



TUTOR IN TOUCH

July 2012

IN THIS ISSUE:
Survey Results
Tutoring Using Technology
Setting Goals With Learners
Goals Worksheet
Literacy Navigator
Need for Tutors

Survey Results

Dear Tutors,

Several months ago many of you completed a survey conducted by one of our volunteers as part of a class project at Roberts Wesleyan College. The survey gathered opinions from many of you who are currently volunteering as well as individuals who have left service during the past few years. We have had an opportunity to review the response as staff and share with the LVR Board of Directors and we have learned a great deal.

Overwhelmingly, those responding indicated that you are very satisfied with the training that you received and felt that it was appropriate for your role as tutor. Many of you indicated an interest in additional training as well as an opportunity to share experiences with fellow volunteers. Starting last fall we began "In-Service Saturdays" as an effort to provide additional training and support as well as give volunteers a chance to get together and share experiences. We will also continue to provide you with information and resources available on-line and in the community such as the recent Regional Adult Education Network – "Teachers Day".

From those that had left service, particularly after less than 2 years, the issue of learner commitment and engagement was cited as the one reason for leaving. As many of you know the learners we serve come from a variety of backgrounds and circumstances. From the new immigrant who wants to communicate at work and in the neighborhood, to the native born learner who has been newly motivated to call us for help by

a life issue, there are many motivations for seeking help from LVR. What we do know about our learners is that they share a common bond of low-literacy/ limited English skills. Statistically we know that these learners are more likely to live in poverty, struggle with issues like health care, employment, housing and education for their children. The challenges of these systems and the navigation of them can sometimes be overwhelming and distracting to one's learning goals. For this reason we will be beginning in July a project called "Literacy Navigator" which we hope will help negate these distractions and help learners focus on their work with you, their tutor. Our hope is that the "Literacy Navigator" can assist with immediate challenges like forms, paperwork and navigation of bureaucracy while you and your learner can spend more time focusing on long-term literacy goals. Soon we will be sending you and your learners more information about when and how they can access this help. Thank you again for your service to LVR and the learners whom we serve, and thank you to all our learners for your dedication to meeting your literacy goals. I hope you all have a wonderful summer!

Thanks for your support,

Bob Mahar
Executive Director

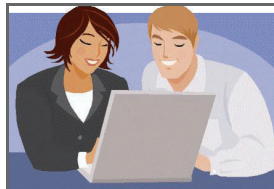
LVR Library Hours

Monday through Friday: 9.00 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Wednesdays: 9.00 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturdays: 9.00 a.m. to noon

Literacy Navigator is Here!!!



See Page 7
for more
information

Tutoring Using Technology

When tutoring, we all have our old standbys like books and newspaper articles that we use to teach our learners. However, technology provides many new and exciting ways to teach. Read the following articles for some ideas on how to incorporate technology into your tutoring.

Tutoring Using YouTube

Perhaps you didn't know that there is a vast online resource of videos with tutoring strategies and tips that you can access online for free. At www.youtube.com you can access millions of videos on any topic you can think of. This includes numerous videos on adult basic education and ESOL tutoring. Videos include recorded lessons, lesson plans and tips on various topics such as spelling and reading comprehension. You do not have to download anything; you simply click on a link and the video plays on your computer. Take some time to explore YouTube when you get a chance. Try a basic search using keywords like "adult literacy tutor" or specific topics that you are working on with your learner, such as "reading comprehension" or "pronunciation." If you take some time to access the vast educational resources here, you will definitely find some new inspiration as a tutor! In the future we will be sending you installments of helpful YouTube videos that can support your tutoring activities.

Here are a few links we have selected to get your started:

First ABE Tutoring Session part 1 of 3:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySDTex_I4Bs

Watch an experienced tutor lead a native English-speaking Adult Basic Education learner through their first tutoring session

First ESL Tutoring Session part 1 of 2:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_0ba7j_VGo&feature=relmfu

Watch an experienced tutor lead non-native English as a Second Language learner through their first tutoring session.

Tutoring Techniques Demo Systemic Phonics:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nC586_TWrUI&feature=related

Watch an experienced teacher help a learner with difficult phonics concepts in an innovative and informative way.

Tutoring Techniques Guided Reading Activity

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3tOkfDeXac>

Watch an example of a guided reading and gain insight to help your own learner with a similar activity

Tutoring Using Skype

Skype (www.skype.com) is a computer-based service that can be used for audio and video calls and chatting. During peak times, there can be more than 30 million Skype users online, according to the Skype website. Skype can be downloaded and used for free. For a small charge, Skype users can also call telephones (versus only calling others who have downloaded Skype) and send texts. Skype is increasingly used to communicate with loved ones abroad. It also plays a growing role for virtual meetings in the business world.

Although the use of Skype to tutor adult education learners is not yet common, it is a growing area of interest for many instructors, tutors, and program managers. With many learners unable to attend classes due to issues with childcare, work schedules, and transportation, some groups are using Skype-based tutoring to reach learners when circumstances prevent meeting in person. Some program directors find that learners are initially more eager to use Skype than tutors are. ESOL learners interested in Skype lessons have often already used Skype to communicate with loved ones in their home countries. Using Skype can help learners overcome scheduling, childcare, or transportation barriers. It also helps learners or tutors who don't want to use extra time or gas money going to and from lessons.

Read on to the next page for tips on how to effectively use Skype with your learner. *(continued on next page)*

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Tips for Effectively Using Skype:

1) Before using Skype, have a checklist that makes sure both tutors and learners have done the following:

- Verified that both learner and tutor have a computer, the internet, an email address, and a camera on their computer
- Downloaded Skype
- Accepted each other on Skype

2) Provide learners with a hard-copy handout in color with instructions on how to download Skype.

Learners have been more successful in downloading Skype when the downloading instructions were printed in the exact same colors as seen on the computer screen. Correct downloading is often the largest barrier to using Skype.

3) Use Skype's Instant Messenger feature to demonstrate words or for short writing assignments.

For example, you may teach a citizenship lesson via Skype. When teaching the word *representative*, use Skype's Instant Messenger to show the word. You can type the word with spaces to indicate syllables (ex. *rep re sen ta tive*). Instant Messenger can also be used for listening and dictation exercises. Another idea is writing target words on a piece of paper and holding them up to the camera. For longer writing assignments such as journal entries, learners can use email.

4) Don't expect a drastic difference from face-to-face classes. Learners and tutors are often surprised at how similar the virtual classroom is to "regular" classes.

5) If you are helping learners set up an email account to use with Skype, use email providers that are uncluttered. Yahoo and Hotmail can have distracting advertisements and visuals that confuse learners. Gmail (www.gmail.com) works best for most learners.

6) Debrief. Remember to consult learners about their experiences with Skype lessons after the fact.

7) Expect interest in Skype to fluctuate depending on the time of year. Often, more learners will want to use Skype in the summer, when children are out of school and parents cannot attend classes or one-to-one sessions as easily.

Tutoring Using Craigslist

Like many of us, learners often have personal items they no longer need. Additionally, some learners have their own businesses that they want to advertise inexpensively. Since Craigslist started in 1995, it has become a popular website for buying and selling products and services, with 20 billion page views and 50 million new classified ads posted every month.

Although some precautions are recommended when using Craigslist, the site can be a great tool to help learners advertise items or job-related services. This article describes the process for posting ads on Craigslist. The directions assume that learners (and you the instructor) have some previous experience using computers, so the technology-related prompts encountered in this activity should not be overwhelming. Learners will also need email addresses, as Craigslist will email ads to them for confirmation as well as notify them when someone is interested in their items and services. Although not all learners will have something they want to sell or advertise, the experience of writing an ad provides useful computer experience and practice with succinct writing.

The Basic Activity

1) Prepare for this lesson by visiting Craigslist in advance of your class to review the kinds of ads that are typically posted under "For Sale" and "Services." These are the two sections that you will use in class. Identify two or three succinct, well-written ads in each area to show learners. Also, decide on the geographical area where you learner will post ads. For some users, there will only be one logical choice, but users in larger metro areas may need to choose from several zones.

Before working with learners, practice opening an account on Craigslist (it's free) so you can better guide them through this part of the activity. You are not required to open an account to sell items, but you do need an account for job/service-related postings. You can create a sample ad, and Craigslist will email the ad to you for verification before posting it.

2) In class, ask learners if they have had experiences selling items that they no longer needed. They may mention traditional venues such as garage sales, selling to friends, or even donating items to charitable organizations. (continued on next page)

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Ask learners what they know about selling items online. Possible questions you can ask: Why might selling online be more beneficial than traditional approaches? What might be some problems or limitations with this approach? Ask if they have a business/job-related service that they need to advertise regularly. This could be someone who operates a business, someone who does babysitting, or someone looking for part-time work.

3) Ask learners if they are aware of Craigslist and what they know about it. Explain that it is a popular website for selling items and services as well as searching for jobs and housing. Tell learners that they will create a Craigslist ad to sell an item they no longer want or to advertise job-related services. If learners do not have anything to sell, encourage them to identify a household item they can write about for practice.

To assist learners in creating ads, show them some sample Craigslist ads. Ask learners why they think the sample ads are effective. Point out that these ads are good because they have short but useful titles and concise descriptions that show readers why their product or service is unique. You can mention that including photos with ads is another way to help sell your item. If they have a website for a job-related service, they may also wish to include that in the ad. Learners should also know that all ads enable readers to email the person posting the ad directly.

4) Introduce the idea of online selling before the day you actually post the ad, as this gives learners time to think about what they want to advertise and take pictures as necessary. Tell them to come to the next class ready to advertise an item or job service. If learners have access to a digital camera (or even have a camera phone), tell them they can take pictures of the items they want to sell and then email those pictures to their email accounts.

5) Once the draft ad is prepared, review the ad with your learner. Provide feedback on ways to make the ad stronger, focusing on word choice, ad length, and even layout (e.g. using bullet points instead of continuous lines of text). Learners should note suggested changes and revise their ads.

6) Guide learners through the process of creating an account to post an ad.

Tutoring Using Useful Websites

The internet is an unlimited resource for tutors, and using the internet as a tool in your tutoring is a trend that Literacy Volunteers has been following for some time. Our librarian, Bonnie Martin, maintains a list of useful websites that you can pick up in our library anytime during business hours at the LVR office on 1600 South Avenue. We've highlighted a few sites for you here.

www.longmanhomeusa.com

Pearson Longman is a publisher of educational materials for learners of all ages, including adult learners. Their adult educational materials focus specifically on ESOL learners. On their website, you can familiarize with new materials and learning techniques, but the most helpful resource is their regularly published newsletter, which contains numerous strategies and articles for ESOL teachers and learners. The current newsletter contains articles on grammar, pronunciation and an mp3 podcasts which can be downloaded and listened to on your computer or an mp3 player. The archive contains nearly 100 separate articles.

www.manythings.org

Another incredibly useful resource for ESOL tutors and learners. This website contains an extensive lists of mp3 files to help with topics like pronunciation. Videos, quizzes, and games will enhance your repertoire of tutoring activities and assist with topics like reading, vocabulary, grammar, writing and speaking.

<http://literacy.kent.edu>

The most extensive collection of ABE and ESOL tutoring materials on our list. Visit this website and get in touch with the adult literacy movement!

(This article was reprinted in part from ProLiteracy Notebook: Resources for the Adult Educator, Spring 2012 and Summer 2012)

Designate your
United Way
Donation to LVR:
Donor Option #240



United Way
of Greater Rochester

Setting Goals with Learners

Goal setting with learners can serve two important purposes: 1) It helps learners focus on what they want to get out of their classroom learning (or life in general), and 2) It helps tutors determine what they need to do so learners can reach those goals.

There are some challenges with goal setting in the adult classroom, however. Many times, the goals that learners talk about initially are vague (e.g., “I want to learn English,” “I want to learn to read”) Other times a goal might seem so far-reaching that learners can become discouraged.

You will find a worksheet on the following page that can help learners identify their goals. Aim to use this worksheet with each new learner. Using the goals worksheet, prompt learners to consider goals in each of the categories listed. Encourage learner to include goals that go beyond what you will cover in class, as this provides a good opportunity for learner self-reflection. Their academic goals could fall under “Self” or even one of the other categories (e.g., someone learning English to help their children in school might write that goal under “Family & Home”; someone learning to read to obtain a better job may write that goal under “Work”). Explain to learners that by setting specific goals, you can teach them material relevant to their needs.

If learners have trouble deciding on specific goals or if you find the goals they are writing are not specific enough, share with them the list of possible goals below. However, remind them that they are not limited to these goals.

You will likely find that some goals are long term and require a good deal of effort and time. For this kind of goal, discuss with learners how to break the goal into manageable steps. Then, have them write down those steps. Encourage learners to include steps that require follow-up outside of the classroom so they take responsibility for their goals.

Example of goal-setting:

My goal is to Get my GED. I will:

1. Start my GED class.
2. Study at home 3 times a week.
3. Take a practice test.
4. Get my GED.

Other Possible Goals:

Work:

Fill out a job application
Write a resume.
Speak in English in a job interview.
Write a report.
Find a new job.
Ask my manager for a raise.

Self:

Fill Out forms.
Open an e-mail account.
Read a book.
Get my driver’s license.
Learn how to type.
Get my GED.

Family & home:

Help my children in school.
Read a book in English to my children.
Make a family budget.
Save money for a family vacation.
Buy a house.
Plan healthy meals for my family.

Community:

Vote in a local election.
Read local street signs and names..
Participate in my local civic organization.
Get and use a library card.
Volunteer in my community.
Learn the local history of my community.

(Reprinted from ProLiteracy Notebook: Resources for the Adult Educator, Winter 2011)

Goals Worksheet

Family & Home

Work

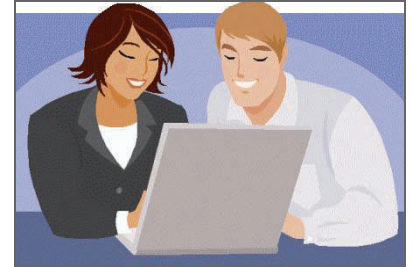
Goals
What goals do you want to reach? What do you want to learn or be able to do?

Community

Self

Literacy Navigator

- Literacy Volunteers of Rochester has begun a pilot for its new program Literacy Navigator.
- This program provides trained volunteers at the Literacy Volunteers of Rochester office (1600 South Avenue, corner of South Ave. and Elmwood Ave.) to provide literacy assistance at scheduled hours;
- Volunteers can assist with paperwork, forms, directions, computer issues and anything that requires reading;
- Mondays, 10 am-1pm
- If you would like to volunteer, be trained, and assist with Literacy Navigator, please contact LVR at (585) 473-3030.



Tutors Needed: 100 Learners on Waitlist

Every day at Literacy Volunteers of Rochester, tutors help learners make tremendous progress, by providing on-to-one lessons and personal attention. The compassion of our tutors is unmatched in seeking to assist those who are trying to overcome challenges and develop the skills necessary for success and personal improvement. We currently have approximately 200 tutors who serve our learners, but their numbers cannot support the demand for tutoring that exists in the Rochester community. At any given time, we operate with a waitlist of over 100 learners who are awaiting tutors. Waits may last as long as six months to a year for some learners, many of whom have an immediate need to improve their literacy to enter job training, earn a GED or participate more fully in their community.

The need for adult education in Rochester is staggering. According to local research, 57% of city residents over the age of 16 read at or below a 6th grade level. The learners who come to our organization are dedicated and eager to learn, however many have simply been unable to reach a basic level of literacy and will not without assistance. Many are immigrants or have been unable to succeed in a public school system with a dropout rate of nearly 50%. This problem will not go away by itself; however a dedicated volunteer can make a difference in the life of at least one person who is struggling to read.

At LVR, our tutors are our most valuable resource. We cannot overstate how much we value your service and your dedication to our learners. However, we need your help now more than ever, so we are reaching out to you at this most critical moment. With 100 learners currently awaiting tutors, we ask that you lend your assistance in our effort to match these learners with tutors. If you feel that you have the free time to take on an additional learner, we ask you to consider it at this time. If you have a friend or relative who you believe would make a great tutor, please consider reaching out to them. Your assistance, at this time more than ever, will help us reach and provide services to learners whose needs are going unmet. Together we can greatly improve the lives of adult learners in our community!

The first step to becoming a tutor is attending a **Preview Session**. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a tutor, Preview Sessions will be held at the LVR office (1600 South Avenue) on the following dates:

Wednesday, August 8, Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, August 18, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Thursday, September 13, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 15, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

The next **Tutor-Training Workshop** will be held on Tuesday night, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., each week from **September 25** to November 13. Please contact Jennifer Eaton at (585) 473-3030 for more information.

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Save the Date

Brain Game

Thursday, October 11, 5-8 pm
Radisson Hotel Rochester Riverside

Holiday Open House

Friday, December 7, 2-4pm at
LVR Office (1600 South Ave.)

Mary Sue Schaefer Fund

Mary Sue Shaefer was an LVR volunteer until 1990. The Mary Sue Shaefer Fund was established in her honor to help underwrite the cost of tickets for learners and tutors to attend local cultural and recreational events. The Fund provides a maximum combined reimbursement of \$35 for the tutor and learner.



Interested tutors should contact Mellissa or Jennifer at least 24 hours before tickets are needed to see if funds are available. Preference is given to those who have not previously received sponsorship from this Fund. Learners who attend the event are expected to write a short article that will be published in the next LitBits. Receipts should be submitted to our offices after the event to receive reimbursement.

LVR Office Hours

The LVR office and library are open:

Monday through Friday: 9 am to 4 pm
The third Saturday of the month from September through June:
9 am to noon

Office and library are closed:

Monday, September 3, 2012
Labor Day
Thursday, November 22, 2012
Thanksgiving Day
Friday, November 23, 2012
Day after Thanksgiving

EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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MISSION STATEMENT

Literacy Volunteers of Rochester, Inc. is an organization of trained volunteers, dedicated to providing one-to-one or small group tutoring to functionally illiterate adults, and to others lacking English language skills and to fostering literacy in the greater Rochester, New York area.