Project Read Update

Project Read: the Adult Literacy Program of the San Francisco Public Library

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New Life Experiences by Juan Elias

My name is Juan. Before coming to Project Read I couldn't read or write. It is kind of embarrassing when your own grandchildren talk about computers and you have no idea what they are talking about. Now, thanks to the staff and the tutors, I know how to basically work at a computer and I'm reading and writing very well. Something that I thought I'd never accomplish but thanks to Project Read and my tutor Tracy I feel that I can communicate through writing and computers at this late age of 60. I keep in touch by computer with my family across the United States and see pictures of my great-grandchildren. So, I continue to come to Project Read and apply myself because they know how to stimulate my mind and there are no limits to learning here for an old individual like me. Again I thank you.

Juan and Tracy

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The views expressed are those of the authors - not necessarily that of Project Read or the San Francisco Public Library.

A Lovely Trip to Atlanta by Wonderful Wright

Wonderful (Photo by Cousin Linda)

I had a nice flight, but again they lost my luggage. Delta has a problem with luggage. But it is OK; I know what to do now. The conference was the National Black Nurses Association, which was held at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. The hotel was celebrating its 40th anniversary.

We went to Spelman College and Morehouse University. We went to the Queen's University-Belfast exhibit called "Gandhi-King-Ikeda Peacebuilders Exhibition" at Morehouse. We also went to the bookstore and all around the campus.We also went to the Underground Atlanta, the Martin Luther King Memorial and I think that everybody should go see it once in their lifetime. The NBNA was both the icing on the cake and the ice cream with the cherry on top at the Sunday program. I also enjoyed riding on MARTA, which is like our BART.

Thank you Project Read for allowing me to write about another good adventure in my lifetime. Who knows where they go in life? Thank you to my cousin Linda Smith for having me as her guest at the conference. I love you Linda.

My Trip To Memphis by Shedrick Ferguson, Jr.

On June 28, 2007 I went to Memphis for a family reunion. The airplane landed, and I got off the plane. The heat was muggy, but it felt good. I went to claim my bags and call my cousin. He came to pick us up. I was with my wife, son and granddaughter. My cousin then drove us to the hotel, and we got our room. Then we went to eat. It was about 2 a.m. The food was good. The restaurant chefs were able to cook very well. Then we went to bed. I was looking forward to the next day. Then it came; Oh, boy!

My cousin picked us up. They took us to the Elvis Presley Mansion which is called Graceland. It looked lovely but we didn't go in. The next place we went to was a Chinese All-You-Can-Eat restaurant. Did you know they can cook soul food? Well, they can. It was very good. It was Chinese and soul food together. I had never seen that before. They had fried chicken, yams, neck bones, greens, pig's feet, and corn on the cob. Next we went to Beale Street. Beale Street contains four blocks. There are no cars, just people walking in the streets and on the sidewalks. People are everywhere. It was fun. They were drinking liquor everywhere and taking pictures all over the place. The next day was the family reunion. It was good to see my cousins. After that we went to the Civil Rights Museum. You have to check cameras at the door. We paid our admission and started walking the path. It goes up a hill and as you walk, the exhibit is on the wall to the right. It started from 1619 when the first black men came to North America, and goes to 1968 when Martin Luther King was assassinated on April 4, 1968. The exhibit tells how they bought the Lorraine Motel in 1982 for $144,000. The Lorraine Motel went into foreclosure in 1982 which made it easier to purchase. I had a good trip and learned a lot.

The Happy Pony by W. R. Chauncey

This is a story about a pony. His name is Gavin. Wherever he went if people were sad or sick he had a way of making sad people happy and sick people feel better. He liked to go to the park and meet the kids at the gate. He would say "hi babies" and play with them. He loved the slide when he went down he would say "wheee wheee!" so loud and laugh so he was called the happy pony.

Learner Accomplishments

Deborah King is doing great work on her own and with her tutor Janet. Deborah showed us a thick stack of completed *Spell It Deluxe* word lists and said that she even does the bonus "Spelling Bee" section of the program. Janet says "Deborah really likes to challenge herself and learn new things. She likes to take on the hard words. Her computer skills have really increased. Her typing is great and she is a pro at using the mouse."

James Beasley is getting better and better at using the *Spell It Deluxe* computer program on his own. He also got a kick out of working with a staff member to find and watch the *We are the World* video on the Internet. He tells us that this is the first time that he has been comfortable using a computer.

Noel Hernandez passed the DMV written test and now has his license and insurance. He says "I only missed 2 questions. I passed because of Project Read. The times I took it before I was nervous and would panic. Using *Ultimate Phonics* helped. I could read the words now and I have more self confidence now."

Rifat Jehan tells us that working with her tutor James motivates her to read, write, and use the dictionary. She says that she never used a computer before coming to Project Read but now she "loves this computer center" and comes in on her own to work on spelling, improve her typing, and send e-mails to "everybody." She also tells us that her children made great use of the books they got this summer from our family literacy program. One daughter used a San Francisco guide book to give a lively presentation to some guests from out of town. The guests are high school teachers in England and they sent her a postcard stating the (very high) grades they would have given her if she had made the presentation in class.

Seema Hossain is writing letters back and forth with her daughter Navila (who is now attending school in Pennsylvania). Navila usually sends her one letter about what is going on in her life and a second one asking all sorts of questions. Seema says "my daughter is pushing me to learn more. She asks me about the weather, who is the mayor, and things like that. It is hard but fun. Sometimes I have to ask someone to make sure I get it right. Sometimes I go on the computer and find it myself - I never did that before. I feel proud of myself to do all this. I feel great."

Tyrone Hicks and his tutor Mary Alice meet consistently and work creatively. Tyrone says "The thing that I have accomplished is the ability to use the parts of speech. I can define the differences in the parts of speech when I read a sentence. I also learned how to spell better than before. If there is a question I know where to look for answers. My learning continues to this day."

Rifat and James choose a lesson.

Mary Alice and Tyrone work on the parts of speech.

Bayview Branch Library Back to School Night by Leon Veal

Project Read is proud to have collaborated in the planning and presentation of a special family literacy night at the Anna E. Waden/Bayview Branch Library on September 26. The theme was *Help Your Child Succeed in School* and approximately 20 parents and 55 children took part in this evening of fun, food, and family resources. Tree Frog Treks stopped by with 2 friendly rabbits. The Jumpstart Early Literacy Initiative engaged the children in fun educational activities. The Children's Book Project and KQED provided a generous free book giveaway. Representatives from Project Read, Parents for Public Schools, Charles Drew College Preparatory Academy, 100% College Prep, and the KQED Early Learning Education Network shared insightful parenting/school success tips and made brief presentations describing the services they offer to families and children (many parents learned of these services for the first time). The evening ended with a delicious spaghetti dinner where children, parents, and service providers enjoyed each other's company and shared important resources. We commend Bayview Children's Services Librarian Darcel Jones for creating this outstanding community event and I'm proud that Brian and I were able contribute to its success.

Darcel helps with research.

Hanging with a bunny rabbit.

Making books.

Kashina shares vital tips.

Leon speaks movingly.

A captivated audience.

Sheila discusses using media wisely.

Monica and Diane give on-target advice.

Building home libraries.

Tips for Tutors: Helpful Resources for Tutor-Learner Teams

by Randy Weaver

Help Yourself: How to take advantage of your learning styles by Gail Murphy Sonbuchner is an excellent book that's designed to help an adult learner understand his or her own particular learning style. It presents methods that can be used right away to enhance a variety of learning skills including: organization and time management, memory, listening, reading comprehension, and test taking strategies.

Here are just a few examples from this book of ideas designed to help adult learners improve their reading comprehension.

1. Read with a pen or pencil in your hand.

Write down what you are thinking and what is important while you are reading.

- Write down questions in the margins of the book (if you own it) or on a large blank piece of paper you can use as a bookmark.
- Circle or make a list of words that are in bold or italic print or write them on your bookmark. Find out what makes these words important.
- Write down your comments.
  — Do you agree or disagree with the author?
  — Is there a relationship between two things or ideas?
- Write the main point of the paragraph in the margin or on your bookmark.

2. Make a study guide while you are reading.

A study guide will help you to understand and remember specialized vocabulary that is getting in the way of your understanding the material.

3. Make predictions.

As you come to each new chapter or section, try to predict what it will be about.

This book is just one of the many tutoring resources available free to tutor-learner teams in the Project Read office. A grant from the California State Library provides funding for the purchase of these instructional materials, which are available specially for Project Read participants.

Mark Your Calendars for this Year's Holiday Party & Potluck on Thursday, December 13, 2007

Project Read members and staff will again come together to celebrate the holiday season with a festive party and potluck on Thursday, December 13th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Don't miss this opportunity to sample some amazing home cooking and spend a fun evening with other tutors and learners. We will also have some special door prizes and FREE raffle gifts donated by local businesses.

We are looking for some fabulous goods or professional services that can be given away during the evening's free raffle. Please consider asking your employer to make a donation for this event. Here are some examples of previous donations: magazine subscriptions, tickets for brunch at a local hotel, gift certificates for a bookstore, and movie passes.

So mark your calendars for the evening of Thursday, December 13th. Invitations will be mailed in November.

Harry Potter Book Release Event

Text and Photos by Brian Castagne

On July 21st at 10 a.m. we swung open the Project Read doors and launched into a *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* book release party. We were delighted to be able to provide brand new free copies of the deluxe edition of the book on the very day it was released to the public. We even created a special edition bookmark to commemorate the event. We had a great time together sharing books, making conversation, noshing on bagels and fresh fruit, drinking juice, using computers, and more. Here are some photos from that exceptional morning.

Alberto gets Harry Potter for the whole family.

Willie embraces his Harry Potter.

Braden gets right to business.

Shanti and Naema write together.

Reading jokes and riddles to the group.

Navila keeps track of the books.

Naya helps Putt Putt join the circus.

Shaheen enjoys bagels and conversation with his daughters.

Braden and Feeney reading together.

Live Performance Thrills Wednesday Night Readers

by John Gildersleeve, Photographs by Brian Castagne

Just as discussing a book heightens your experience of reading it, seeing a play presented live makes the printed word spring to life. The Wednesday Night Readers Book Club was fortunate to have five professional actors, all members of the Screen Actors Guild BookPALS Program (www.bookpals.net), present five brief scenes from *Death of a Salesman* at a recent meeting (this play was the monthly selection that the book club had just read). Even though the actors weren't wearing costumes and were reading from scripts, they skillfully drew us into Arthur Miller's famous play about a man whose lack of solid values brings him down. Afterwards the performers participated in a lively discussion of the play with the learners and tutors present, who agreed that seeing the performance made a huge difference in their enjoyment and understanding of the play. The Wednesday Night Readers wish to thank these talented actors: Carla Hatley, Elizabeth Benedict, Dana Kelly, Martin Ganapoler, and Peter Quintan, for generously giving their time to provide a spellbinding experience of a great American drama.

Rehearsal in the Project Read office.

Elizabeth, Dana, Martin, and Peter launch into the play.

Emotions run high.

George proclaims "It makes me want to go out and see a play."

Queen and Joanna listen as Tim shares his insights.

Carla engages in the fruitful discussion.

Welcome New Tutors

Megan Buckingham
Betsy Cheney
Kevin Coleman
Carol L. Figueiredo
Karen Fine
Nicholas Francies
Jim Francis
Paris Hachiska
Alex Homs
Yari Jeada
Hope Johnson
Young Mi Kim
Erin Kovsky
Whitney Lewis
Sally Martin
Ghislaine Maze
Andrew Palmer
Julia Roy
Michael Shen
Gail Singer
Deborah Stephens

Thank you

☺ John Gildersleeve and Mary Hilton for leading the Wednesday Night Readers Book Club meetings. ☺ Carla Hatley, Elizabeth Benedict, Dana Kelly, Martin Ganapoler, and Peter Quintan of the Screen Actors Guild BookPALS Program for performing scenes from *Death of a Salesman* at the July 25 Wednesday Night Readers Meeting. ☺ Friends of the San Francisco Public Library for their generous ongoing support. ☺Tutor contacts Vivian Altmann, Renee Feldman, Susan Fink, JoAnn Lopez, Terri Ryan, and Bruce Suehiro for providing invaluable support to their fellow tutors and the entire Project Read staff. ☺ Fred Goodall, Tyrone Hicks, and Mary Alice McNab for speaking at the September 2007 Tutor Training. ☺Genanne Walsh for proofreading assistance.

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