

news



Volume 29, Number 11

November, 2003



Happy Thanksgiving

*A Message from the Director
Richard A. Peterson*

Life Skills Classes

Beginning the second week of December Project LEARN will offer to all of its students the opportunity to attend specialized Life Skill classes. These classes will cover a wide range of important topics related to the daily needs of our students. They will be two weeks in length with a total of four sessions altogether.

Life Skill classes will accomplish two things: it will give students practical information on important

subjects, and it will supplement their basic literacy instruction. Application of new skills is critical. Students are more likely to succeed if they use what they learn in relevant and meaningful contexts.

The Life Skills classes will now have a formal place in our annual calendar, much like our Volunteer and Student Recognition, or Summer Reading Breakfast. We expect to offer Life Skill classes three times a year with up to three different classes per segment. Our first class will cover a subject that is directly related to many of our students: Living With Diabetes. Our own Tiffany Butler will teach this class. Look for a mailing this month that will announce details for the December classes and be sure to share that with your student.



It's Good To Be Back

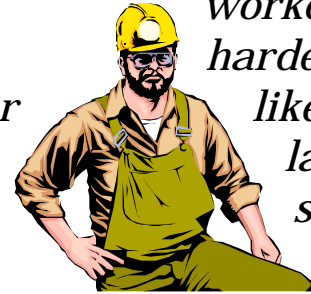
Welcome back! That's what I felt like saying when I came back to Project LEARN after the Labor Day holiday weekend. Most students in all of the group school classes were returning. The students with tutors were also back. It appears that everyone is ready for another year of hard work and progress.

Several people had gardens and were kind enough to share some vegetables with me. I was very thankful to them. The tomatoes, peppers, and squashes made for a tasty change in my salads. I cooked tomato sauce for spaghetti and made stewed vegetables and vegetable soup. We even tried our hand at fixing fried green tomatoes and zucchini bread.

The students also had good summers. Some traveled on vacations and family reunions. Others did things nearby like fishing, boating and camping.



Several of our students had jobs that worked them even harder in the summer and landscaping. Many said that their children and grandchildren were with them for the summer. In any case, it is good to be back in the classes again. I am looking forward to a great year, how about you?



Robert Bivins

School Closings Policy

If the Cleveland Public Schools are closed due to bad weather, then Project: LEARN will be closed. If you meet with your student in the community, call your student to be sure that the two of you will be meeting and

that your meeting place will be open.



The Project LEARN Board of Directors is proposing some amendments to our By-Laws. These are minor changes that are designed to make the language of our By-laws consistent with changes in Ohio law and the change in the name of our national affiliate, ProLiteracy Worldwide. The following is a legal notice for our members, namely active tutors and students.

Notice is hereby given that at the October 21 meeting of the Project LEARN, Inc. Board of Directors, to be in Project LEARN's third floor conference room, 2728 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, the Directors will vote on certain proposed amendments to Project LEARN's Code of Regulations. These changes are intended to be non-substantive, and they include minor typographical changes and replacing the term "Trustees" with "Directors" to bring the language of the regulations in line with recent changes in terminology in Ohio law governing not-for-profit corporations.

Any person (a) certified as a tutor of Project LEARN and currently (or within the last six (6) months) actively participating

with Project LEARN as a tutor or (b) currently

enrolled in classes as a student in the Project LEARN program is permitted, but not required, to attend this meeting and speak thereat regarding the proposed amendments. Only

Board members, however, may vote on the proposed amendments. A copy of the Code of Regulations reflecting the proposed changes may be obtained by calling Project LEARN at (216) 621-9483.

*Tutor Tips
By Barbara Watson*

Don't Fear Writing Anymore!

As tutors/teachers we often have a difficult time getting our students to write. Most people find it challenging at best to put our thoughts down in a way that makes sense at the same time paying attention to grammar and

spelling. This is especially true for our students.

Try these five writing steps, working on one at a time, and watch your student progress toward becoming a good writer.

- **Pre-writing:** Identify the topic. Generate ideas and organize them.
- **Writing the first draft:** Get ideas down on paper in sentence form. Sentences and paragraphs do not have to be correct at this point; you can address that later.
- **Revising:** Add details: clarify, refine, and expand the content.
- **Editing:** Correct errors in spelling, grammar and structure.
- **Final Draft:** Rewrite the draft to include any revisions and corrections. Then share your writing with others.

The student's first attempt at writing should be fun and pleasurable to construct.

Or perhaps your student has a more immediate need for writing such as writing an absentee note for her child's being absent from school. Try these steps:

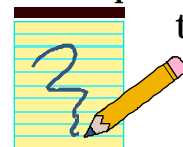
1. Make a sample absent note.

[date]
 Dear (teacher's name):
 (Child's name) was absent from school on (day, date child was absent from school). He/she was absent because (reason).
 Please excuse this absence. If there is makeup work he/she can do please send it home. Thank you.

Sincerely,
 (your name)

2. Help student underline those parts that would need to be changed to fit his/her circumstances.
3. Ask student to identify any other information that should be included in this kind of note.
4. Have student rewrite the note to fit his/her situation.
5. Have student read the new note to see if it makes sense.
6. Help student edit note if necessary.
7. Ask student to rewrite the note.
8. Work with your student to create a standing sample from this note for future notes.

I hope these steps will help to take some of the fear out of writing for your



student. And if you want more information on writing ProLiteracy (formerly Laubach Literacy Action) recommends a one-hour course developed by the Verizon Literacy University where participants learn the five-step writing process mentioned above. The course is free and available to volunteer tutors and instructors in adult literacy programs. Simply go to the Website, www.vluonline.org and follow the directions for registering.

I have not been able to go online to try it out yet. As of the writing of this article P:L has been experiencing some technical difficulty with our internet service, but I hope to try it out very soon.

Meanwhile, I have tried the five step process and it does work, with patience, but it does work. So, until next time...

...happy reading!

...happy writing!

Happy Tutoring!

Some information taken from ProLiteracy America LitScape Summer 2003.

Reminder To Tutors

When your students complete a Skill Book he/she can have their name printed in the Student News under "Honor Roll". The

Student News is a newsletter that is mailed directly to the students each month. Your student is also eligible to receive a free supplementary reader with the compliments of Project LEARN. When you give your student the diploma for completing the skill book:

- 1. Tell your student about the Honor Roll. He/she must call us to have his/her name listed. We must respect confidentially of our students, therefore, we will not take the name from anyone but the student.*
- 2. Help your student select a gift book from the list of materials by the Project LEARN Writers Group. This gift book can be picked up at the office or mailed directly to the students.*

Thank you for helping your student reach another milestone and thanks for helping Project LEARN provide these two bits of encouragement to your students.

Save The Date!!!!

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Alphabet Affair 2003

"Jump for Joy for J"

*Date: Saturday, November 1,
2003*

Time: 6:30 p.m. to Midnight

*Place: Judson Manor
University Circle
1890 E. 107th
Cleveland, Ohio*

J J J J J J J J J

a story out loud is more than just saying the words. The storyteller must draw you into their tale. You can watch their face and eyes as they talk. Their body movements and hands bring you into the saga. Their voice goes up and down, in and out, or sometimes stops just to get your interest.

We listened to some great tall tales when our class went to the Cleveland Metro Parks Zoo a few weeks ago. Could you believe pet snakes even boa constrictors; swimming with alligators (only after they have eaten their fill); making friends with skunks; and my favorite - riding bareback on a giant turtle? There was just enough truth in the telling to keep

you wondering. Then the ending was so wild that you knew it had to be a TALL TALE. What a great way to have fun with words.

Robert Bivins



Development Dialogue

By Maria Asher

The Nancy C. Oakley Heritage Society for Literacy

The health and well being of our community requires its members to be functionally literate. For citizens to participate fully in the social, political and economic affairs of society they must be able to read and write.

With that understanding in mind, Project: LEARN formed the Nancy C. Oakley Heritage Society for Literacy in December 1995. Named for the esteemed Founding Director of Project: LEARN, the Society seeks to provide long-term financial stability in support of literacy in our community. Project: LEARN, nationally renowned in the fight against adult illiteracy, will have the opportunity to expand its scope of services and reach many

more students in Greater Cleveland in the years to come through the planned giving policies instituted by the Nancy C. Oakley Heritage Society for Literacy. For more information please call the Development Department at (216) 621-9483.

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- *The student is comfortable reading the story because it is familiar and interesting.*

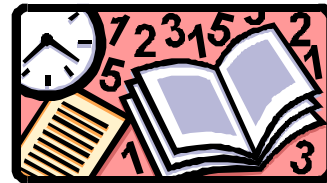
- *The student feels good about seeing his story in print.*
- *The tutor gets to know the student better by listening to his stories
...and has continued access to new and interesting reading material from and for the student.*

From using this activity with your student you can work on several things.

1. *word recognition*
2. *comprehension*
3. *reading fluency*
4. *connection between spoken word and the written.*

When the student is really comfortable with telling a story you can have even more fun with it by having the student make up stories that can be read to her children.

Don't forget to keep these stories in a notebook so that the student will have a



collection of his/her own stories to read and re-read whenever they feel the urge.

Until next time...

Happy Tutoring!

Attention All!!!

Project LEARN's Annual

Literacy Conference

***Saturday, September 6,
2003***

8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

at the

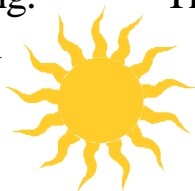
Project LEARN Center

Ah-h, that's summer!

August is a special time for teachers because it means the last days before the new school year with more students and a fresh start. While I look forward to the coming year I still savor these last days of free time.

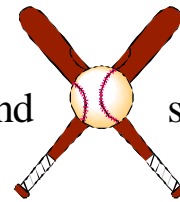
The summer break is not just a period to get away from teaching and learning but it also allows time for a different type of learning.

The long hot days warm nights of summer invite a person to check out and think about



the things they have learned. Work in your garden, tend to your roses, cook out in the yard, plan a short road trip, and take in a ball game or two. Since we learn by doing, there is a great benefit to these activities.

Living in a big city like Cleveland, there are also many festive and interesting events to see. There is art, theater, and music in the parks. There are neighborhood festivals, parades, and community activities. For recreation there are beaches and swimming pools, fishing in the lakes and rivers, picnics in the park, bicycling and hiking, or just taking a walk and enjoying the weather. As you are doing these things take time to notice what is around you and what is happening. You'll be surprised at what you might learn. I advise taking a book and laying out under a tree to read. Ah-h, that's summer!



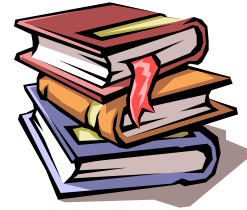
REMINDER TO TUTORS

When your student completes a Skillbook he/she can have his/her name placed on the Honor Roll that is posted in the Student Newsletter which is sent to students each month.

- 1. Tell your student about the Honor Roll. He/she must call us to have the name put on. We must respect confidentiality so we will not take the name from anyone but the student.*
- 2. Help your student select a gift book from the list of materials by the Project LEARN Writers Group, published by P:L. This gift book can be picked up at the office or mailed directly to the student.*

Congratulations to you helping your student reach another milestone and thanks for helping Project LEARN provide these two

little bits of encouragement to your student.



Pass It On!

*Alphabet Affair
"Jump for Joy for J"*

Presented by the

Friends of Project LEARN

Saturday, November 1, 2003

For Information Call

(216) 621-9483

with sentence building and worked our way up.

Anyway, this gives you one more thing to do with those darn flash cards. If you have other creative ways to use flash cards please sent it in. I would love to try it our and pass it on to other tutors as another Review and Reinforcement idea.

As always....

Happy tutoring!

Attention...Attention...Attention

***Don't forget...
Summer Reading Breakfast
Saturday, July 26, 2003
9:30 to 11:30 A.M.***

The Computer Age

I have used a computer for years to help me with so many things I need to do for my classes and at home. This year my students have used the computer to help them in their studies. The Project: LEARN computer lab allows several students to work on the same project or activity at the same time.

Students using the basic computer software have written letters, created resumes, and made reports for their jobs. We used another program to take math data from student surveys and weather records and create beautiful color graphs. Some students have used software to help them check their spelling and writing.

Several classes have used the Internet for many different things. Students send and receive email to the teacher, other students, and their friends. When questions come up in class we can go to the Internet and search for more information. Last month one class updated a math application project that used different models of cars to compare gas mileage for cost of driving and comparing city and highway driving. We searched for more modern car models and got the tested mileage ratings right from the U.S. government website.

Students continue to ask for more teaching on the computers and using the Internet. I am sure that our teachers will think of new and helpful ways to use this exciting tool for learning.

Robert Bivins



The Internet!

It's 9:30, time to go into the Computer Lab. A few grumbles as they dig through their bags looking for computer notes. The sound of electricity buzzing lets me know they've turned on the computers and are all ready to go.

"Don't forget to type in your email address and your password". Some are fisty and say "we know"! It's very quiet in the classroom (Computer Lab), then we hear a sound of excitement. A student has just received his first email and it's from his daughter in Virginia. The whole class was so happy for him, she was everyone's daughter for just that moment. It was like she'd sent each and everyone of them their own personal email message. We all shared in the joy of this monumental moment.

The moment was so monumental because for most of them this was the moment they'd been waiting for. They'd worked so

hard for this moment. First learning basic Microsoft Word, then the internet. They were using the internet! This modern day device that they had heard so much about was actually getting used by them. This was just what they needed. They now know how to use Microsoft Word, look up information on the internet, and how to use the email.

They are excited and eager to know as much about computers, and the internet as I'm willing to teach, and I'm eager and excited to teach them. We're a match made in Heaven!

**Tiffany
Butler**



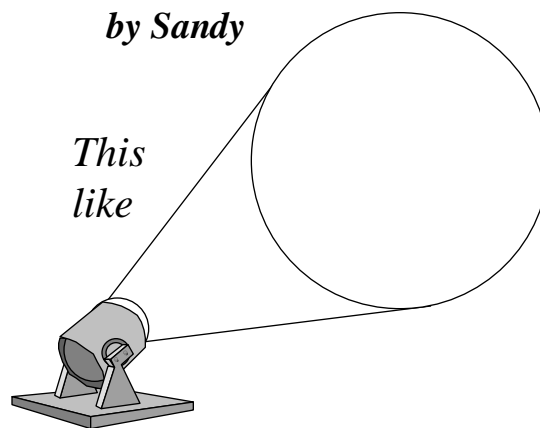
SPOTLIGHT

by Sandy

Dorroh

*This
like*

*month I'd
to feature
one of our
students.*



She, like so many of our readers, gives so much to the Greater Cleveland community.

Imagine yourself keeping a momma cat and her new litter in your home for six weeks. They're not your pets, but you care for animals so much that you have volunteered to do this for the Animal Protective League. The APL supplies the food, but you have the "pleasure" of having seven cats run through your apartment, changing their litter, and doing whatever else a nursing feline and her brood need.



For me, this would be a nightmare, but for Margo Hudson, this is a delightful dream! She absolutely adores cats. In fact, SHE LOVES ANIMALS!

Ms. Hudson was a volunteer of the Foster Care Program of the Animal Protective League. Her other unpaid tasks involved working in the Groom Room at the APL's Wiley Avenue location. She cleaned the room, washed dishes, changed litter pans, and fed and watered the animals.

But NOW, she is no longer a volunteer because Margo was hired by the APL over a year ago. Her passion has turned into a paycheck!

understand is the fact that many of our adults students have likely had years of discouraging learning experiences and, thus, are likely burdened with low-esteem.

Incorporating the ten suggestions below into the learning process should help establish an environment in which self-esteem can develop for the student with special learning needs.

Ten ways to you can help your student build self-esteem

1. Establish a learning environment that is flexible, spontaneous and relaxed.
2. Emphasize learning strengths; de-emphasize learning weaknesses.

3. Emphasize the student's best work.
4. Eliminate the use of a red pen, a color that denotes errors or mistakes.
5. When possible, allow extra time for completing tasks, and do so without making the student self-conscious.
6. Break assignments into small segments, establishing a more immediate sense of accomplishment.
7. Communicate praise realistically; don't overdo it so that it becomes ineffective.
8. Encourage your student to keep trying; finish the lesson before frustration sets in; transition to something he/she can master.
9. Communicate to the student the idea that you believe he/she will be successful at each task.
10. Respect the uniqueness of each student.

As always...
Happy Tutoring!

HELP WANTED

Mature female student in need of a tutor. This woman is very friendly and personable and eager to learn. She lives on the west side of Cleveland about W. 137th and Lorain Avenue. She is available anytime during the day. There is a church on the corner of her street that might be a possible location for lessons, or she could take the bus to Kamm's Corners to the church where her brother-in-law meets his tutor.

She reads easily in Skill Book 1 and knows the names of the letters and most of the sounds. Skill Book 1 could be used as a review for her and an

opportunity for the tutor to see what the student knows for him/her self.

I'm told this student would be fun to work with. She has a good sense of humor and a willingness to learn. If you can help this very nice woman please give me (Barbara Watson) a call at 216-621-9483.

Thanks for your help.

Welcome to Spring



Ah-h-h! Spring is here. The long awaited hope for all of us that live through winter. Springtime means so many different things to each person. Like all the other seasons it has its good, bad and ugly sides.

In the spring the days get longer and the weather is warmer. So people have time to get out and enjoy the fresh air. The birds have returned and sing every morning. You can see your neighbors and fiends again after the long winter. Sometimes there are new people to meet.

Warmer weather changes snow to showers. This makes grass and weeds grow and the trees bud, which means yard work, pruning, planting, and hay fever. I happen to like gardening. So I can't wait to get out there and get my hands dirty. Spring isn't always sweet and kind, it can be hard and rough. Sometimes there can be hard storms with strong winds and hail.

Spring is also the time for "March Madness" (NCAA Playoffs), a new baseball season, high school playoffs, Little League,

and track and field events. It's a time to get out there and get into it. Run, jump, and get in shape.

There is newness about spring, new life in nature and new beginnings in life. Love and romance are in the air. There will be proms and graduations when young people will take their first steps into adulthood. So welcome to spring, it is a great way to lead into summer.

Robert Bivins

FACING THE MATH MONSTER

by Sandy Dorroh

Sandy stopped at the store on her way home from work. She put one gallon of milk, one dozen eggs, one pound of butter, and a roast in her cart. The milk cost \$2.79, the eggs \$1.19, the butter \$2.29, and the roast \$10.79. As the cashier totaled the items, Sandy took out a twenty dollar bill. Is this enough money to purchase all the groceries?

I created this word problem to demonstrate the type of reading that is required of the students in the Pre-GED classes. With addition and subtraction skills, the problem can be solved.

It would be simple to only teach the math skills, but preparing for the GED mathematics test is much more challenging because the test involves problem solving skills, or in other words, solving word problems. As the mathematics questions become more complex, the reading level also increases.

I'd like to report that the students are meeting the challenge! When the 2002-2003 school year began last September, some pupils were openly hostile to math and others were just plainly frightened. However, we have faced the enemy, and he....it....., well we're facing the enemy!

In fact, most don't consider math the enemy any longer, and that is progress.

If one's goal is to pass the GED, then the math monster must be faced, and the learners at Project: LEARN are doing just that!



Development Dialogue

By Maria Asher

(From The Plain Dealer, Jan. 9, 2003)

Create Your Own Reading Nook

Ever wondered what to do with that extra space in a room of your house? Why not carve out a nook for reading. Here's how to create your very own nook:

Increase the snuggle factor in a reading nook by choosing a spot near a fireplace. Choose furniture comfortable for reading, either reclining or sitting up. Some folks like to put their feet up when they read, so don't forget an ottoman. Heap on the pillows and keep a soft throw or afghan within arm's reach.

Lighting is especially important for a reading nook. Keep at least one fixture within arm's reach, and make sure light is adequate.

Storage is another necessity. Shelves keep books and reading material nearby. Shop book sales or law library sales for

inexpensive yet handsome leather-bound books to shelve for visual interest. Or, have a spot to stack coffee table books that can be picked up in a jiffy for a 15-minute reading break.

board and interests is a good way to get and keep their attention. We all learn the things we need to know.

- **GET IT RIGHT THE FIRST TIME**
The mind clings to first impressions. Go slowly and carefully the first time you introduce material. That will help learning take place.
- **DO NOT OVERLOAD**
Research says that we can remember about seven “chunks” of new material. Be selective
Don’t try to teach too many new ideas or concepts at one time.
- **MAKE ASSOCIATIONS**
Attach new ideas to something the student already knows. Connect the learning with something in their background or experience. Ask them if the new information agrees with, disagrees with, or enhances what they already know.
- **USE ALL THE LEARNING SENSES**
Information goes into our brains through our senses. All of us have a preferred style of learning, which means we depend on one sense more than another. Some of us remember faces rather than names, follow oral directions better than written ones, or

prefer doing something to being shown how to do it.

Teach to your student’s strength, but reinforce the information using a multi-sensory approach. Incorporate something visual, auditory, and kinesthetic into your lessons and activities. That will reinforce the learning in a number of ways.

- **RECITE**
Ask learners to summarize in their own words, orally or in writing, what they learned. Without reciting immediately after reading, a little information will be transferred from short-term memory.
- **STRUCTURE**
If possible, organize information in a way that is easily remembered. An outline, list or chart can simplify information into a format that is easily retained. (Example: To remember the colors of the spectrum think “Roy G. Biv” to remind you of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.)
- **REVIEW**
Frequent review is one of the most efficient methods for improving memory. It has been said that a new word must be used fifty times before it is remembered. Take a few minutes at the beginning of each lesson to review previously learned materials. Make practice exercises for homework. Incorporate practice games and activities into your lessons.

Above all, make learning a positive experience. Have fun. Mental attitude had a surprising effect on memory.

Received from Laubach Literacy Action Information Center, written by Michelle Joyce, Reading Specialist, Greater Pittsburg Literacy Council.

Let Us Work With Joy!

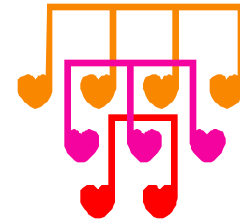
by John Clifton Robinson III

In September of 1977, after having completed eight years of service in the United States Marine Corps, I began my teaching career in Chicago, Illinois teaching GED & ESL for the Chicago City Colleges in their Adult Education Program. One of the sites where I taught was the Dawson Skill Institute located on the south side of Chicago. The Faculty there was very close-knit, and we had a very high "pass rate" of students having taken the GED exam. One of my students was a fifty-five year old grandmother who received one of the highest scores achieved on the GED in Chicago. When her scores arrived at the school she and I cried together. She had attained this level of scholarship because I have always instilled in my students the belief that learning can be fun, you can reach the goal you set for yourself, and when you work you should work with joy.

Now that I am teaching here at Project: LEARN, my philosophy and my approach to teaching continue to prevail. The students in all my classes as well as the students of all our teachers and tutors alike, come to school with a zeal for learning and a desire for achievement. To me, one of the most wonderful aspects of all our, teachers, tutors, and administrative staff, is that they come to work daily with vibrant attitudes towards their jobs.

Kahlil Gibran, the well-known Lebanese writer, poet, and philosopher, wrote many years ago in his book, "The Prophet" this wonderful statement, "Work is love made visible". And if you cannot work with love but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at the gate of the temple and take charity from those who work

with joy." Shall we, as teachers, tutors, staff and students, continue to work and learn with joy!



Project LEARN had it's 29th Annual Meeting on March 8th and, as usual it was a great time for all who attended.

We elected four new Board Members: Susan Potter, a Vice President with KeyBank; Pearson Bownas, an Attorney with Jones, Day; Len Calabrese, Executive Director for the Catholic Commission on Community Action; and Kathie Barr, a Vice President with National City Bank. We welcome each of them.

We also said goodbye to four Board Members who worked tremendously hard, each for six long years: Ron Hongosh, Ed Sebold, Ginny Wilhelm and Jan Ridgeway. What these four accomplished is amazing. Our move to the office we now occupy and our spectacularly successful Group School effort are products of their tireless commitment and incredible dedication.

Finally, we gave to former George Gund Foundation Executive Director David Bergholz our "Friend of Literacy Award." His personal support of adult literacy and Project LEARN in particular throughout the years has been the source of rewards for us that are too numerous to mention. Project LEARN, and our community for that matter, are a better off thanks to David.

Printed in last's month Tutor Tips column was a article about the short vowel sound for -i and -e, which reminded us about just how odd the English language can be. That reminded me of something I had read some time ago. I dug it out and thought that we would reprint it for your amusement and/or amazement.

English: An Unusual Language

The following are just a few reasons why ours can be a challenging language to learn...and teach!

1. The bandage was wound around the wound.
2. The farm was used to produce produce.
3. The dump was so full that it has to refuse more refuse.
4. We must polish the Polish furniture.
5. He could lead if he would get the lead out.
6. The solidier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
7. Since there is no time like the present, he thought it as time to present the present.
8. A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
9. When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
10. I did not object to the object.
11. The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
12. There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row.
13. They were too close to the door to close it.
14. The buck does funny things when the does are present.
15. A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
16. To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
17. The wind was too strong to wind the sail.
18. After a number of injections my jaw got number.
19. Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.

20. I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.

21. How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?

There is neither egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England nor french fries in France. Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat.

We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig. And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham?

Let's face it – English is an unusual language.

Reprinted from Literacy Link, a publication of Indy Reads. May/June 2002 issue.

Thank you, Thank you!

Thank you, Thank you!

A thank you goes out to Erwin Panfil for fulfilling my wish. In March's newsletter I wished for a couch for our reception area. And I got my wish. The reception area has a nice new look.

*A raspberry leather couch, and it is very comfortable and gives the lobby a professional look. Mr. Panfil you are much appreciated for fulfilling my wish
Thank you, thank you.*

Dionne Overton



U.S. and Iraq

One day the GED class was reading and talking about a mystery story. One of the characters had gotten a strange flower from the East Indies. A student asked, "Where were the East Indies?" Looking at the large world map on the wall we were able to find this group of large islands in the Indian Ocean between Asia and Australia. I also discussed a little about the climate, people, and the things we might get from the East Indies.

By then we were just about ready to go back to our story when there was a question. Another student asked, "Where are Iraq and Afghanistan?" Since these countries were in the news so much I thought it would be good to talk about them too. There was a lot to tell about these places and their neighbors.

On a world map these countries look small, but when you compare them

to places we know they are quite large. Iraq, where Saddam Hussein is president, is larger than Ohio, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and Indiana together. Iran, its neighbor to the east is about the size of our largest state, Alaska. Both nations have many high mountains and hot dusty deserts. Iraq's southern neighbor is Saudi Arabia. While it has fewer mountains, there are still vast deserts. Saudi Arabia is also host country to one of the most sacred cities for Moslems. People come from all over the world to worship at Mecca. I also pointed out that all three nations as well as others nearby drill and sell large amounts of crude oil.

Iraq has a very old culture. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers run through its center. There was an ancient civilization that grew strong in those valleys several thousand years ago. These rivers and those people were mentioned in the Bible.

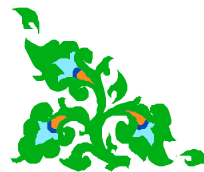
Taking the time to apply what we learn to our daily life is very important. Even though Iraq is 7000 miles away, when we read about or hear about it and the Middle East we will have a better idea of where and what they are talking about.

By
Robert Bivins



Development Dialogue *by Maria Asher*

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