Newton Free Library

English Language Learning and Literacy Newsletter

January/February 2022

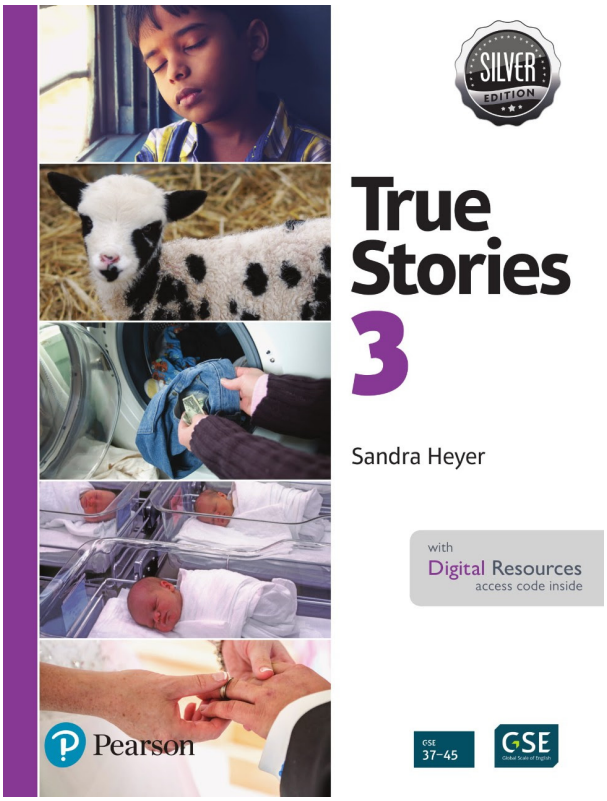
Online Resources

The library website has a new list of recommended online resources for English learners. You can find resources in several areas, including reading, listening, grammar, pronunciation, and more. A few examples:

- ESL Literacy Readers, a collection of simple stories for beginners; the stories have helpful pictures, and you can listen to each one being read aloud.
- Write & Improve, where learners can practice a variety of writing tasks and receive automated feedback.
- Eva Easton's American English Pronunciation, with lessons on verbs ending in "ed," difficult sounds like "th," and reductions like "wanna" and "gonna."

Note that there is a section for tutors at the bottom of the page, as well as a link to recommended resources for citizenship preparation. Please share this page with your learners, and let me know if there are any other resources that you would recommend!

True Stories



Have you heard the one about the Costa Rican fishermen who got caught in a storm and were stranded for five months, ultimately being rescued 4,000 miles from home? How about the Brazilian babies who were mixed up at birth because the hospital gave them the same number? Or the swindler who duped 105 women into marrying him and giving him their money?

These stories and more can be found in the *True Stories* series, which is one of the print resources that I recommend most often. There are several levels, ranging from simple stories with a picture accompanying each sentence to more challenging texts that use advanced grammar. Each story is followed by exercises to practice vocabulary and reading comprehension, as well as questions for discussion and writing. As the title suggests, all the stories are true! New editions of the series are now available in the ELL collection on the third floor.

ESL Library

The ELL program has received some donated licenses to a website called ESL Library. This is an online library with hundreds of lessons for English learners. Topics include

current events, idioms, holidays, grammar, basic literacy, and more. Lessons are available as printable PDFs as well as digital versions; with the latter, each teacher/tutor can assign the lesson to one or more learners, then review the learners' work and provide feedback online. You can view some sample lessons here (select "View Lesson" and then "PDF Viewer").

The number of licenses is limited, so I can't provide one to every tutor. This would be ideal for someone who would benefit from a little more support with lesson planning; if you've been focusing primarily on conversation or you've been using other materials (print or online) with great success, then this may not be right for you. I will ask those who sign up to keep me updated about which lessons they use. If you are interested, please let me know!

Program News

- If you used to tutor in person but have been hesitant to do so online, I've created a few videos to help! They cover creating a Zoom account, scheduling a meeting, sharing your screen during a meeting, and more. You can find them here. Remember that you can always contact me with specific questions about these topics or anything else.

- If you are interested in leading a class this spring or later in the year, let's discuss! Examples of classes happening during the winter session are Let's Talk About Food, Short Stories, Everyday Life in the United States, and You and Your Child's School. There are also several conversational groups without a specific focus.

- There will be more tutor roundtables and workshops (hosted by me and/or other presenters) later this year. If there are topics that you would like to see covered, please let me know!

Until next time,
Andrew

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