

ONE TO ONE LITERACY - 2016 Volunteer Tutor Coffee Chat Notes

There were some great discussions at the 5 Coffee Chats in December. Here are some of the key ideas that were captured:

- Older ELL students – use I Spy game to learn vocabulary
- Download flash cards with pictures from internet – according to themes – again to learn vocabulary
- Tutors can write stories about the student, entitled “Who Am I?” and the story can be made up of facts that the tutor has learned about the student;
- Tutors don’t always have time to mark down in the student records which new words the student learned that day, so have the student help. Ask them which words they learned and the tutor can then write them in the student log.
- One school wanted to switch out the students halfway through the year so more students could be seen; volunteer needs to speak to Coordinator and advise that it takes time to build the relationship and that is at least as valuable as the actual reading time; only switch out the student if they are no longer getting value from the program – i.e. they are ready to move on.
- Need more high interest, low vocabulary books for older ELL students
- Good to play hangman, especially with older students
- Tutor and student can write notes to each other to engage in written conversation
- Write words they don’t know on a post-it and offer them to the student if they want to bring them home; when they have mastered that word, the student can cross that word off or rip up the piece of paper with the word on it – empowering student once success is achieved
- Easier for volunteers to pull students from the same classroom (but it depends on the needs of the school)
- Suggestions on how to work with Grade 1 ELL students – dual language books, find a word on the page, word search games – check with Carol (LV) re site for word search game online
- Dual language books are available in most public libraries, or check with your school librarian
- Many teachers still not filling in student profile so tutors not sure where to start; Liaisons to continue to emphasize the importance of this to the teachers
- For reluctant or distracted students – bring stress ball; will help them do something physical while reading
- If student too energetic to sit still, divide the 30 minutes into smaller segments; provide reward activity after each x minutes – eg. read for 5 minutes, then play a game, or you read to them, or they can run 2 laps around the table
- Offer incentives. Do 5 minutes of this and then we will do 1 minute of that.
- Empower students – eg. “so what are we going to do today after reading this book?”
- To help learn difficult words (eg. ancient) – spell out the word on a white board and find words within the larger word; remove some letters and ask them what letters are missing
- Shy students who read very quietly – suggest they imagine that they are reading the story to their younger sibling or that they are reading a bedtime story – to encourage expression while reading
- Tutors are encouraged to check on the school calendar and try to stay ahead of events that might disrupt their tutor schedule.

- Some schools have great resources in their resource book rooms; ask Coordinator if you have access to these books to help supplement books in ONE TO ONE book box
- Poetry books are another great way to encourage reading
- More lower level French books needed

Suggested Resources

- I Witness books good for pictures and vocabulary but words too hard
- The Jolly Postman
- Land of Stories – Grades 4 – 7 (per Kelly)
- Greek Myths
- Weird But True – National Geographic books
- Fly Guy (8-9 yr old)
- Panties Thief – (Linda)
- If I Built A Car – good for boys
- Dr. Seuss, especially for rhythm and fluency
- Jules Vern – Around the World in 80 Days
- Pinkalicious – choice of picture books, I can Read! Books
- Fancy Nancy – choice of picture books, I can Read! Books, chapter books
- Bob Books were mentioned as an excellent resource by one tutor and also Pirate Pat Books by Usbourne.

Working with Early Level Readers

- There are good songs, rhymes on the internet (“Alphabet Rap”).
- Encouraged to let their liaison know if they need some early level reading books and also to ask the school coordinator for help with this.

During the Coffee Chats, many great ideas and suggestions were made. They are passed on to the ONE TO ONE Program Committee for consideration.