

Clatsop Community College Volunteer Literacy Tutor News

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The **FALL TERM TUTOR TRAINING** will be held **November 12**, Saturday, from 11:00 to 2:00 pm. Look for us in **Columbia Hall**, room 221.

We will be discussing **goal-setting** and **lesson planning** in the context of the new Oregon State Learning Standards Initiative that will alter the way adult basic skills are delivered to our students. We will go over the results from our recently-completed **program review**. Are there other topics you want to cover? Let me know . . . Please RSVP: 503-338-2557



TUTOR TIPS OF THE MONTH

Adapted from the writings of ESL instructors Kathy Harris (Portland State University) and Dominique Brillanceau (Portland Community College).

It is well known that acquiring English language literacy can be a challenge for low-education students. Literacy isn't the only challenge faced by these low-education learners. They must also learn how to "do school." Learners who have attended school as children or adolescents come to ESL classes, or to their tutors, knowing how school "works." They know how to start activities, how to ask for help, and how to be an expert or novice in a classroom interaction.

What are some techniques we can teach our students who have little classroom experience? How can we help them to assert themselves when they cannot easily express themselves in English?

- **Teach a few simple phrases.**

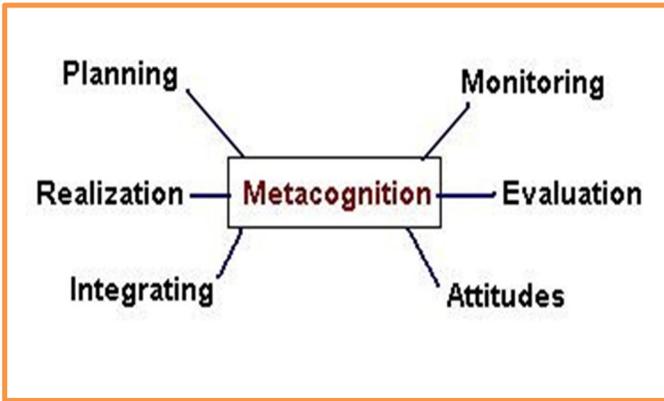
If your student speaks a language other than Spanish let us know.

"I don't understand it." (No lo entiendo.)
"Repeat it, please." (Repítalo por favor.)
"Speak slowly, please." (Hable lentamente, por favor.)

If you need other phrases translated into Spanish, let me know.

- **Does your student keep a notebook with past work/worksheets?**

Students and tutors who keep a record of work done can refer back to it. Reviews are made easy for the tutor, too.



LEARNING ABOUT HOW WE LEARN

Another way to help your student is to encourage him/her to ask questions about what they are studying. For beginner ESL learners, this is problematic, but those of you with higher-level students, think about how you can use the following phrases to get your student to think about his/her own thinking.

- This reminds me of
(Esto me recuerda)
- I'm thinking
(Estoy pensando)
- I'm remembering
(Estoy recordando)
- I'm noticing
Estoy notando
- I can relate this to
Puedo relacionar esto con
- I'm feeling
Estoy sintiendo

- **Can your student use a dictionary?**

Beginning students might need a picture dictionary. More advanced students may need help in deciphering word entries. We are swift to find words in dictionaries because we have been practicing it all our lives. Make sure you have the right level dictionary- there are a variety of styles in the literacy office.

- **Encourage open communication in your tutor sessions.**

Teachers are flexible and respond to students' concerns as they arise. Relevancy is a key concept in adult literacy practices.

- **Use the student's native language to accelerate comprehension.**

It's OK to spend first lessons exchanging words and phrases in each other's language. Asking beginning students to write the Spanish (or other) meaning next to the new English word or phrase is the beginning of a personal dictionary. The tutor gets to struggle, too, which helps create a peer-to-peer relationship.

- **Does your student have notebooks and folders? Pencils? A pencil case? Highlighters? A 3-ring binder? A backpack?**

Sometimes all these things that help a student get organized are available free in the literacy office. Let us know; we'll try to get it to you.

Remember that teachers and students in the United States study and learn in a cooperative environment. In some cultures, teachers are authorities and students passive listeners. Tutors may have to encourage their student to become a partner in the learning process.