



NALA-GRAM

A Newsletter for Tutors and Volunteers

July 2016

From the Director's Desk

I was thinking of ways to show how we value our volunteers, and decided to venture into commercials. For example, paraphrasing *Visa*, I could say: "Volunteers—don't leave students without them!" Or we might restate the *Army* slogan and add to it: "Be all that you can be—with the help of our volunteers!"

Give me a slogan and I'll turn it into positive praise for all of you wonderful volunteers. Whether you teach in the classroom, tutor one-on-one, serve in the office, work as a board member, and/or give to our financial needs, you are essential to our literacy program. Truly, we couldn't do it without you.

What excites me is the new ways you approach your task. Whether it's teaching or serving in other roles, you come up with ideas I've never thought of. A case in point—Judy has her student telling his life story. She writes it down, puts it in the computer and prints it off, then has him read it. Since he's familiar with the words and interested in the story, he's practicing it so he can read it to family members. That's literacy, folks!

Mary, who works with a developmentally challenged adult, is assigning her student to write a story during our three-week break. The student will use stories in Laubach Way to Reading, copying if she needs to. This will help her review the content and practice spelling the words.

Janet teaches ESL students and reinforces their learning of English with varied approaches. She uses conversation, fill-in-the-blank sentences, interaction between the students, and real items as well as the books we furnish.

I could go on with the innovations you come up with to enable your student to make progress, but let me finish by saying, "Thank you—I am impressed and

grateful for your expertise and desire to strengthen our students' literacy skills." I am glad we can work together toward that goal, for our mission is exactly that—to enable learners to reach their full potential. Thank you for your part in all that we do.

Marj



Student Spotlight

Edgar Sosa

Edgar returned to NALA in August of 2014 with a list of goals - get a better job, improve employability skills, enter college or job training, improve English language skills, obtain citizenship, and increase community involvement. He can check some of those goals off his list! Edgar passed the High School Equivalency exam, allowing him more opportunity for job advancement. He was recently promoted at work and continues to come to ESL classes two evenings each week. Edgar is a serious learner - while having fun in class - and is always happy to help out other students! We congratulate Edgar on his recent accomplishments and look forward to assisting him as he continues to meet his goals.

Teacher Feature

Kalli McCoy

When Kalli came to NALA in July of last year she said, "I love meeting and helping people." That is exactly what she does each Monday at 1:00 with her Special Needs class - meets and helps people. Kalli keeps her students engaged as they practice short reading selections containing common words. In addition to phonics instruction, she leads the class in writing, speaking, and listening activities to teach basic skills and build confidence. And the class looks forward to ending each session with a game of bingo using sight words! Thank you for sharing your time and talents with your students at NALA.

Tutor Tips

Language Experience Story

The concept behind the Language Experience Story is that students will be telling a story using their own words, making it easier for them to learn to read the story.

Begin by asking the student a question. Possibilities would be:

- What is your favorite hobby? Describe what you do.
- If you could have three wishes, what would they be?
- What type of work do you do? What do you like about your work? What do you dislike?
- What is the strangest thing that ever happened to you?
- What is something you do well? What would you tell someone else about it?
- If you had as much time and money as you needed, how would you spend your vacation?

If your student is somewhat uncommunicative, you may have to keep asking for more information. "Tell me about that. What did you do then?" As the student tells you the story, take it down word for word. Try to keep it in their words as much as possible. Ask the learner for a title. Read the story back to see if you have it down correctly. Read each sentence aloud, tracking the words with your finger. Ask the learner to read each sentence after you.

After that have the learner read the entire story. If there are many words the learner doesn't know, make flash cards to review. You may read it with the learner in a kind of duet reading where you both read at the same time. The learner might be a little bit behind you, but you just keep a steady flow and pace. This promotes fluency and lessens anxiety.

Before the next session, you may want to save a typed copy for both of you to look at. Review words on flash cards and read the story duet fashion first. Then have the learner read it. Multiple readings are good.

With a low level English as a second language learner, I have used a modified version of this technique.

Taking words we've been learning I write a story about the learner, and we practice it. I may write a description of the learner if we're learning body parts. "***Mikhail has brown hair and brown eyes. He is tall and strong. He likes to play soccer. He is learning English at Joplin NALA Read.***" It is helpful to act out or illustrate each of the sentences, as much as possible, so the student understands your story about him.

Save the Dates

Benefit Breakfast

Saturday, July 9th



Volunteers from NALA will serve farm fresh eggs cooked to order, sausage, biscuits and gravy, juice, and coffee at the Webb City Farmers Market **Saturday morning, July 9th from 9 to 11.** Come out and have breakfast for a good cause – literacy!

Tutor In-service

Thursday, July 21st

Thursday, July 21 from 12:30-1:30 in classroom 5 at NALA we'll do a hands-on "Language Experience" and "Duet Reading" session. We'll learn about each other in the stories we share and practice the techniques. Bring your lunch and come prepared to enjoy this Tutor In-Service.



NEW – CITIZENSHIP CLASS



We have had many students ask about citizenship classes – so NALA tutor Laura Teverow decided to take action! She is currently working with three students who are preparing to take the citizenship test, but beginning **August 1st** Laura will offer classes to present and reinforce the knowledge required to pass the citizenship test, supplementing each class with related lessons in American history and government (*beneficial to non-citizenship students as well*). Citizenship classes will be offered in conjunction with ESL classes on Monday evenings from 5:00 to 7:00 for beginning level and intermediate level students.