

LOOK AT US!



A Newsletter of the Los Angeles Public Library
Adult Literacy Services
Edited by Ruth Gooley
Fall 2006

IT'S A MATCH!

The Tutor's Tale
by Phyllis Gibson

My current pupil, Hung Phan, (Dr. Phan Hung in his native Vietnam) is a born student. Only in his mid-30s, Hung is a full-fledged medical specialist, a urologist and talented surgeon. He may legally practice in many other countries, including Germany and Vietnam. However, before he can practice as a physician in the United States, he must literally take all his general medical training over from scratch, in English!!! and pass his National Boards. In preparation for these exams, Hung has been studying night and day at the Kaplan Center, which specializes in preparing doctors from other countries for their board exams. One aspect of the exams will require him to converse with and diagnose mock patients who will describe various symptoms of illness.

Although he is extremely intelligent, and can read and write English quite well, Hung knew his verbal skills, and particularly his English pronunciation, would make him virtually unintelligible to most Americans. He laughingly gave me an example of his limitations when we first met by telling me, "I'm going to say two sentences: 'This drug will kill you' and 'This drug will cure you.' Can you tell the difference between them?" I absolutely could not hear the difference in the way he pronounced "kill" and "cure" and frankly told him so. "Now you see my problem," he said. We both giggled, and then I said, "I think we'd better get to work immediately."

More than a year has passed now, and Hung is preparing to take the first written segment of his board exams in the next few months. He has made remarkable progress. His dedication to learning and his willingness to try to wrap his mouth around our not-so-easy language – especially words that begin or end with multiple consonants – have inspired me never to give up on any task I ever tackle. I know he will make a wonderful contribution to the medical profession in the U.S. and that he will be completely ready to make himself understood to his patients when the time comes for him to resume his practice. It has been an honor to be his teacher.

The Learner's Tale
by Hung C. Phan

I am Hung C. Phan, I have been in the US for eighteen months. I was really frustrated the I first came here because I could not know what was people saying to me or vice versa, even though I had studied English for many years in Vietnam. It is my luck to find out the adult literacy program and my wonderful tutor, Mrs. Phillis Gibson, who taught me many things from how to curve my tongue and round my lip to pronounce the single words. To be honest, I have never thought earlier speaking English is that difficult and it is still now. Weeks after weeks, the more I practiced English with my tutor, the better I got understood by people around me.

I am now on my way for the National board in Medicine, thus, my tutor is one of those who paved that way. More than words, I want to say thanks you to her again.

How wonderful! We'll be your patients any day, Dr Phan Hung!

CONGRATULATIONS

Adult Literacy Services would like to say congratulations to the following
Learners:

Don Beckerman, a finalist in the Writer to Writer Contest sponsored by the California State Library, was honored at the "Books Change Lives" Ceremony, hosted by the California Center for the Book. His tutor, Tamara Rosenberg, and Adult Literacy Coordinator, Bill Wells, also attended the awards ceremony. Don's letter, which was addressed to Mario Puzo, author of *The Godfather*, is available online at http://calbook.org/pdf/wtw/2006_entries/wtw06_beckerman.pdf.
Take a look at the letter—you'll be impressed. We were.

Sung Hee, encouraged by tutor Alex Gray, enrolled in an art class and is relying on her new and improved English skills to help her through. *That is wonderful! We'll want to see samples for the next newsletter.*

Margarita Hernandez may not be a citizen and can't vote, but she and her tutor Gail Browning talk a lot about politics and local issues just the same. Gail says she's hoping that by the end of the year Margarita will be a citizen. *Good luck, Margarita!*

Terry Moore not only learned to spell 6 new words, he also learned to recognize 24 letters of the alphabet by sight and to alphabetize them. Tutor Eileen King reports that Terry also has a new job at Goodwill, where someday he hopes to be a manager. *Good luck, Terry. We wish you all the best.*

Graduates of the June 2006 Tutor Training workshop:

Dwayne Alexander	Djallon Dinwiddie	Rita Stanford
Chooi Feei Ang	Patricia Hong	Kathy Strelieoff
Dave Baggott	Lester Lie	Elsa Tran
Kim Barnes	David Malofy	Brett Yoshimura
Tim Barnes	Michael Mocciano	Susan Yoshimura
Jackie Browne	Cathy Pack	Rahat Zaidi
Susan Casmier	Rose Reid	Sue Morgan
Colleen DeCourval	Edwin Ricaflanca	
LaVonda Dillon	Olga Sokolova	

Graduates of the July 2006 Tutor Training workshop:

Gwyn Drischell	Dorothy Nishikawa	Harry Sweet
Trang Duong	Eliz. Richter	May Vicent
Jose Estrada	Arabella Santiago	Carol Watson
Bruce Fisher	Karla Schuh	June Weddaburne
Stan Jones	Helena Simon	Carolyn Winston
Alex Kochlas	Eleanor Southers	Lettie Villarreal
Steven Malm	Bonnie Spielman	

Graduates of the August 2006 Tutor Training workshop:

Eduardo Ballerini	Kathy Huang	Barbara Snagg
Patrick Bollig	Susan Hulbert	Michael Wang
Leticia Burgos	Alexander Jones	Byron Wright
Tanya Bhardwaj	K'yhel King	Alana Mayo
Dianne Edson	David Lara	Edie Oligan
Carmen Gamboa	Eunju Lim	Richard Wishingrad
Rita Hill	Doreen Scott	

Graduates of the September 2006 Tutor Training workshop:

Heather Bradford	Lisa Greenwell	Jaelyn Reiman
Joann Cantillon	Jason Kandel	Krista Richardson
Maria Casio	Jane Karwoski	Norma Saunders
Jacqueline Chou	Alberto Lucas-Bohm	Milt Schuffman
Katherine Cominolo	Karin Nelson	Bette Smith
Marian English	Doris Olikier	Brenda Sykes
Rochelle Fernandes	Danielle Parsons	Tina Yang
Jina Field	Barbara Piggee	
Rosalie Gray	Victoria Pua	

FUTURE TUTOR TRAINING WORKSHOPS:

Tutor training workshops will be held on the following dates and locations

Saturday, October 14 at the Baldwin Hills Branch

Saturday, November 18 at the Mid-Valley Regional Branch

Saturday, December 16 at the Jefferson Branch

TUTOR APPRECIATION

Look for an invitation to our annual Tutor Appreciation Event, coming soon.

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

Taking the Driver's License Written Test by Nathan Fletcher

There were thirty-six questions. I did not pass the first time, but I did not give up. Me and my tutor went on the Internet and got the sample DMV tests. We made a list of the rules and laws from the DMV book. We went over them again and again. I wrote down the answers to the questions I missed on the practice tests. The first time I did not know what to expect, the second time I was more comfortable with the computer and the way it produced the questions. My tutor told me how to skip the questions I was not sure of.

The second time I was more determined because I did not want to fail. I passed the second time with an eighty-six. At first, I did not believe it, I was so excited and looked around and asked the woman sitting next to me: "Did the computer say I passed?" She looked and said, "Yeah!"

That was a good feeling. I stormed up out of there smiling and told my tutor: "I passed!"

How the Library Changed My Life By Eun Hae

My name is Eunhae. My husband, my children and I came to America from Korea two years ago. My husband's company invited our family to U.S. After coming to U.S., my family often go to the library. In this country, there are a lot of libraries that we can use. My children and I go to the library about twice a week. My children love to choose books and video in the library. In the beginning of our American life, these books and videos helped us to improve on English. Sometimes, senior woman reads books to young kids. My daughter attended one of these programs. One day, one of my friend told me that there are an English Improvement service program. That program helps adult to learn more English. So I asked one of the librarian to join the English program.

At last, I was able to meet the English tutor. When I join this program, I was very happy. These days, I am learning from English tutor. This program is important for me. I hope I can speak and write English well. I wish I could improve my life.

With Gratitude
By Gloria Ibarra

I want to give thanks to the Public library program for tutoring an adult to write and read English.

First it is a very supportive program because it is very flexible with the hours. They are 2 hours per week. And it is one to one.

Second Volunteers take time from their own schedules, with kindness and love to teach others who want to learn and improve their second language.

For me this program has been a beautiful experience, because not only did I meet a wonderful human being but also I have a friend. Our relationship has grown and given us the opportunity to share and learn from each other like human beings.

Please keep this program. Not only does it allow those who are concerned to make a difference in our world, it also opens to the students other opportunities—reaching books, using the internet, borrowing tapes and videos, and enjoying the beautiful facilities. When we are here, we reach something else.

Giovanna and I
By William Keogh



Liam and Giovanna

One day I happened to be walking passed North Valley Occupational Center with my dog. On my way back home I decided to go into the school to see if I could get some help with my reading.

There I met Giovanna for the first time; at that moment I was very shy and nervous. Giovanna asked me some questions about my background and then she had me take a test to see what the school could do for me. After the test Giovanna and I sat down to set goals for myself and put a plan together.

My first goal was to get my green card and secondly, my driver's license. It was a very happy time for me when I finally had a driver's license in my hand. Now I could drive my first car in California and it gave me a new sense of freedom.

As time passed I became good friends with Giovanna and her family. Because of Giovanna's encouragement, I tried to go to school as much as I could while working at night. Soon after starting at North Valley I began studying for my American citizenship and six months later successfully passed the test. I am now going on my sixth year and proud to be an American citizen while still retaining my Irish passport.

Meeting Giovanna, competing the North Valley program, getting my driver's license, green card and citizenship has given me a lot of courage to go on expanding my life.

Giovanna also encouraged me to enter the Literacy Program at the public library. There I was blessed with good fortune. I was given a wonderful tutor, Anastasia; she is kind, patient, and has empowered my life. Because of these two people my life is constantly improving and I intend to keep moving forward.

Fernando, the Champion Loser
By Fernando Mercado

My friend at work asked me to join him in a contest to lose weight. There were ten teams of eight people – all of them employees of Crane Aerospace. We had six weeks to lose as many pounds as we could. Each member of the winning team would get a day off, with pay.

I went on a diet. I ate only vegetables and fruit and, every third day, a little protein in the form of tacos. Every day I ran five miles from my house to Hansen Dam and back. I ran after work, between 3 and 5 p.m. before I got lazy.

Every Tuesday was a weigh-in. The contest director recorded our weights. She posted them so everyone could see the results from each team. My team was called, "The Fat and the Furious". Within our team we bet \$20 to see which individual could lose the most.

My team won. We lost a total of 150 pounds, almost 50 pounds more than the runner-up team. I lost 34 pounds -- more than anyone else in the contest. So I got the day off with pay, plus \$140 from my teammates. Now, the challenge is to keep those 34 pounds from coming back.

TUTOR REFLECTIONS:

On Tutoring
by Roberta Miller

I had no idea how much I would learn about the English language through tutoring my student. I just always took my knowing how to read, write and speak English for granted. The Challenger series is fun, informative and a learning experience for both my student and myself. Learning about my student's culture and ability to learn to read, write and speak English has been a unique and enlightening experience.

CLASSES:

Adult Literacy Services are proud to offer the following classes. Please call the appropriate Center for more information.

Singleton Adult Literacy Center at the Central Library:

English conversation class: Monday-Thursday 3:30-5
Friday-Saturday 2-3:30

Writing class: Monday 2-3:30
Tuesday 10:30-12 and 2-3:30

Mommy and Me: Thursday 11-12

MidValley Regional Branch:

Conversation class: Wednesday 12:30-2
Thursday 3:30-5

Pio-Pico Koreatown Branch:

Conversation class: Tuesday 3:30-5

Vocabulary: Please contact coordinator for times.

TUTOR HINT

Spelling
by Holly Schoch,
Adult Literacy Coordinator,
Panorama City Branch Library

Visualization is a major key to spelling success.

In the workshop tutors learned about learning styles and that most likely, students will usually not have the same learning style.

This is also true of spelling. Natural spellers visualize words. They see the word in their mind. You can help your student become more proficient in this.

Have your student look at a word, then close their eyes and see the word in their minds eye and then spell it out loud or write it down or both. Visualizing does not come easily to some so it will take practice.

Spend just a few minutes each session having your student practice seeing the word in their minds eye.

Along with showing students how to find the correct spelling for a word (i.e. dictionary or spell check), visualization can help them to become more confident spellers.

THE WORD TRAVELS

The Adult Literacy Coordinator's Tale
by June Brandon
Adult Literacy Coordinator
Exposition Park Branch Library



I could not believe what my eyes were revealing to me! Am I suffering from intense eyestrain? Or were my eyes just playing tricks on me? I was passing through a small classroom at the Bridgman Center in Zola Township, Soweto, South Africa, and what do I notice but a rust colored syllabus sitting on a half hidden shelf in the far corner of the room. I was drawn to investigate more closely; to turn the booklet around and, oh my, IT IS the same Challenger 1, student edition, skill book that we use in our Adult Literacy program in Los Angeles, California, USA!

I had travelled to South Africa as a representative from my church, Lincoln Memorial Congregational, United Church of Christ. Our group of 20 persons was assigned that day to work with the children that are enrolled in the Center's after school homework assistance

program. Due to a scarcity of children's books, the center uses whatever reading materials they have available to assist the children. Would you believe that neither the vowel sounds, nor the consonant sounds as presented in the Challenger lesson altered because I was working with a child rather than an adult! The language arts were constant, but I did alter the story line a bit to make it more relevant to the children and their surroundings.

In the future when I relate to tutors the global significance of Frank Laubach's literacy work, I will share with them the excitement I felt on finding that little rust colored book, sitting on a shelf 15,000 miles from my comfort zone of Exposition Park Library, Los Angeles, California, USA!!

POETRY CORNER

Two by Carmen Quispe

Tickets

Play
dramatic, real
rehearsing, performing, clapping
actors, script, screen, theater
watching enjoying laughing
expensive, crowded
movie.

Public Library

Public library
books, quiet
studying, learning, reading
where interesting people go
LAPL

Two by Otis Adams

Market

Food
sweet, salty
eating, chewing, biting
hogs, cows, fish, chicken
swallowing, drinking, sipping
wet, cool water.

Market

Apple
red, green
falling becoming, ripening.
Sweet to bit and eat,
fruit.

Bank

by Eric Johnson

Bank

paper, coins

helping, buying, earning.

It's good to have

money.

Quiet Please

by Gloria Zurito

Quiet

polite, wonderful

sleeping, eating, painting

library, hospital, school, party

dancing, singing, fighting

stupid, rude

noise.

THANK YOU

Adult Literacy Services would like to thank the staff for their invaluable help at the following branches, where Literacy Centers are located: Baldwin Hills, Cahuenga, Central, Exposition Park, Jefferson, Lincoln Heights, Mid-Valley, Pacoima, Panorama City, Pio Pico-Koreatown, Robert Louis Stevenson, Venice, Washington Irving, Watts, and Wilmington.