

“Newsy” the ESOL Tutor Newsletter

May 1, 2020

Hi everyone,

We are definitely moving into the next phase of this journey. More and more we are talking about how Literacy Unlimited and the libraries may function when “stay-at-home orders” are lifted. Although we may be able to meet face-to-face, we will be maintaining physical distancing and wearing masks. With that in mind, almost all meetings (e.g., tutor and student, conversation classes, tutor get-togethers, etc.) will probably continue to meet remotely in some capacity.

For almost 2 months, we have been sharing many ideas for continuing to tutor or lead conversation classes remotely through weekly tutor technology meetings, weekly tutor get-togethers, weekly Newsy emails, and person to person calls. Now seems a good time to slow down the information sharing and let you put some of these ideas into practice if you haven’t already.

Tutor Meetings - On Tuesday we had 13 participants in our weekly **Tutor Technology meeting** and last night we had 12 participants at the **Tutor Get-together**. You can read about these meetings below in the Weekly Tutor Get-togethers section.

Tutor Hours for April – In addition to phone calls, texts, emails, and of course virtual conferencing time (e.g., Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp, etc.) with your student, please let us know how many hours you spent wrangling with technology (both you and with your student) and planning lessons with your student.

Testing: Because student testing cannot be administered in person or remotely, your students’ May/June assessments have been put on hold until further notice.

Correction: The new Pronunciation conversation class on Friday afternoon is for **low intermediate to advanced** English learners.

Last Week’s “Newsy” Survey

We had 8 respondents to our survey about what fun things we are doing. Five of the respondents are reading good books. 33% of respondents are watching Grey’s Anatomy – yay for reruns! For complete survey results see our website here [Literacy Home page](#)

Weekly Conversation Classes

The **following English conversation classes are being held** and tutors are referring students who need the practice. If you have a student who might benefit from participation in a conversation class, please let us know by email fplmail4@minlib.net. The conversation leader will forward the meeting information to them.

Some of these classes use video conferencing, some not:

Beginner: Mondays 1:00 – 2:30PM “Test-driving” TPRS method **NEW**

Low Int to Adv: Fridays 1:00 – 2:30 PM Pronunciation – but fun! **NEW**

High Beg/Int: Thursdays 1:00 – 2:30PM

Intermediate: Tuesdays 1:00– 2:30PM

Wednesdays 10:00 – 11:30PM

Advanced: Wednesdays 7:00 – 8:30PM

Natick is also offering conversation classes – contact Laurie Christie at LChristie@minlib.net for more information.

Weekly Tutor Get-togethers

Tutor Technology Meeting – Tuesday May 5th at 2:00 PM (Note: no meeting on May 12th).

These ZOOM meetings are about technology and digital teaching options for use in conversation classes or for one-to-one tutoring.

The meeting on April 28th was focused on WhatsApp, a free app used by many students. For tutorials and more information about WhatsApp go to our website here [Literacy Website/Covid-19 Ideas](#)

The meeting on **May 5th** will focus on Mango Languages. A Mango representative will join us and present Mango and explain how it can be used by ESOL tutors.

If you have an idea for a technology topic, let us know fplmail4@minlib.net

Tutor Get-together – Thursday May 7th at 7:00 PM (Note: No meeting on May 14th).

These ZOOM meetings (using video conferencing or call-in, your choice) are for tutors to support each other and to share tutoring ideas while maintaining physical distancing.

Last night we discussed many topics including: how tutors might expand a student's vocabulary, we practiced screen-sharing with ZOOM, and we learned that the Library's Adventures in Learning will be offered in May via ZOOM meetings.

Joining a ZOOM meeting: Click here [Literacy Unlimited/Covid-19 Ideas](#) for ZOOM download instructions for Android and IOS devices. If you don't have video capability, you can just call into the meeting. Liehua has helped several tutors, who have called into a meeting, to set up the video at a later date.

Ideas for Working with Your Students While Practicing Physical Distancing

If you are looking for ways to jump start your tutoring, Literacy Volunteers of Massachusetts (LVM) shared a PowerPoint presentation with us that has many ideas ranging from using minimal technology to using videoconferencing. The presentation also has many links to great resources for tutoring ideas – we discussed several of them at last night's Tutor Get-together. LVM also shared visual instructions for downloading ZOOM on iPhone and Android devices which may be of help to your students. You can find this information on our website here [Literacy Unlimited/Covid-19 Ideas](#)

It's the beginning of the month and the ESL Library has new lessons. One of them is "Attending an Online Class or Meeting" and another is "Spring and Easter Idioms" (they are Spring related and not out of date). You can find them under the "Materials" drop-down list at the top of the ESL Home page, click on "Resources" and then click on the topic "Visual Learning".

Based on the tutor meetings and the survey responses, many of you are connecting with your students in a variety of ways based on the tutor's and the student's situation. If you are working with a student remotely and would like to share your process with other tutors, please let us know fplmail4@minlib.net.

Reminders

The 2020 census is here and it is so important that everyone complete their census form. We continue to post information about it on our website here [FPL Website/Literacy/Census](#). The deadline for returning census forms has been **extended to October 31, 2020**. Framingham response rates are above average no doubt in part due to the work you have been doing to get the message out to students.

Although we are working from home, we do have access to our database, email, and voicemail and can give you student or tutor contact information if you need it.

Just for Fun

No survey this week – we're giving you a break! 😊 However, if you have a photograph of what you have been doing or what made you happy over the last 2 months, please send it to fplmail4@minlib.net. Liehua will make a collage to share.

Musings

Whew, another week behind us. I must say I am tired of the same old, same old even though so much has changed in the past two months. I would like to change things up a bit, but I am finding it difficult to find the energy to make the changes. I think what I am really looking forward to is a vacation or at least a couple of 70 degree, sunny days. I think I might really enjoy our next vacation whenever that might be. I guess I could start planning one but that would take energy. Oh well, I think I'll go make a cup of tea, read a good book and wait for a warm, sunny day. Oh wait a minute, I just got an email from Russell's Garden center – they are open for retail shopping. And it looks like Fran's Flowers may be open for retail shopping as well and River's Edge Garden Center has curbside pick-up. All is good! 😊

Stay healthy and safe and enjoy getting outside this weekend.