

LEARN Minutes – August 8, 2006 at Downers Grove Library

In Attendance:

1. Debra Kakuk (College of DuPage)
2. Susan McNeil-Marshall (Woodridge)
3. Karen Neal (Downers Grove)
4. Joe Popowitch (Indian Prairie)
5. Kate Mallon (Wheaton)
6. Christy Eyre (Brookfield)
7. Ann Weaver (Westchester)

College of DuPage Materials Available

Debra Kakuk reminded the group that she is wading through numerous boxes of ESL materials donated to her department. Any items which she decides not to add to the collection will be made available for member libraries. She plans to set aside several days during which librarians can view the donated books and take what they want for their own collections. Debra will announce the viewing dates when she is done evaluating the donations.

Web Site

I asked how we wanted to display the information received from our online questionnaires submitted by member libraries and groups that help teach English. It was suggested that they be put in pdf files which could be updated periodically (maybe every two years) because collections often grow and shrink with acquisitions and weeding. By the next meeting I hope to have the pdf files on the LEARN Web site.

Recommended Items:

Here are a few items brought by members during our “show and tell.”

1. English for Spanish Speaking People CD-ROM by Laser Pub. Group, 2000.
2. Basic English: English as a Second Language (2 videocassettes) by Video Aided Instruction, 1995.
3. Everyday English by Barbara Zaffran (National Textbook Company), 1991.
4. Oxford Bookworms series – Graded readers which can be purchased with audio.
5. Thumbprint Mysteries – Series by Contemporary Books.
6. Writers’ Voices – Series by Literacy Volunteers of New York City.
7. Grammar Links by Houghton Mifflin, 2000 (3 vols. with cassettes).
8. Slangman Guide to Street Speak by Slangman Pub., 2002 (3 CDs with books). Also have a 3-set series called *Slangman Guide to Biz Speak*.
9. Citizenship Interactive DVDs...bilingual overview of the United States history and government by California Language Laboratories (in various languages).

Publishers List

Debra Kakuk had posted a message on November 10, 2005, which is message number 50 on our Yahoo group list of messages. Her message includes links to lists of ESL resources and publishers. Members keep asking that we have our own list of publishers.

I am trying to decide if it would be better to simply link from the LEARN site to these other sites with their lists, or if we should create our own list. Until this issue is resolved, please see message number 50 for a list of publishers.

Miscellaneous Comments

- College of DuPage is putting in the notes field what level each ESL item is.
- COD has cassette players for check out.
- I had mentioned that I was considering separating business/job books in our Life Skills area because they are not going out. Debra suggested creating handouts instead, which I will try.
- It was suggested that information about the Conversation Groups that meet at area libraries be included on our Web site.
- Debra mentioned that at COD they try to make handouts of frequently asked questions.

Grant Opportunities:

We did not discuss this at length. I asked if any members had new ideas on what to ask for if we were to apply for a grant. Some ideas include:

- At a prior meeting Jean Demas had suggested purchasing laptop computers which could be shared by our members.
- I had suggested a joint publicity campaign, but more so because it could easily be shared by the members. I don't know that this would be the best use of grant funds.
- Debra Kakuk had recommended something along the lines of "ESL in a Box" – a traveling display/resources which would rotate among member libraries. These resources could be tied to library programs or events when the display was present at a particular library.
- Susan McNeil-Marshall suggested that perhaps the funds could be used for collection development for smaller libraries which have no resources or very small collections. Going along with this idea, perhaps the grant funds might be better spent on the LEARN members that are not libraries but rather which teach students.

Use of Collections:

Once again several members commented about how tutors do not seem to use our ESL collections very much. Perhaps we need to coordinate with the various teaching organizations to better promote our collections. Literacy Volunteers of DuPage has had me talk about our collection during training sessions of new volunteers. Perhaps we should make this a regularly scheduled part of all training? I noticed during the tour of the Downers Grove collection that resources geared for tutors have "tutor" stickers on them. Perhaps we should have posters or publicity to have tutor orientation by appointment?

Tour of the Downers Grove Library

Karen showed us the ESL collection as well as offering a brief glimpse of the Adult collection as a whole. The ESL books were shelved together, next to the 400s. One feature I thought was interesting is that books for tutors had a “tutor” label on the spine.

Audiovisual ESL materials were not next to the books, but located in the audiovisual section. However, they were all together in the audiovisual section, if I remember correctly.

Next Meeting:

We did not set a date or time for the next meeting. If we want to continue to meet three times a year, we should probably meet in November (or in January if we meet twice a year). **Would anyone like to volunteer to host the next meeting?** (Perhaps a library that has not hosted before). If no one posts a message to the group, Indian Prairie could host the next meeting again.