

Tutor Talk

March 2010

Racine Literacy Council

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LIFE'S VOYAGES, VOLUME 8

Is your student new to the RLC tutoring program or are you both "regulars" here? In any case, please encourage your student to submit a story for Life's Voyages, Volume 8, RLC's annual publication of student writings. This book gives every student the opportunity to share his/her thoughts with others. We also encourage students to submit artwork for the cover.

We know that RLC students are at a variety of levels in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding, but they all have something worthwhile to say. Stories need not be long. Tutors can use techniques such as Language Experience Writing or the traditional five-step writing process to help each student produce a selection of which he/she can be proud. We encourage every tutor to work with his/her student on this exciting project. Finished stories should be submitted to the education coordinators by May 6. The stories will be compiled and put into the book. The target date for our publishing party is June 2010.

You'll find copies of the previous volumes of Life's Voyages in the library. Many teams use this book as one of their readers. Watch for the helpful handout packets in the RLC library.

THANK YOU

An ESL tutor generously donated a copy of The New World Spanish/English-English/Spanish Dictionary for each tutoring room. This comprehensive dictionary will help you and your learner select the correct word in each language. It doesn't just translate the word, it gives the part of speech and separates various meanings according to context. There are appendices, in both English and Spanish that includes information on the alphabet, pronunciation, punctuation & capitalization, syllabification, parts of speech, prefixes, suffixes, and geographical names.

There is a CLASSROOM copy in each tutoring room. Please do not remove the dictionary from its designated classroom.

RLC is grateful for this generous gift. ¡Gracias!

TUTORS NEEDED

Do you enjoy tutoring? Are you aware that the positive influence you have on your learner will last a lifetime? Do you know someone that would enjoy tutoring as well? Many of the adults who come to RLC for services are specifically interested in working one-on-one with a tutor ... and we have many adults waiting for a tutor. Please encourage your friends to come to an information meeting, or, better yet, attend with them. The next tutor training workshop is scheduled for Monday and Wednesday evenings beginning April 12. Information meetings, the prerequisite to taking the workshop, are scheduled for Tuesday, March 23, 6:30 – 7:30 at the Starbucks on Washington Ave., Wednesday, March 24, 6:00 – 7:00 and Wednesday, March 31, 12:00 – 1:00 at RLC. Information meetings in western Racine County will be held on Thursday, March 25, 1:00 at the Union Grove Library, 2:15 at the Burlington Library, and 3:30 at the Waterford Library.

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Tutors are also needed to serve on the Recruitment Committee. If you'd like to help with tutor recruitment, please contact Diane or Joyce, and Rosa Flegel will contact you. Thanks!



COME ONE, COME ALL TO CELTIC NIGHT CONCERT & DINNER! FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2010

Enjoy a delightful evening and support the RLC program at the same time! This year's event will be at the Woman's Club of Racine right next door to RLC. Advanced tickets for the concert & dinner are \$35 and for the concert only are \$20. (Concert tickets are \$25 at the door.) Doors open at 5:15 p.m. and the concert starts at 7:00 p.m.

Invite your friends to a wonderful evening of music, food, and fun!

Tickets are available at RLC or call 632-9495.

2010 CENSUS

In March 2010 every household in the U.S. and Puerto Rico will receive a copy of the Census 2010 form. There are only 10 questions to be completed by the head of household, plus questions about each individual living at that address.

Please encourage your learner to complete the census form and return it. "Federal law requires everyone to participate." (If they do, be sure to report it as a MILESTONE on the monthly calendar you submit to RLC.) The information gathered is confidential and by law cannot be shared with other agencies such as Immigration.

RLC is a census Assistance Center and will host a census worker from March 19-April 17 on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. - noon and 5:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m. S/he will answer any questions you or you learner may have.

The data provided by the census "is used to determine how many seats in the U.S. House of Representatives each state gets, and for redistricting efforts at all levels." It also affects how more than \$400 billion in "federal funding is given to local communities for transportation, public health and other vital social programs, such as English-language education and job training." (from: www.fillinourfuture.org/census).

For more information, please visit www.2010census.gov. This is the official website of the census and provides all the information you might need to work with your learner. Of special interest are the sections [WHY IT'S IMPORTANT](#), and [PROTECTING YOUR ANSWERS](#).

If your learner is a member of a minority group or lives in a "non-traditional housing" setting, see <http://www.civilrights.org/census/census-resources/> or is a Spanish speaker, see www.yaeshora.info and go to [¡HAGASE CONTAR!](#)

RLC COMPUTER UPDATE

Have you noticed the changes in the Resource Room at RLC? The big bulky old PCs are gone! In their place are three new sleek black PC's. All can be used for the networked version of [Rosetta Stone](#) and internet searching. PC#1 also offers [ABC Pronunicary](#) and PC#3 offers [Aztec](#).

Unfortunately there are some disadvantages to upgrading. Some of the older software programs will not work on the new computers. Neither the OMTI Reading Program nor the Language Tune-Up Kit will run on the new computers. An upgrade is available for the Language Tune-Up Kit. We have placed it on our wish list. We still have to test some of the other software and will update you on changes and new developments.

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND "LEARNING TO ACHIEVE" WORKSHOP FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 2010

Attention all tutors, especially those who have a basic literacy student! You are encouraged to attend a "Learning to Achieve" workshop on Friday, March 26, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Next Door Foundation, 2545 N. 29th St., Milwaukee. RLC will pay your \$15 registration fee.

The National Institute for Literacy has designed this training to replace the Bridges to Practice training. (We use Bridges to Practice as the basis for the LD segment of the Tutor Training workshop.) This program differs from Bridges to Practice in that it is based on the most current research on learning disabilities, addresses new topics, provides a standard set of materials, and offers opportunities to practice training techniques.

Trainers for the day are Layla Coleman and Georgia Weier of Wisconsin Literacy, Inc. They bring a wealth of knowledge in working with those with learning disabilities, including being trained in the Orton-Gillingham method.

Please go to www.lcswi.org to print the registration form. Those interested in attending must pre-register by March 18 and go through an on-line Accommodations Course prior to attending.

This workshop will provide a wealth of information that you can use with your basic literacy student. You may register directly and bring a copy of your completed registration to RLC, or talk with Diane or Joyce.

If you have specific questions about the workshop, contact Susan Nemetz at 414-297-6817 or Nemetzs@matc.edu.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 12—Celtic Night for Literacy

March 14—Daylight Savings Time; set your clocks ahead one hour

April 12, 14, 19, 21, 28—Tutor Training

May 6—[Life's Voyages 8](#) stories due

Sept. 30—Volunteer Recognition Event

HEALTH LITERACY IN-SERVICE

By Pat Taylor Roach, RLC Tutor

Marsha Connet, RLC Health Literacy Coordinator and Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Consultant for Wisconsin Literacy, presented a health literacy i-service on February 24 and 25 at RLC for tutors.

The seminar specifically focused on H1N1 education and prevention and suggested ways to teach this to our students. In addition, it was suggested that lessons on other health related topics be kept relevant to the learner. This could be accomplished by working with actual forms from hospitals or doctors offices, medication bottles with dispensing information, city and area maps indicating the location of medical professionals, or a “field trip” to a pharmacy. A tutor might also pick up free brochures from doctors’ offices and hospitals and bring them to their tutoring session. They are useful for both discussion and reading practice.

A classroom copy of the “ASK ME 3” DVD will soon be available in the RLC library. It will play on the three new computers in the Resource Room. It reviews the three important questions to ask a healthcare professional: 1) What is my main problem? 2) What do I need to do? and 3) Why is it important for me to do this?

ESL students should be made aware that interpreters are available at most hospitals and that, if necessary, they should take advantage of this service. Producing and practicing dialogs about health is beneficial to ESL students. In addition, “Project Shine” provides additional information to aid elderly immigrants and refugees through language, literacy and citizenship tutoring. You can Google “Project Shine” on any RLC computer since they all connect to the internet.

Improving your learner’s health literacy was stressed as one of the most critical components to healthy outcomes. A person who can not communicate effectively with healthcare professionals (dentists, doctors, pharmacists or nurses) carries a higher mortality risk than someone who can.

CHARTING A STUDENT’S TIME SPENT READING AND WRITING IN ENGLISH

By Sandy Riekoff, RLC Tutor and Board Member

I’ve been a tutor for over a year and a half. My student, Angela, moved to the U.S. from Mexico about 18 years’ ago. Her progress in learning the English language has been a slow climb. I know a crucial part of learning any new skill is to practice, practice, practice. That lack of practice is why I’m not the virtuoso pianist or ace tennis player that I envisioned myself to be or so I’ve told myself over the years.

Angela’s world of family, friends, and work is one in which English need not be spoken much. So, I have wanted to encourage Angela to practice English more while she is learning skills through our tutoring sessions. *My Weekly English Minutes* chart was created to help her track on a weekly basis (It starts on Thursday, since we meet on Wednesday) the times and situations in which she spends speaking, reading, and writing in English.

Although we have just recently begun using this chart, Angela has been very enthusiastic. It has created more of a desire to practice, as she daily records her minutes, seeing them add up as the week progresses. She thanked me for providing this tool for her. It has become a talking point for us in our sessions. As it chronicles her week, we will discuss the specifics of some of her entries.

I recommend trying out this chart (see page 4) or customizing it to fit your own tutoring situation. It might provide a help to encourage your student to practice English more, which could result in more proficient English skills.



Accredited Program
of ProLiteracy

RLC REACCREDITED BY PROLITERACY

RLC is very proud to have been reaccredited by ProLiteracy, the national umbrella organization for Literacy Councils. Accreditation involves meeting a set of 16 standards involving agency management and program activities. The email from the accreditation committee stated, “The members were extremely impressed with your organization and we are proud to have your affiliate as a leader in our network. Please pass along my congratulations to all of the people in your organization who have contributed to this accomplishment.”

ProLiteracy’s Accreditation provides literacy programs with a comprehensive process for: 1) conducting an organizational self-assessment; 2) developing program improvement plans; and 3) demonstrating that their organization meets the highest standards for governance, program management, program operations, and volunteer development.

Your dedicated work at RLC was essential to our receiving this honor. Thank you!

Days of the week	Minutes SPEAKING in English	Minutes READING in English	Minutes WRITING English
Thursday	Situation(s) _____	I read _____	I wrote _____
Friday	Situation(s) _____	I read _____	I wrote _____
Saturday	Situation(s) _____	I read _____	I wrote _____
Sunday	Situation(s) _____	I read _____	I wrote _____
Monday	Situation(s) _____	I read _____	I wrote _____
Tuesday	Situation(s) _____	I read _____	I wrote _____
Wednesday	Situation(s) _____	I read _____	I wrote _____
TOTAL MINUTES FOR THE WEEK	SPEAKING _____	READING _____	WRITING _____