Welcome!
I’m Debora

Welcome!
I’m Peg
Welcome!
This is our guest
Yanqing Li

Session Objectives

- Learn how to remove barriers for English language learners.
- Gain insight into how to have a vibrant and engaged community of learners and volunteers, while creating meaningful relationships.

Facts versus Supposition

- Information we're sharing today represents our perspective from JPL. "I can only see through my own window."
- In some instances, we have data to support our program. In other instances, we only have anecdotal evidence, but we feel it is valuable.
- We are still learning. And today we hope that we can learn together.
Why do you think there is a need?

- Who used to use the library?
- Who is using the library today?
- Local school enrollment can be an indicator of need.
- Library’s mission is to serve its community; as the community changes, so must the library.

Why do you think there is a need?

Who can you reach out to for information and support?

- Local School District
- Local ESL Teacher
- Area Education Association
- Local Support Agencies (churches, food pantries, clothing closets)
How do you make ESL accessible?

- No registration
- No fees
- Free
- Consistency

What are a library’s assets & needs?

**What can a library offer?**
- Infrastructure = space, organization, communication, photocopies
- Adult literacy and ESL materials in library collection
- Transparent Language (mobile)

**What does a library need?**
- Expertise
- Staff
- Funding

**English Conversation Group**

- Determine Need
- Decide When
- Decide Where
- Recruit Volunteers
- Find Conversation Starters
- Determine Group Structure
Let's Talk: ESL Conversation Group

Determine Need

- Idea brought to our attention by another library.
- Reached out to the school district and inquired about EL population.
- Modeled initial program from another library's program.

Decide When to Meet

- Research existing programs in your area.
- Try to meet the availability of desired audience.
- Schedule it when you have people available to lead it.
- How did Johnston Public Library decide?
  - Initially tried once/month at noon
  - Moved to once/week in evening

Designate Space

- Accessible
- Comfortable
- Arrange Small Groups
Let's Talk: ESL Conversation Group

Recruit Volunteers
- Library Website
- Library Newsletter
- Social Media
- Community Newsletter/Newspaper
- Volunteer Match [https://www.volunteermatch.org]

Let's Talk: ESL Conversation Group

Determine Group Structure
- Monthly volunteers
- Weekly volunteers
- Small groups

Let's Talk: ESL Conversation Group

Find Conversation Starters
- How to Teach a Conversation Class [https://owlcation.com/academia/how-to-teach-a-conversation-class]
- Compelling Conversations [https://www.compellingconversations.com/]
- Adult Literacy Newspaper [https://www.newreaderspress.com/news-for-you-online]
- ESL Games [https://eslgames.com/]

Let's Talk: ESL Conversation Group

Recruit Volunteers
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Let’s Talk: ESL Conversation Group
Examples of Conversation Starters

**Beginner - Use Picture Support**

- Where were you born?
- Do you have brothers or sisters?
- Where did you grow up?

**Intermediate**

- Where were you born?
- Were you the first child? Second? Fifth?
- Do you have any older brothers? Sisters? Younger siblings?
- Where did you grow up? Is that a city, village, or suburb?

**Advanced**

- Where were you born? Describe your birthplace? (City/Suburb/Rural? Large/Small? Economy-primary source of income for most households? Etc.)
- Tell me about your extended family – your parents, your siblings, other relatives that may have lived with or near you.
- When did you decide to move to the U.S.? Why? What was the experience of coming to the United States like for you?
English as a Second Language Class

- Determine Need
- Decide When
- Decide Where
- Recruit
- Decide on Curriculum & Class Structure

Adult Beginner ESL Class

Determine Need
- Need was brought to JPL's attention by a passionate community volunteer.
- Asked library to partner with her to start the program.
- Struggled initially - lack of organization. Had to set aside.
- Sought out professional ESL teacher in Johnston Community School District.

Adult Beginner ESL Class

Decide When to Meet
- Research existing programs in your area
- Try to meet the availability of desired audience
- Schedule it when you have people available to lead it
- How did Johnston Public Library decide?
  - Teacher availability
  - Space availability
Adult Beginner ESL Class

Designate Space

- Classroom style
- LCD Projector to Whiteboard

Recruit

- Professional Teacher or Volunteer Teacher
- Volunteers to Assist Teacher
- AmeriCorp Volunteer
- Funding

Decide on Curriculum & Class Structure

- Most of the curriculum is original, teacher-created
- Where to start?
  - https://esllibrary.com/courses - 7$/month
  - Very Easy True Stories
  - REEP ESL Curriculum for adults
    - https://www.apsva.us/reep/eslcriculum/ - free
A student’s perspective

What have we learned?

- Start with a conversation group - gauge levels of learners; if high beginner need, start an ESL class.
- Reduce/eliminate barriers to attendance.
- Attendance will fluctuate - don’t give up!
- Building relationships is very important.
- Consistent volunteers help build sense of community.
- Consistent attendance builds confidence.
- Who we expected to attend and who actually attends are not the same.
  - Both refugees and immigrants express need and interest, but immigrants tend to be our regular attendees.
    - Family priority, transportation, availability.
- Richness of relationships between students in spite of great diversity in backgrounds.

Tools We Use to Communicate

myattendancetracker.com
Thank you for joining us today!

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