brings his heart to the stage and fearlessly shares it with us and what a gallant heart it is."
Marcia Blondin, Vallarta Mirror

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS TODAY
www.serenityrenewal.ca
Heartwood House, 404 MacArthur Avenue, Ottawa, ON
Off-site street parking available

Fall Recipe

Chicken Cheese Soup

Prep: 5 min.

Cook: 10 min.

Total: 15 min.

Servings: 4



Ingredients:

- 4 cups shredded, cooked chicken breast
- 3-1/2 cups water
- 2 cans (10-3/4 ounces each) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- 1 package (16 ounces) frozen mixed vegetables, thawed
- 2 diced potatoes
- 2/3 cup shredded or diced cheese
- Minced chives, optional

Directions:

- In a large pot, combine the first 5 ingredients.
- Bring to a boil.
- Reduce heat; cover and simmer until vegetables are tender, about 10-12 minutes.
- Stir in cheese (do not boil).
- If desired, top with minced fresh chives.



- adapted from: <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/cheese-chicken-soup/>

Opposites Word Search

1. Match the opposite words.
2. Find all of the words in the puzzle. The words can be horizontal from left to right, up or down, or diagonal. Then, try to write sentences using the words.

Answers are....

Opposites Word Search

Match the opposite words and then find all of the words in the grid below.



bad	O	O	low
bottom	O	O	hot
cold	O	O	good
dry	O	O	top
fast	O	O	slow
happy	O	O	stand
high	O	O	sad
long	O	O	wrong
right	O	O	wet
sit	O	O	short



Fall Word Scramble



Fall Word Scramble



Unscramble the following fall / autumn words

1. TRSEE
2. NDIWY
3. JCKEAT
4. ACRON
5. LASEVE
6. PESPAL
7. BAKETS
8. KAGGINHNSVIT
9. PIUMKPN
10. HRAVETS
11. SRRQELUI

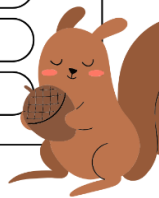


Answers

Fall Word Scramble

ANSWERS

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. TRSEE | TREES |
| 2. NDIWY | WINDY |
| 3. JCKEAT | JACKET |
| 4. ACRON | ACORN |
| 5. LASEVE | LEAVES |
| 6. PESPAL | APPLES |
| 7. BAKETS | BASKET |
| 8. KAGGINHNSVIT | THANKSGIVING |
| 9. PIUMKPN | PUMPKIN |
| 10. HRAVETS | HARVEST |
| 11. SRRQELUI | SQUIRREL |



- | | |
|----------|---------|
| bad O | O low |
| bottom O | O hot |
| cold O | O good |
| dry O | O top |
| fast O | O slow |
| happy O | O stand |
| high O | O sad |
| long O | O wrong |
| right O | O wet |
| sit O | O short |



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