



New Neighbors News



A Newsletter Written By and For Our Students

New Neighbors English Language Learning and Family Literacy Program Volume II, Number 2 May 1, 2015

Tales Build Dreams

By Tabatha Santos, Level 7

When we are young, we are more able to dream than when we are adults; we make the imaginary world become true. Therefore, in this context, we have fairy tales, which help us believe that the world is generally pure, all dreams can become real, and the impossible can be possible. We see that, always, love and good win at the end of the story.

In our dreams, we can pretend about what we would like to be when we are older. Some people want to become famous painters or singers. In my case, I remember that I used to imagine

becoming important for those whom I loved. I imagined doing something good... maybe saving lives.

Nowadays, I realize how this pretending in my youth relates to what I chose to do in life. I became a nurse. Furthermore, sometimes when I "suspend my disbelief," I still imagine that I am being important because I saved someone's life. I imagine that I am doing CPR on someone, or working in an ambulance, or going to Africa to be a helper there. In brief, I encourage the telling of tales, since this helps kids dream they can change the world.

Why It's Important to Learn English

By Nhora O. de Leon, Level 5

There are several reasons why I want to learn to speak and write English very well. First, English is the official language spoken in 54 countries.

Second, it's the main language for international communication. In addition, it's widely studied as a second language in many countries. Most importantly, I'm living in the US, and I have a need to communicate perfectly.

I want to be able to talk with my grandchildren and with my son-in-law's American family.

Every day I meet wonderful and friendly people who are always willing to help me. I appreciate the teachers and friends who have been collaborating with me to learn to speak and write English.

New Neighbors Photo Album



Level 2 class with teacher Sally Brierre



Level 5 story time



Level 7 plays Scrabble

From Our Director

By Marcia D'Arcangelo

"Good Morning, Teacher!" These words ring out every morning as our students arrive for English classes. This year, we welcomed 328 students, who spoke more than 20 languages, from 45 countries. Our remarkable teachers are all volunteers. This means they do not get paid for teaching English. They volunteer because they care deeply about their students' success. They donate their time and effort so that students can enjoy productive lives in the U.S.A. and become part of the community. Throughout the year, teachers and students form cross-cultural connections through communication – the art of give and take, sharing experiences and learning from each other. The more we learn, the better we see that we are more alike than different. We share common feelings, such as joy and sadness, anxiety and relief, hopes and dreams. Communication works best when it comes from the heart. Thank you to our volunteer teacher-communicators for sharing their hearts and building understanding: **Susan Anderson, Sara Becker, Sally Brierre, Sally Buikema, Bitsy Bullock, Julie Cooke, Marfe Delano, Pat DePuy, Carol Ann Detlef, Sara Dougherty-Jones, Joby Dupuis, Katherine Hoffman, Ava Marlow-Hage, Nancy Leisch, Barb Reed, Elise Reeder, Virginia Rocen, Mary and Don Schlichtmann, Sue Tate, Sandy Tinkham, and Paula Tosini.**

What's Happening in the Classroom

Intro Level A: Words! Words! Words! Students are learning more everyday!

Intro Level B: Students shared how they make soup in their native countries.

Level 1: Students are making new friendships in English!

Level 2: Students are learning how to express their hopes, dreams and wishes.

Level 3: Students are learning about using credit and hosted a special speaker about real estate.

Level 4: Students are mastering those tricky irregular past tense verbs, 10 each week!

Level 5: Students are writing about their new lives in the United States!

Level 6: Students are comparing English idioms with those in their native languages.

Level 7: Students are writing essays about parables in their native countries.

Spring Events at New Neighbors

- January 21: Spring classes began with 166 students and 52 children in childcare.
- February 25: Presentation by Empowered Women International to students interested in starting a business.
- March 18: First meeting of new Student Council to represent the students' voice in the school.
- March: Students wrote articles for "New Neighbors News."
- March 25: "Job-related Table Talks"
 - ComputerCORE, JobLink, Wells Fargo Bank, Volunteer Alexandria
- March/April: Three Family Literacy presentations at the library for parents and children on literacy strategies.
- April 8: "Health-related Table Talks"
 - Alexandria Health Department, Neighborhood Health, Domestic Violence and Family Services
- April 22: Presentation by Nurse/Nutritionist for parents of young children.
- April 27-30: Course review and post-testing.
- May 1: End-of-year Celebration!

Get Ready for Fall 2015!

- September 10 and 11: Registration for the fall
- September 14: Fall classes start
- December 11: End of semester Celebration

New Neighbors Student Council

We formed a Student Council this spring to build communication among students and staff. The Student Council will help share students' ideas, interests, and concerns, and provide feedback to staff on how well the program is meeting students' needs. The Council will meet 6 times in the 2015-2016 school year.



Page 2 *NNN* May 2015



Did You Know? Students in Level Two can say "Please" and "Thank you" in many languages. How many do you recognize? *Por favor/Gracias, S'il vous plait/Merci, Lw samahto/Chkren, Ebakish/Amasagnalahu, Teseyc/Kesenem, Pozalosta/Spasibo*

Milestones

- Sahar Moghaddam, Level 5, got a job with a civil engineering firm, Soil and Structure Consulting in Reston, VA.
- Tabatha Moreira Santos, Level 7, recently took the TOEFL exam and is pursuing a PhD in Maternity and Child Health.
- Thais Campos, Level 7, is moving to Seattle, WA and will enroll in Seattle Community College.
- Laila Mansour, Level 7, is taking a Medical Terminology course of study.
- Natalie Penedo, Level 7, is taking the U.S. Citizenship exam this Spring!
- Lisbhet Claros, Level 7, is pursuing employment as a Dental Assistant.
- Shewaye Woldeyesus, Level 4, recently obtained employment at Starbucks on King Street.
- Soumiya Zayani, Level 4, will be taking the TOEFL exam this spring with plans to attend NOVA in the fall.

Level 4 Journal Entries

Students in Level 4 are asked to write in a journal each week. Sometimes they answer a specific question, other times they just write what they are thinking. One week they were asked, *Why is America special or unique?* Here are some examples of their answers:

- You can travel from state to state as you like, no one can stop you.
- All American states are clean and full of technology.
- All the children go to school for free, even the classroom materials are free.
- The traffic systems are very advanced and special.
- No one is above the law, even if you are President.
- America has a lot of opportunities like education, jobs and better futures for our children.

My First Days in the U.S.

By Soumia Ziani, Level 4

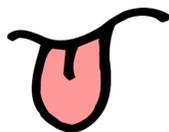
Leaving your country, your family, and your friends is not easy. Your life will be different than before and may be more difficult and harder than you are used to. Personally, when I came to the United States three years ago, I was so sad. I found everything was new to me. Things such as the weather, the rules, the culture and the language were very different from my home country. My first days were hard. Whenever I went out, I could not even open my mouth. I was very scared to make mistakes. Many times I was shy when someone talked to me or asked me a question. I could not understand what they were talking about. This a very bad feeling. I was alone and sad.

My life has completely changed since I had my son. He gives me a big push to break all the barriers and to realize my goals. So now I feel more confident, especially when I do some activities myself. For example, I can make an appointment, I can go to the doctor's office and I can go to an interview about jobs. All these things make a big difference. I can now be optimistic.

My English had improved since I started taking classes at the New Neighbors program. I am proud of this year's experience because I have learned a lot of things. I have meet lots of people from all over the world, and I have made friends. This program has child care. I love this idea because it is very helpful for parents and children too. Another thing is that I met a wonderful teacher who really is a good person. She does all her best to help us to learn and to understand. She is nice, polite and she has a good sense of humor. Also, my wonderful husband encourages me all the time to learn. He always gives me advice on ways to learn more. I know I am lucky because I have a person who does all he can to help me.

Now I feel more active than before. Each day I learn something new. I push myself to practice, to share and to communicate with other people even when I make a lot of mistakes because I know I will learn from my mistakes.

Finally, I want to advise all the students, me as well, to keep trying and to be patient. If you want to achieve your goals, you have to work hard to realize them. As we say in English: "No pain, no gain."



Tongue Twisters Help with Pronunciation

By Joby Dupuis, Level 4 Instructor

If you walk by Level 4's classroom this semester, you may hear strange babblings! The class has been working on pronunciation by learning tongue twisters in order to make their English more understandable. The class begins by learning how to say each sound required and practicing the tongue twister out loud individually, with classmates cheering them on. They then take the twister home and practice it slowly over and over until they have taught their mouths and tongues to make the correct sounds. In-class practice continues for several days. As the students master the sounds, they can speed up their delivery! All of the students have improved their pronunciation and are proud that they can say the following and be understood. Can you?!

- Check with the sheep shippers for seeping chips.
- Sherman was shy about chips and sherbet in Chattanooga.
- The zoo's zebras swam through the zebra zone.
- The red bug bled on the black bug's head.

Poetry Corner

A poem about pronunciation

The poem excerpt below is called "The Chaos" and was written by G. Nolst Trenite

Dearest creature in creation,
Study English pronunciation.
I will teach you in my verse
Sounds like corpse, corps, horse and worse.
I will keep you, Suzy, busy,
Make your head with heat grow dizzy.
Tear in eye, your dress will tear.
So shall I! Oh hear my prayer.
Just compare heart, beard, and heard,
Dies and diet, lord and word,
Sword and sward, retain and Britain.
(Mind the latter, how it's written.)
Now I surely will not plague you
With such words as plaque and ague.

Billet does not rhyme with ballet,
Bouquet, wallet, mallet, chalet.
Blood and flood are not like food,
Nor is mould like should and would.
Viscous, viscount, load and broad,
Toward, to forward, to reward.

Pronunciation – think of Psyche!
Is a paling stout and spikey?
Won't it make you lose your wits,
Writing groats and saying grits?
It's a dark abyss or tunnel:
Strewn with stones, stowed, solace,
gunwale,
Islington and Isle of Wright,
Housewife, verdict and indict.
Finally, which rhymes with enough –
Though, through, plough, or dough, or cough?
Hiccough has the sound of cup.
My advice is to give up!!!

Or just keep coming to our New Neighbors English classes!!

-- From Elise Reeder, Level 2 Instructor

- On Thursday, thirteen thirsty thoroughbreds thundered past Mr. Thurber.

Practice Your English Over the Summer

There are no English classes at New Neighbors this summer. But, students should continue to practice their English so they don't lose what they have learned. Here are some resources for practicing:

Use the internet at home or at the library. Voice of America has a special page on their web site for learning English: <http://bit.ly/1zQD4Tu>.

So does a4esl: <http://a4esl.org/> and Manythings.org: <http://bit.ly/1Jy3UVI>. On YouTube you can find very good lessons for all levels. Try Seattle Learning for pronunciation: <http://bit.ly/1DgELKd> and English for You: <http://bit.ly/1Gbf76>.

Find a summer English class. You can take classes at the Beatley Library in Alexandria on Tuesday and Thursdays, from 10 to noon. Several of the teachers at New Neighbors teach here. Classes are free!

Listen to the radio, watch T.V. or see movies in English.

Find free events in your neighborhood that are in English and go! This is also a good way to meet your American neighbors.

Take the family into Washington DC and visit one of the free museums on the National Mall.

Read as many of the information signs as you can. Take a tour with a park ranger in English!

Read a book or two in English! Ask your teacher to recommend several at your level. The library can also help you choose a good book to read.

Review your text book and workbook from New Neighbors. There are many pages that you have not used. Fill up those empty pages before school starts in the fall!

Meet with some of your classmates for coffee or at a park. Speak English!

And, finally, be sure and register for classes next fall. Our fall registration will be held on September 10 and 11, 2015. Classes start on September 14.

Wise Sayings from Across the Globe

By Jin Chong, Level 7

"Belly button is bigger than belly." How can I possibly be unhappy to receive an unexpected package from my country? Whatever is inside, whoever sent it, it makes me feel like flying over the moon. But at the same time, I feel so sorry to check the label attached on the package; the delivery charge from Korea to here is always painfully expensive. I understand it in some ways. My home country is located on the completely opposite side of the earth; we have a 14-hour time difference and it takes 14 hours with a direct flight. Nevertheless, I hate to see the postage costs more than everything inside of the package. If the package is the belly and the delivery charge is the belly button, it

simply goes, "*Belly button is bigger than belly.*"

However, when I open the package, I always find there are so many things inside which I am eager to have but dare not to expect to have: my mother's homemade condiments, my favorite Korean potato chips, chopstick sets with my favorite pattern, a new calendar of my favorite Korean artist, thick books full of my native language, paper coasters from my favorite bar, and my family's and friends' handwritten messages. These are more than valuable to me. They are just priceless. Surely, I can use the expression, "*Belly button is bigger than belly,*" but the belly button can't be bigger than the belly in my real world.



More Wise Sayings From Across the Globe

From **Luis Leon, Level 6**: "Better a bird in the hand than 100 flying." (Columbia)

From **Nhora O. de Leon, Level 6**: "God helps the early bird," and "All that glitters is not gold." (Columbia)

From **Shukria Iqbal, Level 6**: "Eat your words before telling them" and "The tasty grape goes to a fox." (Afghanistan)

From **Svitlana Stepanchuk, Level 7**: "Morning is wiser than evening," "Better is there where we are not," "Speech is silver, but silence is gold" and "Everything that is done is done for the better." (Ukraine)