

Literacy of Northern NY

February 2020 Newsletter

Annual Yard Sale

It is too early to mark your calendars but not too early to think about the third annual LNNY Yard Sale. We are looking for donations of suitable items, so if you are house cleaning, please consider donating unneeded items. We need furniture, seasonal items, puzzles, toys, kitchen items, etc. It's an easy way to support LNNY!

Watertown Savings Bank's Used Book & Puzzle Sale for LNNY

Two of our Board members, Denise Brownell and Denise Randall, have been running a successful fundraiser at several Watertown Savings Bank branches. Employees and others donate used books and they are set out for anyone to buy. All proceeds are donated to Literacy of NNY.

We are looking for jigsaw puzzles to add to the sale. If you have any with all the pieces intact, you can drop them off at our Watertown office or at WSB, 111 Clinton Street, Watertown. Our display table is near the front doors of the bank.

Cheers to Jason!

Jason passed his high school equivalency test in October 2019 after working with his tutor, James Baker, for two years. He became a lot more optimistic about life when he saw how much he was improving. He recently took up playing the guitar again and has been working hard to improve his skills. While he has held a variety of part-time jobs over the years, he hopes to get a better, full-time job now that he has his high school equivalency diploma. Jason enrolled in Jefferson Community College in January 2020 and plans to get a two-year degree in computer information technology. "I never had career goals before," Jason said. "Now I do."

Tip for ESL Tutors

Deborah attended a Regional Adult Education Network workshop in January entitled, *Empowering ESOL Students to Use Their Phones and Tablets as a Learning Tool in and out of the Classroom*. One of the apps that was introduced at the workshop was **English Conversation Practice**. This app addresses listening and speaking skills. The picture shown is for Android but there is an IOS version and it has a red face facing a blue face. The Android



English Conversation Practice, Android version

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version is available at the Google Play store and the IOS version is available at the Apple app store.

The app is free and ads just need to be X'd out. There are dialogues on many categories, for example, Family and Friends. Each dialogue has four sections, the two-person dialogue, a dialogue where a student takes the role of one of the speakers, a quiz, and a recording section where the student again takes the role of one of the speakers. The recording can be saved. (The quiz section can be quirky.)

If you use this app, you should do a practice drill with your student. Deborah's students have given positive feedback and find it useful to work on listening and speaking skills in a fairly simple format. The app lends itself to use on a smart phone.

Helping Students with Memory Issues

We had a student come in the other day for testing who said she has problems with comprehending what she is reading because she can't remember what she just read. When asked if she remembered information better if she read it aloud, the student agreed that helped her. Writing brief notes next to each paragraph also helps her remember. An online article at www.readingrockets.org called, "10 Strategies to Enhance Students' Memory" by Glenda Thorne, suggests students should use graphic organizers to help consolidate information into long-term memory. Graphic organizers are a visual representation of information. We have many graphic organizers available at the office about main idea and supporting details, sequencing events in a passage, cause and effect, character webs, etc. One free, online resource for graphic organizers for reading is: http://www.teacherfiles.com/resources_organizers.htm

Practicing retrieving information from long-term memory, such as test-taking or reviews of previously taught information also helps a student, according to the Reading Rockets article. Creating a practice sheet that reviews previously taught math or reading concepts helps a student become better at recalling information.

Research has indicated that students who review material right before going to sleep remember it better.

Discussing the topic of the story before reading also helps students comprehend it better. Look at the headline and pictures. Ask what the student knows about the topic. If the textbook has vocabulary words at the beginning of the story or a glossary of words, review those before reading. If you've found a technique that helps students remember information, let us know and we'll feature it in the next newsletter!