

CLATSOP COMMUNITY COLLEGE VOLUNTEER LITERACY TUTOR NEWS

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Training Considerations for Volunteer Literacy Tutors

According to a recent article published in the *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, 42% of instructors in federally-supported adult basic skills programs are volunteers. Add in volunteers working in community-based organizations and "it is evident that volunteers are the majority of all ABE (adult basic education) instructors."

Given these numbers, and the fact that both literacy volunteers and our students come from diverse backgrounds and with lots of needs, how can we improve our training to meet everyone's requirements? The article suggested a few solutions that we are going to adopt.

All volunteers with the CCC Literacy Program are required to take at least 2 trainings per year. These trainings can be acquired in several ways.

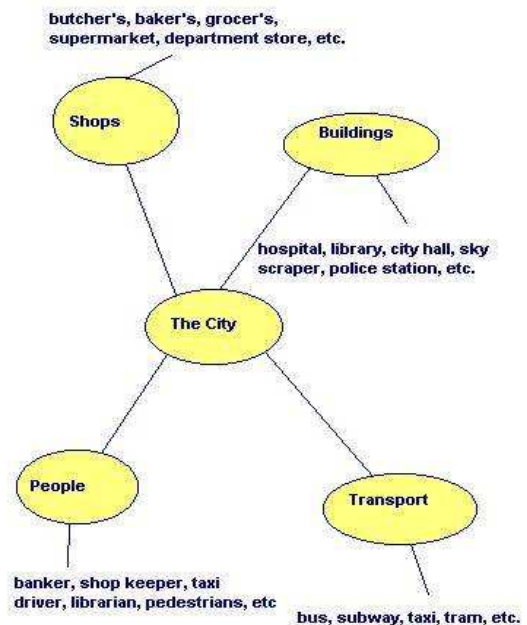
Orientations for new tutors will be separated from skill-building trainings that address specific tutoring

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TUTOR TIP OF THE MONTH

Help your student create vocabulary trees to improve "specific" or thematic vocabulary.

1. Choose a subject area and draw a graphic.
2. Help the student to generate as many words as possible around the theme.
3. Perhaps the student will think of the words in their native language first. You can use a picture dictionary to generate ideas or translate vocabulary (available to borrow in the literacy office.)
4. Create the same vocabulary tree in the student's native language. Create more vocabulary from words already generated; for example, what one finds at a butcher shop, etc.
5. Introduce simple verbs and begin constructing sentences from the vocabulary tree. Repeat, review, and revisit.



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skills. Orientations will address the characteristics of adult learners, barriers to literacy, the importance of establishing a peer relationship with the student, an introduction to essential study materials and some simple ideas for getting started with the student. Specific trainings will address reading, writing and conversation, with occasional workshops that reflect training the coordinator has received. (See the 10/9/10 training for GLAD techniques.) All tutors are encouraged to attend the specific session workshops.

The article also discussed the importance of “just in time” trainings that tackle specific needs that tutors have identified from their sessions with students. Many tutors now call the office and ask for advice, materials and particular instructions to teach specific skills. Hopefully, these individual ad hoc trainings are effective because “it is far more likely that tutors will implement instructional strategies that fit their situation.” Please alert the coordinator to your needs and we will do our best to address them.

There was one more suggestion that the author made which we will try to implement this year. She advises the coordinator to visit and observe a tutoring session to determine what strategies the tutor is using to help the learner, and if there are any suggestions for improvement. I hope no one will be put off by this; it’s all to strengthen the effectiveness of the program.

Departmental News: *New registration system will prove a boon to all!*

We have a new computer registration system @ CCC that allows the coordinator to register our literacy students **WITHOUT PAPER REGISTRATIONS!!!**

Wahoo . . . All we need is a phone call to confirm that the student is continuing to study with the tutor into the new term. Of course, new students must first see the coordinator to obtain a student ID and take a test (or 2!). This system should alleviate a lot of pain for the volunteers (and students)!



October Tutor Training: 10/09/10

The Fall Term volunteer literacy tutor training will be held in Astoria @ Clatsop Community College on Saturday, October 9, from 10-1 PM. We chose Saturday to accommodate some of our tutors who work during the week. We will discuss the “ecology of language acquisition,” strategies to elicit vocabulary from English language learners drawn from GLAD (Guided Language Acquisition Design) training and how tutors can self-monitor their performance with the help of a simple rubric. The training will be in the newly-refurbished Towler Hall in Room 208 on the revamped Astoria campus. Call 503-338-2557 or email epurcell@clatsopcc.edu to sign up.

BON VOYAGE to Norma Wehtje, a new tutor who summers in Astoria and is now returning to her home in Alabama. Norma first came to the July tutor training and began working with two Hispanic ladies soon after. She will be returning to the North Coast next year when the heat hits the south. We’re sorry to see her go, her students are already missing her and we look forward to her return. Her students are seeking a new volunteer. Do you know of anyone who can work with them? Norma said they are eager to learn and easy to work with.

