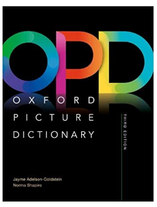
# English Language Learning and Literacy Newsletter

## May 2022

### Upcoming Tutor Workshop




I'm excited to announce an upcoming tutor workshop led by Jayme Adelson-Goldstein, a nationally recognized expert in the ELL field. She's the author of the *Oxford Picture Dictionary,* one of my favorite ELL texts (which we have here at the library, in monolingual and several bilingual editions), as well as director of the *Step Forward* textbook series. She will be joining us from California via Zoom! Here is more about the workshop — or as she calls it, a webshop:

***Picture This: Helping Learners Communicate Their Thinking Using Visuals***

*English language learners have identities well beyond those of immigrant, refugee, or non-English speaker. When we help our learners communicate their varied identities, their wealth of experience, and their higher-order thinking, we are helping lift up the voices of the adults with whom we work. By using relevant visuals as a basis for communication, we are able to create opportunities for learners with limited English language proficiency to give voice to their ideas and demonstrate their critical thinking.*

*In this webshop, led by Jayme Adelson-Goldstein, you will draw on visual resources from a variety of sources to experience and analyze three basic activities that build and expand learners' communication skills. As a proof-of-learning activity, you and your colleagues will pick a topic and collaborate to develop an activity for your learners.*

This workshop will take place on Saturday, June 4, at 2:00 PM. You can register here. Space is limited, so sign up early!

### Learner Survey

Last month I sent out a survey to all the learners who are currently matched with a tutor, and I'd like to share some of the results. Not surprisingly, the learners' feedback was overwhelmingly positive!

The vast majority reported being very happy with their tutor and said that their tutor has helped them a great deal with English. The activity that respondents said they found most enjoyable and useful was speaking/conversation practice, followed by reading articles, stories, books, etc. with their tutor. Several noted that they enjoy learning new vocabulary and appreciate being corrected when they make mistakes. A few other comments:

- "My tutor listens to me very patiently even when I am not speaking accurately. She teaches me both the English language and the American culture."
- "Tutors need to know that regular conversations like going to the supper market can be a big lesson for a person who is not from this country."
- "I am always grateful if the tutor corrects me when I am making mistakes in grammar and pronunciation in a sentence."
- "Listening to what the students want to know is the key for the success."

You can read more of their feedback here. I am proud to be part of a program that has such a positive and meaningful impact on learners' lives!

### Zoom Update

You may have heard about a recent change that affects people using free Zoom accounts. Until now, Zoom meetings with only two participants — which would be the case for one-on-one tutoring — have had effectively no time limit. (Meetings with three or more participants have been subject to a 40-minute limit.) However, beginning on May 2, the 40-minute limit will apply to all meetings set up with a free account.

After 40 minutes, you could simply restart the meeting, and many people don't find this to be a major inconvenience. You could also use an alternative like Google Meet, Skype, or FaceTime, none of which have a time limit for two-person meetings. Let me know if you'd like to discuss any of these options!

### Current Events Websites

I also have an update about a website that I have recommended to many tutors. The Times in Plain English, as the name suggests, has articles from *The New York Times* that have been simplified for the benefit of English learners. Unfortunately, the person running the website says that he is no longer able to update it regularly. At least for now, old articles are still available, and I think many of the feature stories would still be interesting and useful to students.

Two great alternatives are VOA Learning English and Ellii (formerly ESL Library), both of which I have described in previous newsletters. I also recommend Newsela. With a free account, you can access all of the articles in the news section, which range from world and U.S. news to sports, culture, science, technology, and "good news." One of the best features is the ability to change the difficulty level of each article so that it's appropriate for your student. Let me know if you need any help with this!

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Until next time,
Andrew

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