

# Clatsop Community College Volunteer Literacy Tutor News

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TIME'S UP: the old GED  
TEST Phases Out  
December 31

Our **GED classes** here at Clatsop are seeing an influx of students rushing to finish their GED tests before the **2014 series** goes into effect. We are looking at adding test sessions beyond the **December 6 final date** now in place, but we have yet to receive authorization to do so. There are several worrisome factors about the new tests:

- the **math requirements** will increase significantly next year
- students will **need computer and keyboarding skills**
- the **price is going up**
- students will need **content knowledge**, which is not a bad thing, but problematic for instructors running multi-level classes with diverse needs

**Many thanks go out to our volunteers working in the GED classes!**

An article from **CNN Money** discusses the "hottest" current job skill – **bilingualism**. The growth in good-paying jobs for people who have fluency in another language is expected to **increase markedly** over the next decade. Sometimes this skill is needed in conjunction with other job skills (technical and otherwise) and sometimes as a stand-alone for translations. Fluency in Spanish brings the smallest returns because it is the second-largest language group in the US, but companies like Microsoft are looking for workers fluent in Spanish to do marketing and development in Mexico and other Latin American countries. **I can tell you wholeheartedly that there are good-paying jobs in our town going begging because of a lack of bilingualism.**  
[http://money.cnn.com/2013/10/30/news/economy/job-skills-foreign-language/index.html?hpt=hp\\_t2](http://money.cnn.com/2013/10/30/news/economy/job-skills-foreign-language/index.html?hpt=hp_t2)

TUTOR APPRECIATION LUNCH:  
November 15 from 11:30-1:00  
Columbia Hall, room 219  
RSVP

Enjoy a  
Catered Lunch and Guest Speakers  
Let us **THANK YOU** for all your hard  
work and dedication!



The Utility of Command Verbs with  
ESL Students

The answer to last month's question: "**What is the shortest English language sentence?**" was '**Go.**' The winner also suggested '**Be,**' one that I didn't think of, but which also fits the bill. Command verbs **imply** the subject (you) and are just like the infinitive (the 'to' form of a verb). Good ESL instructors **strip the language of unnecessary words** to increase a student's ability to comprehend. Command verbs are also easily demonstrated by the teacher and student- sit, walk, write, listen, etc. **Command verbs are a good place on which to build additional language.** For example, add a *time word* (Walk tomorrow.), a *where phrase* (Cook in the kitchen.) or an *adverb* (Write faster.).

## Helping Our Students Write Better

Many of our GED/ABE/ESL students do not understand the importance of **planning and revisions** to good writing. And it is particularly important for you to talk with your student before they begin to write no matter how small the task is. Essay writing requires even more planning and there are several good planning templates available to assist with this. Let me know if you need one.

Many students think that their first writing attempt is the finished product. This behavior is similar to students who are reluctant to go back to the text to find an answer. For various reasons, many of our adult students find going back and revisions to be a sign of weakness, when in fact it's just good learner behavior. Some studies, in fact, indicate that good writers spend up to 50% of writing time on revisions and editing.

Students often are embarrassed to see their writing samples awash in red ink, but you still need to help them understand the importance of editing. Perhaps something other than a red pen is needed to reduce embarrassment. Do urge them to re-write the essay after you have made corrections and discussed with them why you made them. Sometimes the finished product isn't perfect, but the student has a visible record of the changes occurring as they improve their ability to write clearly.



<http://www.cyberbackups.com/tudecides/Newsletter/V7Isue42/Newsletter.html>

**This site offers news articles in English and Spanish: a good resource for GED/ABE/ESL lessons. More on this next month.**



## Do You Know Anyone Who May Want to Become a Literacy Tutor?

Recently, a number of tutors have left due to changing schedules, moves and other circumstances. Do you have friends or know of others who may be interested? Please let me know, and if they would like to attend the tutor luncheon, invite them to come along with you. (Just let me know so I can alert the caterer.)

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We also are looking for **volunteers fluent (and who can read and write Spanish)** to help out in the new Spanish GED classes set to begin November 6-7 (Wednesdays from 6-8 PM in Astoria and Thursdays from 6-8PM in Seaside). **Can you help or do you know someone who can?**

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**Integrating Immigrants:** This complex and evolving process always begins in ESL classes (and the volunteer tutor program!) and the workplace. Most tutors are working with students who wish to improve their work skills; your work has a vital impact on not only their success but upon the entire economy. I have included a short article from **World Education** that discusses this route to "Americanization" in more detail. **Immigrants and their children will account for 85% of the net growth in the U.S. workforce over the next 20 years; by 2030, nearly one in five U.S. workers will be immigrants** (from the Migration Policy Institute and The Center for American Progress). The political theater that has surrounded the most recent immigration debate (and throughout all of American history) rarely addresses the contributions immigrants make to our country.

(<http://worlded.org/WEInternet/>)