

Spring 2021

LITBITS

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Message from the Literacy Department

We hope that your 2021 is shaping up to be successful in this new environment that we all find ourselves living and working in. Exciting things are coming to the Hillsborough Literacy Council! First, we are continuing to transition our services online to help meet the needs of our stakeholders in Hillsborough County. Furthermore, we will be offering new opportunities throughout the year that we think you will find to be beneficial, some of which we will talk about more below. So please stay tuned to our social media and continue to keep an eye out for more editions of LitBits!

Online Conversation Corners

The Hillsborough Literacy Council has been running six Conversation Corners online in 2021. Happily, we have seen growing participation in the groups. We plan to continue to offer Conversation Corners online throughout 2021 and beyond, and we will also resume in-person sessions as soon as the Covid crisis passes. For more information, including links to join, please visit the Conversation Corner web page at <https://hillsboroughliteracy.org/learn/english-practice/>.



English for Families

The Hillsborough County Pubic Library, in collaboration with the Hillsborough Literacy Council, has been awarded a grant from the Florida Department of the Humanities to deliver Family Literacy Courses. Family literacy education is focused on engaging entire families in literacy and English language acquisition. We are currently building a framework to deliver five-week courses where parents and their children can learn reading strategies together. A family effort can improve language skills for both parents and children, who can help each other in many ways.

We expect this program to launch in time for school in September, so keep an eye out for more news!

Volunteer Reports & Quotes

"It was wonderful -- by great luck, [the participants] are about the same level! We all enjoyed ourselves!"
- Conversation Leader Marie D.

"We are using a library-provided hotspot and Oxford Bookworms reading level tests "
- Tutor Jim A.

"It was so interesting to talk to someone from North Korea! I was surprised."
- Conversation Leader Maria N.

"We stay in touch via text and phone and outdoor visits. I can see [the learner] progressing...she is introducing her new baby to the virtual library Baby Story Times!"
- Tutor Candy S.

"Students fairly conversant, now working with more practical conversations for listening and hearing of English."
-Tutor Frank S.

Mango Assessment & Features Highlight

If you, or the learners you are working with, have not yet had a chance to use Mango, now is a great time to get started! Mango is the language-learning application free with your library card. Many of the learners on the waitlist for an ESL tutor use this service, and some tutors also encourage learners to try it as a supplement. Access it here: <https://hcplc.org/research/online-learning>

Recently, the mobile app added the capacity to take assessments, quizzes and tests. Previously, learners could only access these features on the web version. Now, you can measure your progress anywhere and at any time.

Another great feature is the recording line-up, as seen below. With Mango languages, you can improve your pronunciation by listening to an original recording of a phrase, recording your imitation of the phrase, and lining it up so that the recording plays simultaneously. It's easy, interesting, and effective. Try it out, and let us know how it goes.



Online tutoring

We are pleased to announce the return of individual tutoring through the Literacy Council. We are currently in the process of training tutors to deliver online tutoring in both ESOL and Adult Literacy. Tutoring will begin in March, 2021.

If you are interested in online tutoring as a tutor, please contact the Literacy Department. Interested students should also express their interest in online tutoring as well so that we will be aware.

Face-to-face tutoring in the library is not planned to be available until sometime in the latter half of 2021.

To let us know of your interest:
AdultLiteracy@HillsboroughCounty.org
Phone: 813-273-3650

"We talked about new year's goals and aspirations (and the difference between a "goal" and an "aspiration"). We also discussed what we liked best about living in Tampa, which sparked a great discussion what how "warm" it is in Tampa during winter."
 -Conversation Leader
 Beth W.

Student Achievements

- 2 had a meaningful conversation with someone in the community
- 1 got a new job
- 2 were able to read an instructional text in English
- 3 were able to communicate with a healthcare provider, make an appointment, and follow instructions.
- 4 used English over the phone and read in English for pleasure
- 1 was able to price compare when shopping

"We had 6 people today - two new ones!"
 -Conversation Leader
 Carol B.

Spring Word Search

G L G B F R E N E W
 A U A L R R B T Z F
 S S R U I B S O W E
 P H D E E I U U A S
 A E E S N B N T L T
 R A N K D L R S K I
 I S I I S O I I I V
 L T N E H O S D N A
 L E G S I M E E G L
 A R L Y P E G P L S

gasparilla
 festivals
 walking

gardening
 Easter
 bloom

friendship
 sunrise
 renew

blue skies
 outside
 lush