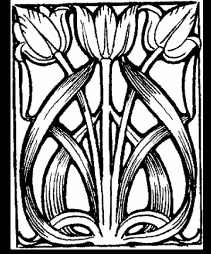


Literacy Link

Spring 2009



Abington Free Library Adult Literacy Program

1030 Old York Road * Abington, PA 19001 * 215 885 5183 * ablit1@yahoo.com

Program Update

Many thanks for all the individual good wishes for the New Year. A special thanks to all the tutors: it is through your efforts that our program is possible and successful. We are doing well, but we can always use more tutors (Tell your friends and relatives!) I know most of you realize what a tremendous help you offer our students. Once again, on behalf of all our students, many thanks to you, our tutors, for all your efforts to maintain and improve our

program. We will continue to support you with training opportunities offered at the Library and in the area. Should you have any questions regarding our program please stop by, e-mail, or call. You can also stop by to check out our collection of ESL, reading, and GED materials. We hope to see you at our meetings and workshops, a listing of which you can find below. As always, take out your calendars and mark the dates.

Upcoming Events

Monday March 23, and Wednesday, March 25 – both 6:30-8:45 pm Spring Tutor Training. Both nights mandatory for aspiring tutors! Welcome to all new and experienced volunteers.

Wednesday, June 10, 7:00 -8:45p.m.:
Reception honoring students and tutors

Tutor Support Meetings on:

Monday, February 9 2:00-4:00p.m.

Wednesday, March 4 2:00-4:00p.m.

Thursday, April 30 7:00-9:00p.m.

Tuesday, May 26 3:00-5:00p.m.

The next *Literacy Link* will come out in July 2009.

Deadline for submissions: June 15.



Ongoing Activities



For all information, please call 215 885 5183 or e-mail: ablit1@yahoo.com

Conversation Please! - On Monday evenings at 7:15, Beverly Willett, Doranne Smith and Donna Hower lead an ESL [English as a Second Language] class for non-native speakers of English at the library. Many countries are represented and only English is spoken.

Conversation Please! - The daytime class meets Tuesday mornings, 10:30 till noon, under the supervision of three volunteer teachers. Ann Gaugler, Edis Hall, and Sara Chernoff welcome ESL students and help them feel comfortable while they learn the language and culture of America.

Idioms and Usage in Conversation - A relatively new class for intermediate and upper-level ESL students who are in need of extra help with idiom, grammar, and conversation. The class meets Wednesdays from 1:30-3:30pm. Paul Sude and Stephen and Judi Rosen lead this class. Individual instruction is available when needed.

Adult Literacy Advisory Board - Representatives of Abington Free Library, Abington Memorial Hospital, Eastern Center for Art and Technology, Penn State Abington, Abington Township Schools and Rydal Park Retirement Community comprise this committee. Library representatives are Nancy Hammeke Marshall, Doranne Smith and Rob Naborn.

Assessment Committee - Barbara Cooperberg, Lois Bachman, Marcia Klafter, Marcia Jacoby and Rob Naborn oversee procedures for the TABE, BEST, and BEST Plus tests. Test outcomes are analyzed and reported. These standardized tests are a requirement for our program by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Family Literacy - Family Literacy Committee members Edith Lane and Rena Spratt meet one morning a week, servicing two Head Start programs in Abington.

GED Advisory - Lois Bachman, GED advisor, is available to answer GED questions.

Literacy Live - A talented group of performers led by Geri Tyler, eager to spread the literacy word via a live, script-in-hand performance at your club, service organization, school, church or synagogue. What does it take to be a volunteer, how does a student feel about needing help, how can we help as tutors? Our group is talented and inspirational. Please volunteer your talents or inquire about a performance.

Master Tutors - Three Master Tutors (Lois Bachman, Marcia Klafter, and Barbara Cooperberg) are available to answer your questions regarding students, programs, materials, testing, and all literacy matters. Please utilize this great resource for any special needs.

Program Improvement Team - Lois Bachman, Selma Dafilou, Arlene Franco, Marcia Klafter, Marcia Jacoby, and Rob Naborn work together toward program improvement: how to serve our tutors and students better.

Technology Committee (Learning Center) - Software, VCR videos, CDs, and audio cassettes are all available in the Literacy Office. Marcia Jacoby, Elaine Lauff, and Rob Naborn are ready to help.

Tutor Support Committee - A dedicated group of volunteers helps organize meetings, special events, and program information.



Workplace - Rydal Park Retirement Community is the site of a Tuesday afternoon class for employees who need literacy help, led by a team of three: Doranne Smith, Peg Cheney and Ingrid Rivel.

Tulips



Some freshly picked tulips to say “Thank you” to many of the people helping me make the program a success. Please come admire the real plastic tulips in the office.

- Rob Naborn



Tulips – to all the staff of the Abington Free Library staff, for their unwavering help.

Tulips – to all the tutors for their continued efforts.

Tulips – to Marcia Jacoby and Elaine Lauff for entering all the data and for their continued help crunching all the numbers.

Tulips – to Marcia Klafter for her *Tutoring Tidbits*.

Tulips – to Edith Lane and Rena Spratt for their dedication to the *Head Start* Program.

Tulips – to Nancy Hammeke Marshall for supporting our program

Tulips – to Doranne Smith, Peg Cheney, and Ingrid Rivel, for persisting and reinvigorating our Rydal Park program.

Tulips – to our Master Tutors, Lois Bachman, Marcia Klafter, and Barbara Cooperberg.

Tulips – to Lois Bachman for her test scoring and uplifting conversation whenever she stops by.

Tulips – to Karen Burnham for her on-going help, especially in graphic design.

Tulips – to Paul Sude, and Judi and Stephen Rosen, for setting up and continuing our new upper-level ESL class, *Idioms and Grammar in Conversation*.

Tulips – to Dimitra Seiler for answering my “office” questions.

Tulips – to our Tutor Support Committee for making the phone calls about important literacy news.

Tulips – to the tutors of “*Conversation, Please!*”: Beverly Willett, Doranne Smith, and Donna Hower on Monday evenings, and Ann Gaugler, Edis Hall, and Sara Chernoff on Tuesday mornings.

Please ...

- Call the Library’s main number, 885-5180, for information on library closings **during inclement weather and/or national holidays**. Inform your student of cancellations ASAP.
- Sign out all materials in the maroon sign-out book on the office desk under the first letter of your last name. When returned, cross out the entry.
- Call or e-mail us with any news, changes, goals reached, problems and questions.
- Sign in at the circulation desk when you and your student meet, for the Library’s statistics.
- Give us your student progress report sheets for program data, hours, and outcomes.



...and keep those receipts coming!

Some activities of our Literacy Program are made possible by the financial help from two area supermarkets but involve some cooperation from you. It does not cost you anything, and yes, since my request in the winter 2008 issue of the *Literacy Link*, the donations have gone up (**many thanks!**):

ACME donates money to our program based on receipts turned in at the Library. If you put your **Jenkintown ACME** receipts in the box marked “ACME” at the Circulation Desk, near the entrance, the Library takes care of the rest.



Through Genuardi’s donating is even easier: the purchases by everyone who has signed up for eScrip are automatically added up. If you would like to help us this way, please follow the link to the eScrip information (also on the Library’s homepage):

<http://abg.mclinc.org/donate/index.htm#escrip>.



Tutoring Tidbits: Use Those Teachable Moments

Over the years, my reading and ESL students have provided me with many teachable moments. Their conversations, stories and life events have become springboards for my devising impromptu lessons to introduce new reading and spoken vocabulary and practice correct grammar, reading fluency, reading accuracy, and comprehension. Many times, these lessons have had great personal relevancy since they had authentic connections to their lives. Some examples:

Conversations centered around their own or family member's medical issues: I've used some of the documents/materials they received in the doctor's office or hospital as reading materials, thereby introducing new words. Asking focus questions helped to increase their comprehension of the text. For ESL students, their health concerns have led me to teach the names of body parts and words for common health problems: vocabulary needed when trying to accurately communicate with the medical profession.

Conversations about their involvement in their places of worship: After talking about their Sunday commitments to their churches and attendance at

Bible study classes, it was often mentioned that they couldn't read the Bible passages of the week. I've used the Old and New Testament texts to prepare them for the next week's reading. Again, we practice new sight words and practice accuracy and fluency in oral reading of the passages. What a sense of power they felt when, in the following week, they could proudly participate without the fear of disclosing their reading problems!

Conversations about what happened to them and their families during the week: While relating their stories they often made grammatical errors, misused words and used certain words over and over again instead of synonyms due to somewhat limited vocabularies. I discretely made notes and designed short lessons. Two examples: (1) A student used the word "guy" again and again while telling me about his week at work so we spent time on nouns that could be appropriately substituted, we used these in new sentences for reinforcing practice. (2) A student's upcoming job interview led me to take a list of common job interview questions, found on the Internet, and used these in role play situations, teaching and practicing new vocabulary and grammar structures when needed.

- Marcia Klafter

ESL Teaching Tip #3: Pronunciation and the Simple Past

When students learn the pronunciation of regular forms of verbs in the *Simple Past*, they often first have to learn to add "-ed" to the end of the root of the verb. No problem, right? Wrong! The problem is: there often is a difference between spelling and sound, and students typically learn that the "-ed" ending simply adds another syllable to the word. Result: in order to form the simple past, they *always* add another syllable to the base form of the verb. For example, "walked" is erroneously pronounced "walk/id/" instead of "walk/t/." Adding a syllable with the "-ed" ending is only necessary when the last sound (not the last spelled

letter) is a /t/ or a /d/, for example, "ended," "wanted," or "needed." The last sound of these words are /t/ or /d/. The last sound for the words "decide" and "need" is /d/. These two sounds are the only ones that require an extra syllable when -ed is added. (Extra tip: The webpage http://www.stuff.co.uk/calcul_nd.htm enables you to click on a phonetic symbol to hear the corresponding sound.)



Do you have an ESL teaching tip? Please share it with us.

- Rob Naborn