

Vineland Public Library's  
American Dream:  
**Volunteer ESL Tutoring**



[hrogerson@vinelandlibrary.org](mailto:hrogerson@vinelandlibrary.org)

856-784-4244 x4243

# My ESL Background:

- Masters degree in Linguistics
- 20 years of ESL experience – teaching & teacher-training
  - University of Pittsburgh
  - Nichiei Kaiwa Gakuin in Tokyo
  - Triton Community College in Chicago
  - Federal Correctional Institution at Ray Brook, NY
- Speak Spanish

# Our Program:

- One-on-one tutoring
- Minimum 1 hour a week & a 4-month commitment
- Survival English focus
- All tutoring done in the library
- Free for students & tutors

# Why tutoring?

- Limited funding
- Limited room availability
- Student scheduling problems
- Range of levels among students
- Potential for involving more community members

# The Challenges:

- Recruiting tutors
- Training tutors
- Selecting appropriate tutoring materials
- Matching up tutors with students
- Communicating with tutors & students

Recruiting students – NOT a challenge!

# Tutor Recruitment:

*(Listed with most useful first)*

- Electronic sign in front of library
- Articles in newspapers
- Articles in church bulletins
- “Everyone” email to city employees

# Training Tutors:

- Time constraints, so only two 2-hour sessions
- 20-page training manual
- Given every other month, alternating evening & morning
- Emphasis on cultural pitfalls, how to use the texts & available help

# Selecting Materials:

- Survival English
- Beginning level through high intermediate
- All skills addressed
- Easy to use
- Suitable for ELLs from any language background

# *Survival English: English Through Conversations, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*

- Lee Mosteller & Bobbi Paul
- 3 volumes



Students above the survival level use a variety of materials that they and their tutors choose.



# Matching Tutors w/ Students:

- Interview tutors
  - Contact info?
  - Prior teaching or tutoring experience?
  - Languages spoken or studied?
  - Prefer same gender student?
  - Prefer a particular level student?
  - Possible tutoring schedule?

# Matching Tutors w/ Students

- Interview Students
  - Contact info?
  - Goals?
  - Level of English skills?
  - Education level in first language?
  - Possible tutoring schedule?

# Communicating

- We arrange 1<sup>st</sup> tutoring session, then the tutor & student decide when to meet.
- Tutors & students told to call library Info Desk when need to reschedule, etc.
  - Now that have > 30 tutors, told to exchange phone #s as soon as feel comfortable
- Use email & bulletin board with tutors

# Pitfalls

- Tutors not showing up
  - Only happened a couple of times
- Students not showing up
  - Fairly frequent for 1<sup>st</sup> appointments
  - They get a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance, but only one!
- Once a pair meet for the 1<sup>st</sup> time, there are very few problems.

# How It's Working:

- July, 2010:
  - 7 tutors did 45 hours of tutoring
- March, 2011:
  - 28 tutors did 139 hours of tutoring
- Over 160 students have requested tutoring so far.
- Happy tutoring pairs can be seen all over the library everyday

## Other Texts Used:

- *Clear Speech* by Judy B. Gilbert
- *Discussion Starters* by Keith S. Folse
- *Longman ESL Literacy* by Yvonne Wong Nishio
- *Oxford English Picture Dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*, by Jayme Adelson – Goldstein
- *Longman Photo Dictionary of American English* (with CDs)
- *Discovering American Culture* by Cheryl L. Delk