



## A Letter from Laura

*"A good mystery keeps you up on Saturday night. A bad mystery puts you to sleep on Sunday afternoon. Either way, you come out ahead." - Elizabeth Jane Howard*

### Calling All Mystery Lovers!

Mark your calendar for our first mystery-themed **Book Club Forum** by **Ron Shoop**, representative of Penguin Random House.

The event will be held at the Pleasant Hill Library (1750 Oak Park Blvd.) on **Tuesday, April 22** from **6:30 – 8 p.m.** It is **free** and open to the public. There will be a **free raffle for a bag of books**. Hmmmm...what could the books be? It's a mystery!

For those of you who are new to Book Club Forums, Ron gives a brief recap of 12 – 15 book titles for your book club or personal reading pleasure. As a bonus, if any of the titles pique your interest, The Storyteller Bookstore will be there to sell the books and donate a percentage of book sales to Project Second Chance.

So we hope to see all you mystery novel fans on April 22. And if this takes off, who knows what our next theme might be?!

### WILSON TUTOR SUPPORT MEETING

**Wednesday, March 26**

**10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. or 3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**  
RSVP by Monday, March 24

All Wilson Reading System tutors are invited to a discussion/workshop. Bring your questions; share your success stories. See some new 'manipulative' materials which correspond to Wilson lessons. Attend the session most convenient for you. Please RSVP if you plan to attend so that we have enough materials. Sessions will be canceled if under-enrolled.

# NEWSLETTER

**Central (925) 927-3250    East (925) 754-8317**

**West (510) 527-7558    FAX (925) 646-6461**

[ccclib.org/psc](http://ccclib.org/psc)

## March/April 2014

### TEACHING VERB TENSES

#### Tutor-to-Tutor Workshop

**Monday, March 24, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. or**

**Thursday, March 27, 2 – 4 p.m.**

RSVP by Wednesday, March 19



For: PSC tutors wanting help explaining verb tenses to their students

You're not alone(!) if you know how to *use* correct verb tenses but are hard-pressed to *explain* them to your student. Fortunately, our ace tutor Joanne Lederman, a former adult school ESL instructor, has offered to break it down for us. In this workshop, Joanne will provide:

- an overview of all verb tenses - their forms, uses and meanings;
- tips for how to help your student use verb tenses correctly;
- a "toolkit" with explanations and practice activities to do with your student.

The workshop aims to give tutors information and tools for teaching a grammar topic that is both tricky and important for their students' reading and writing skills.

### BOOK CLUB

Students of all levels are invited, with or without their tutors. Ask for the book to read and/or audio CD to listen to now; then bring questions or comments to the meeting.



**Monday, April 14, 1 – 2:30 p.m.**

PSC Pleasant Hill

*This I Believe 2* (first half of book) - This collection of short essays, by both famous and ordinary people, answers the question: *What is something I believe in, and why?* Each 2-3 page essay explores topics such as forgiveness, change, integrity, happiness, and dreams.

# Student Achievements

## Success Stories.

Students are reading:

**PSC Book Club – Twelve Angry Men, This I Believe 2**  
**Bahana G. – The Bean Trees**  
**Chloe T. – Girl on the Platform**  
**Lucy E. – Tuesdays with Morrie**  
**Parvin M. – Lone Eagle**  
**Raju B. – Al Capone Does My Shirts**



According to tutor Leslie Satin, **Ferozan M.** has started recognizing literacy references as she comes across them. That's impressive!

With the help of his tutor, Jim Riley, **Hassan M.** signed up for his library card. Great news!

After working with tutor Cynthia Ding, **Vicky D.** is now using a dictionary and reading short stories at home. Fantastic!

Thank you, **Jenny M.** and **Consuelo S.** for speaking at our new tutor training! Accompanied by their tutors, Kerri Marvel and Judy Crosby, Jenny and Consuelo inspired our newest tutors with stories of their efforts and successes. Way to go!

With tutor Helen Beyer's support, **Ike E.** passed his driver's license test. Congratulations!

Since working with his tutor, Celia, **Bryan R.** reports that his pastor asked him to read scripture aloud to the congregation. Reading aloud is intimidating for most of us, but especially impressive for a new reader!

**Is your student proud of a recent accomplishment?** Would she or he like to see it listed here? If so, tell us your "celebration" on your monthly tutor calendar and checkmark the box at the bottom of your tutor calendar where it says, "check here if we may mention these accomplishments in the next newsletter."

## Work completed:

**Miyoung K.** with Joan Leone – *Challenger 4*  
**Martha G.** with Sheryl Sankey – *Wilson Step 5*  
**Mindy W.** with Neil Konkel – *Wilson Step 8*  
**Kenny C.** with Cristine Hilsinger – *Wilson Step 9*

## Introducing...

## *In Our Words,* PSC's New Book of Student Writings

We are renaming our book of student writings. Goodbye *Let Me Say This...* and hello *In Our Words*. PSC students are encouraged to submit writings for publication in this book.

As in the past, students are welcome to write stories, poems, recipes, letters...anything they want. This year, in honor of PSC's 30th anniversary, we are also interested in student writings that celebrate anniversaries, whether it is the anniversary of starting at PSC, moving to the United States, a wedding, a birthday, recovery, or any other major life milestone.

Here is what you need to know:

- Students may submit up to three pieces of writing.
- Each piece should be 4-400 words long.
- Very short pieces are especially welcome.
- Stories do *not* need to be perfect!
- If students don't feel comfortable writing independently, they may dictate stories to their tutors.
- Submissions are due **Friday, May 30**.

We would love to have a submission from every student, so start writing! Please speak with staff if you have any questions.

## ❖ Welcome New Tutors! ❖

Alice Batchelder	Linnea Soderlund
Amber Avelino	Marc Hanson
Becky Eiben	Meg Baldwinson
Bettina Domingue	Nichole Coggiola
Beverley Nidick	Paula Anderson
Brenda Hanschen	Perveen Guzdar
Cathleen Slaga	Rhonda Futterman
Diana Casanova	Russ Beaty
Ellen Green	Sharon Spencer
Hank Fesler	Susan Beyerle
Iris Hillman	Susan Kishi
Jan Mattos	Tammie Nichols
Joan Jump	Vicky DeYoung
Joan Tarver	Vivian Fong
Lesley Nutting	Wafaa Akl

## Be kind to our books!

Please take care of PSC books by not folding back the cover, writing in them, or spilling food and beverages on them. We only have one copy of some books and a very limited budget to replace them. Thank you!!

# Tutor Tips



## WRITING THANK YOU NOTES

By Kate

As I was writing my holiday thank you notes this year, I was once again reminded how much easier writing is once you get into a rhythm. With thank you notes, there is a general formula most of us use, whether we're aware of it or not. Of course we put our own personal twist to it, but using a formula makes what could be a daunting task into a doable one.

Students tell us how hard they find writing thank you notes. They don't know where to begin. They're often eager to learn the secret to simple thank you notes, and are grateful when offered this little formula, or template.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ (*Grandma, Bill, Aunt Sue...*),

Thank you for the \_\_\_\_\_ (*sweater, gift card, flower vase*). I really like \_\_\_\_\_ (*it, them*) because \_\_\_\_\_ (*green is my favorite color, I've been wanting some new shoes, I planted a rose bush this year...*). It was so kind of you to think of me for \_\_\_\_\_ (*Hanukkah, my birthday...*).

Love,  
\_\_\_\_\_ (name)

Simple, right? These are the basics; a more advanced writer might want to add more, such as:

I look forward to using your gift \_\_\_\_\_ (*to wear to school, for my next dinner party...*). I hope to see you \_\_\_\_\_ (*soon, at John's party...*).

You can also discuss different ways to end a letter. When is signing "Love," appropriate? When should you use something a little more reserved? What other options are there (*Best wishes, Sincerely, Yours truly, Cheers, Warm wishes, All the best...*)?

For students afraid of making mistakes, assure them that Aunt Sue will be glad to hear from them, no matter the spelling. However, suggest they make a first draft on scratch paper. Usually not even the very best writers are satisfied with their first attempt. Talk about, or better yet model, the editing process and how to know when you're ready to transfer the letter onto a nice card or stationary.

## Families for Literacy

By Veronica



## Early Literacy Stations

Are you wondering about what type of indoor activity your child might enjoy? If so, here's a suggestion.

Consider taking your child on an outing to a Contra Costa County Library. Some of the libraries\* have Early Literacy (computer) Stations available for children 2-10 years of age. Your child can use the station to learn something new or use it for pure entertainment!

Each station has educational programs\*\* installed that engage children in pre-reading, reading, writing, math, or keyboarding activities. Stations come with a colorful keyboard and a child-sized mouse. Stations are not connected to the internet.

### \*Libraries with Early Literacy Stations

Antioch (includes bilingual Spanish edition), Concord, Danville, Dougherty Station, El Sobrante, Hercules, Lafayette, Moraga, Pittsburg (includes bilingual Spanish edition), Pleasant Hill, Prewett (includes bilingual Spanish edition, San Pablo, San Ramon, Walnut Creek, Ygnacio Valley).

### \*\*Educational Programs

**Pre-K:** Colors, Shapes, Math, Matching, Painting, Phonics, Music, Animal, Sounds, Thinking Activities, Puzzle Sounds Match, Calendar Game, Connect-the-Dots

**Toddler:** Matching, Shapes, Thinking, Painting, Animal Sounds

**Kindergarten:** Story Solvers, Animal Maze

**Ready to Learn:** The Human Body, The Junior Visual, Universe, Weather, Earth, Solar System, Encyclopedia Britannica, Learning Systems, English, Literature, World History

More information about Early Literacy Station features and how to use them is available at Project Second Chance.



Photo and most information copied from the Contra Costa Library *Early Literacy Guide*.