

LEARN Minutes for February 24, 2009 at Helen Plum Library

Attendance & Introductions:

1. Ann Weaver (Westchester Library) – Ann described how Westchester has an older building with limited space and must be selective of the materials they purchase.
2. RoseAnn Vonesh (Oak Park Library) – RoseAnn is handing over responsibility for the ESL collection to Ed O'Brien.
3. Ed O'Brien (Oak Park Library) – Ed is excited to be taking a more active role with the ESL collection
4. Joe Popowitch (Indian Prairie Library) – Joe updates the LEARN Web site, maintains the Yahoo email group and takes notes at the meetings.
5. Karen Dini (Addison Library) – Mentioned that a nearby Junior High is a site for ESL classes, and thus the library sees some of those students.
6. Ellen Pancoe (Glen Ellyn Library) – The Glen Ellyn ESL collection is small and old and has recently been weeded.
7. Kate Mallon (Wheaton Library) – Because World Relief is located nearby, Wheaton Library has a demand for ESL materials. ESL students from the middle school are interested in books on CD. Kate asked if anyone had suggestions for books on CD. Some suggestions included Bookworms on Audio which I found at <http://www.oup.com/elt/catalogue/isbn/31059/?cc=gb>, SmartReader books on CD by Recorded books, and books on CD by Cambridge University Press (which I am having trouble locating).
8. Esther Chase (Brookfield Library) – Esther has been involved with ESL in a number of ways. She has worked with Project CARE at Morton College and at Lyons Township High School. Every two weeks she moderates an ESL book discussion group. She uses books in the Fastback series which are at a 5th grade reading level and available at www.pearson.com.
9. Tiffany Morgan is the Coordinator of Literacy Volunteers of Western Cook County.
10. Tina Viglucci (Aurora Library) – Tina is the Spanish materials specialist which includes handling ESL and helping people find fiction titles they are interested in reading.
11. Barbara Drai (Helen Plum Library) – They pulled together an ELL collection a few years ago, and it is not very well used at this time. Many of the patrons that might make use of the collection live in unincorporated areas and cannot get library cards. They have thought about creating a scholarship to help get cards for these people. As the economy gets worse, many of these patrons have left to return to their countries of origin. Would it be better to focus their resources on the tutors? (At Wheaton Library, patrons who live in unincorporated areas can still check out materials, but they must leave an ID at the library to do so. This question has come up before. I will try to get the specifics of this program from Kate Mallon at Wheaton and post it.)

12. Jan O'Connell (Helen Plum Library) – Before they spend more money, they want to wait to see which items are getting used so that they can avoid buying more “wrong” items.
13. Merrill Tlusty (Bloomington Library) – They have a different librarian who handles ordering books in other languages and other formats. Books on CD seem to go out well. They have something called the Froil Collection, which is maintained through a perpetual donation from a patron. The collection includes easier ESL books. Merrill can get a list of publishers of the materials in the collection if the LEARN group members are interested. The items in the Froil collection are available to be interlibrary loaned.
14. Leslie Brittain (Winfield Library) – Winfield is a small library with no money or space for an ESL collection. Two of the major foreign languages for the area are Russian and Polish. Leslie pointed out that the letter of intent for the LSTA grant offerings from the Illinois Secretary of State are due at the end of March.
15. Debbie Bradt (School on Wheels) – Debbie is replacing Sister Marybeth as head of School on Wheels. She recently attended the TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) Conference in Naperville. One idea from the conference was to use children's literature (50 words or less) on mature topics with pictures. An example she gave was *The Wall* by Eve Bunting, which talks about visiting the Vietnam Wall Memorial. She also suggested looking at www.usalearns.org, which is an outgrowth of a project conceived by the U.S. Department of Education.
16. Jean Demas (Lisle Library) – Jean mentioned that they also have an Adult New Reader Card for patrons living in unincorporated areas (I can post this information as well). The Lisle collection started with a grant and now has a budget of \$12,000 with an additional \$2,000 from the Friends. For smaller libraries, Jean says to be patient because it takes time to develop a collection. The collection includes all formats, but she is replacing tapes with DVDs and CDs, and she buys a lot through Midwest Tape and California Language Laboratories. Lisle also has a Literacy Room with a dedicated computer and space for tutoring. Jean buys several copies of each Oxford Picture Dictionary, but she does not buy foreign language materials. Each library must decide its own mission and who it is going to serve. Patrons can find materials to read in their own languages, but Lisle is focusing on helping them learn English. Jean notes that over 54 languages are spoken in the local schools.
17. Cheryl Diane Collins (Forest Park Library) mentioned that they have three meeting rooms for doing tutoring.
18. Carol Larsen (New Readers Press) – Carol has worked as an ESL instructor herself, and she discussed some of the products available from New Readers Press, specifically *Endeavor*.

New Readers Press Presentation:

- *Endeavor* helps to analyze a student's vocabulary, fluency and phonics. It is, more or less, an updated and revised version of the old *Voyager* series. There are three tiers of

words, and *Endeavor* focuses on tier 2 words, which are the words that continuously pop up in daily life. It covers levels 3-8.

- Jean Demas said that many of the New Readers Press products seem to deal with intermediate levels, while the patron demand in libraries is often for beginning level materials.
- Tina liked that *Endeavor* is up to date.
- Sometimes patrons write inside circulating copies of workbooks like the ones offered by *Endeavor*. Cheryl Diane Collins mentioned that tutors can sometimes photocopy pages so students have a copy on which they can write.
- School on Wheels uses several New Readers Press Products, including: *Easy Stories*, *More Easy Stories*, *That's Life*, *Life Goes On*, and *Health Stories*.
- Barbara Drai commented that it looked like New Readers Press seemed to have more tutor-related products than resources that students could use on their own.
- Esther Chase noted that *Timeless Tales* was one title that students could use themselves.
- *Living in America* and *Across the U.S.* were two other New Readers Press titles mentioned. They deal with civics and literacy. **Note: The Citizenship test will be changing.

Hosting an MLS Workshop:

The group was given the following rough draft of a description of the proposed ESL workshop to be presented at MLS. We discussed what should be added or removed from the workshop.

1. The invitation of publishers to the meeting might come off as an endorsement. It could be quite time consuming and almost could be its own workshop.
2. Ann Weaver also wanted us to define our audience. We might not want to market this as solely for the buyers of ESL materials, but rather as a useful presentation for all reference librarians – ESL things to look for in your library.
3. Marketing – For many LEARN members, this has been something that needs improvement. Suggested topics for this portion of the presentation include:
 - Discussing the LEARN Web Site.
 - LEARN brochure and individual library brochures
 - Signs and newsletters.
 - Partnering with other organizations.
 - Bring in a PR strategist to discuss how to promote the collection.
 - How to do an ESL Reference Interview (Esther is creating a flowchart for this).
 - Flowchart for how to use the collection (i.e. Here's where to start).
 - Get more teachers involved (ESL teachers at community colleges or tutors).
 - Demonstrate model book discussion (Esther moderates one and Tina starts one in May).
 - Have the community colleges come to the library.

- Demonstrate how we are promoting local tutoring groups.
- Encourage more patrons to actually get library cards (the tutoring groups direct their students to get cards).
- Publish something in *ILA Reporter* asking how libraries are addressing ESL.
- Have a tutor handbook translated into other languages.
- Discuss how to communicate with people who cannot communicate.

MLS Workshop on ESL

I'm in Charge of the ESL Collection. Now What?

or

Assisting the ESL Patron

Length: 3 hours

This workshop is designed to help library staff assist ESL patrons by addressing the following three goals:

- Goal 1 (Selection):** To select the most useful items for our patrons.
- Review a core list of materials (yet to be created).
 - Recommended resources – This would include all the resources that LEARN group members have recommended at meetings. It would also include the recommended lists from Literacy Dupage and Literacy Volunteers of Western Cook County.
 - Publishers: Invite representatives from 4? of the biggest publishers to talk (15 minutes each) about their products.
 - Special Collections: Describe special resources already at area libraries for library staff to make referrals.
- Goal 2 (Promotion):** To inform the public that we have these special collections.
- Tips on marketing the collection.
 - Discuss LEARN's joint brochures.
- Goal 3 (Referral):** To effectively direct patrons to non-profit organizations when there is a need beyond the resources we have available.
- Have representatives from each of the tutoring groups talk.

Some Questions We Need to Address

1. Which members of our group will speak at the meeting?
2. Which publishers, and how many, should we invite?
3. How much time should be allotted to each person and topic of the discussion?
4. We need to create a core list of materials.
5. Goal 2: Promotion has always been one of our library's weaknesses. I feel that this topic needs to be effectively developed before we do a presentation.

Should the LEARN Have its Own Ning?

Lisle Library created a makeshift Ning, which is similar to Facebook, for us to try. I tried to demonstrate this at the meeting, but we were running too short of time to really explore all of its functions. Basically a Ning is similar to a blog, but it is much more interactive. Each user can set it up so that every time there is a message posted to the Ning, the message will appear in that person's email. Therefore, it would not require people to log into *yet another* online account. Users could follow each thread, or idea, easily. Currently, we use a Yahoo email group to communicate, and there is no way to follow the thread of any one idea. In addition, some members have found it difficult to get into the Yahoo email group, which makes it cumbersome for me to contact everyone. Perhaps I can work on the Ning and try to present it again at the next meeting.

Resource Sharing:

The following titles were recommended. I will add these to the existing list of items recommended from previous meetings and make that list available on the LEARN Web site.

1. *English Grammar* (8-10 DVDs by Video Aided Instruction
<http://www.videoaidedinstruction.com/englishgrammar.html>) (Suggested by Kate Mallon).
2. *Barron's Pronounce it Perfectly in English* CD (Suggested by Kate Mallon).
3. *Oxford Picture Dictionary* CD-ROM/DVD-ROM (Suggested by Kate Mallon).
4. *Adios, Accent* DVD by Vocalis Ltd. (Suggested by Karen Dini).
5. *Slangman Guide to Street Speak* CD.
6. *50 Strategies for Teaching Language Learners* by Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall (Suggested by Ann Weaver).
7. *In English On Your Own* DVD by Video Language Products (Suggested by Joe Popowitch).
8. Capstone Press at www.capstonepress.com has bilingual titles on many topics (Suggested by Tina Viglucci).
9. Saddleback Publishing has a series called Saddleback Pageturners which are more adult-like and include teacher resource guides (Suggested by Cheryl Diane Collins).
10. Saddleback Publishing also has a series of Read Alongs like the *Shakespeare Read Alongs* <http://www.sdlback.com/p-89065-shakespeare-ic-read-alongs.aspx>. This series features classic Shakespeare retold with graphic color illustrations (Barbara Drai).
11. Merrill Tlusty related that during National Library Week (April 12-18) the Bloomingdale library will have a unified theme of "Worlds Connect" throughout the library, including in the ESL area.

Miscellaneous:

- Tina suggested that maybe we could form a cooperative for ESL book discussions. Each library might buy a set of one title, and then the sets could be circulated among the libraries.
- Many people come to the LEARN meetings with specific questions, and these are not always answered. I plan to create a section on the Web site to post these questions, and hopefully post the answers as well.

Next Meeting:

Woodridge Library had volunteered to host the meeting for a Tuesday in August. I will announce the meeting time when the arrangements have been made.