



Happy New Year from PSC!

The PSC staff had a busy and exciting fall. We welcomed a new tutor-learner coordinator, Christina. We published a wonderful new *In Our Words*. We had fun at our Fall Celebration seeing learners and tutors. We are already planning our next event! Save the date:

PSC Recognition Event 2023
Saturday, June 10, 5-6:30 pm,
Pleasant Hill Library

At the event, we will share the latest *In Our Words* book. See page 2 for information about sharing your story.

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You can find the meaning of words
in **orange** in the Glossary on page 8.

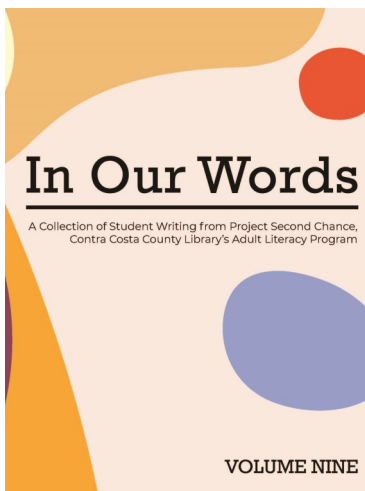
News for Learners & Tutors

Welcome, Christina!

Hi! My name is Christina DeLeon. I'm a Tutor-Learner Coordinator. I am excited to work on the new program to support ESL learners with conversation skills. I have worked as a volunteer ESL teacher and an ESL middle school teacher. I also worked as a Resource Coordinator for seniors living in low-income housing, connecting seniors to resources like having a food bank at their apartment building.



In Our Words 2023 Deadline



In Our Words has a new deadline for stories in 2023: April 15, 2023.

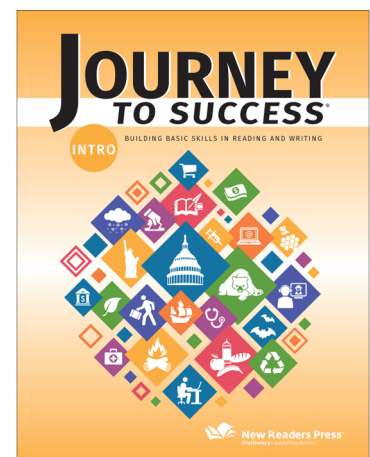
Why so early? PSC has reorganized our calendar year. We will print *In Our Words* for the PSC Recognition Event on June 10.

So, sharpen your pencils and start writing! You can submit up to 3 stories. Each story should be 400 words or less (not including the title). You will need to sign a release form so we can print it.

When your story is ready, please give or send it to your tutor-learner coordinator (Christina, Laura, Leslie, or Megan). You can also email it to psc@library.cccounty.us.

Coming Soon: Some Books for Learners to Write In!

For many years, learners have been asking for books to write in. Thanks to some generous donations, we were able to buy our first-ever copies of the *Journey to Success* and *Challenger* series for learners to keep! We expect to have these textbooks available by early spring and will send an email with more information then. We hope this will make tutoring easier for pairs.



Call for Learner Newsletter Writing

PSC learners—do you have any tips or advice for other learners about reading, writing, spelling, or confidence with learning? PSC may be able to print your ideas in an upcoming newsletter.

Here are some **guidelines**:

- Your story must be 300 words or less.
- Your story must be written and edited by you. Your tutor can **advise** you, but the words and ideas should be your own.
- Your story must be about “literacy learning” in some way. Here are some possible ideas:
 - A story about a favorite activity you and your tutor do.
 - The craziest spelling rule and how you remember it.
 - Your trick for learning new vocabulary.
 - What you do when you feel like your writing will never get better and you want to give up.
 - The most helpful book or book series you used during your tutoring and why it helped you.
 - Your **original** idea—please share!

Send your story to psc@library.cccounty.us or your tutor-learner coordinator (Christina, Laura, Leslie, or Megan). If we can't print it in the newsletter, we'll ask you if it's okay to print it in *In Our Words* instead.

PSC Fall Celebration Photos



Frangolino, a Family Circus performs at the PSC Fall Celebration.

PSC's Fall Celebration was held on October 26, 2022. Most of the photos in this newsletter were taken at that event. Thank you to PSC, Inc. for **sponsoring** it!

We Want to **Brag** about You!

PSC wants to **brag** about you and your work! We are trying to get more learner faces on our Facebook page and write about their accomplishments. If you want to share, whether right now or in the future, please email psc@library.cccounty.us. We will find a time to talk with you and take your photo. Thanks **in advance** for helping us tell some **inspiring** stories!

Learner Book Review: Love You to Death

By Lilian O.

Love You to Death by Gail Bowen is a good book because it is about a radio show where they have callers every night to express their ideas and have discussions. In this book, Charlie D and Nova are the central characters who work in the CVOX radio station. I loved to see how Charlie D and Nova knew how to work together as a team. It was good to see how they knew each other really well and they didn't need to talk between themselves to understand.

I enjoyed reading this book because of how **suspenseful** it was. I loved it when I didn't know what was next in the story. Every chapter kept us thinking, "Who is the killer?" Each chapter had **intrigue** because on each call they almost knew who the killer was, but it was **to-be-continued** for the next chapter.

I really enjoyed this book, Love You to Death. It was good for me to read this book, because I understood the story and it was easy to comprehend. The book was at the right level for me to have the confidence in my reading.

The book **enriched** my vocabulary and my comprehension and pronunciation. This was my first full novel that I read in English. I stopped thinking in Spanish, and just stayed with English without **translating**. I wasn't thinking I was learning a language, I was just enjoying the book with Ann Marie, my tutor.

I definitely recommend it because the book is very interesting and keeps you page turning to the end.

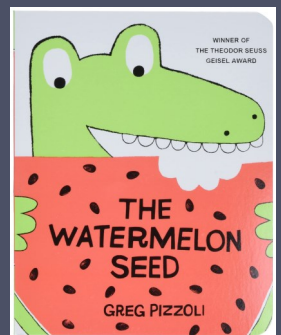


Tutor-learner coordinators Laura and Megan hand out awards at the PSC Fall Celebration.

Family Reading Event

Please save the date for a fun storytime for you and your children. It will be on Wednesday, March 15, at 4 pm.

We will be listening to a book about fruit and completing a **craft** together. We will mail the book and art supplies to you if you have children between the ages of three and seven. A Zoom link will be emailed to you before the event. Please give us a call if you have any questions. We hope to see you there!



Activity for Learners and Tutors

Tutor/Learner Activity: Bag of Rocks

We all have stress. **Mental** health can be hurt by stress. Talking about stress is a good learning opportunity and can help **mental** health. This is a tutor/learner activity for talking about stress. See page 6 for more about **mental** health.



Steps:

1. Read the short story *Bag of Rocks* below. Learners can read it themselves, or tutors can read it out loud to learners.
2. Pick a specific stress and put it in the story. For example, for a learner from another country, moving to the United States can be a stress. Parenting can also be a stress.
3. After reading the story, look at the discussion questions.
4. Fill out the chart, either with writing or just talking. Tutors can share their own Bag of Rocks to help learners feel comfortable.

Bag of Rocks

Life can be stressful. Everyone feels stress sometimes. Some stresses are big; others are small.

Adults who are learning a new skill, like reading and writing, might carry **pressure** and bad memories about going to school. *(This is where the learner and tutor can put a specific stress in the story).*

When we have stress, our **invisible** bag of rocks is *HEAVY*. Some rocks can be big and heavy and stay in your bag for a long time. Some rocks may feel smaller and lighter. If we have too many small rocks, they can be difficult, too.

We can do things to make our bag of rocks lighter. We don't have to carry our rocks alone. One example is sharing a conversation about stress, or writing about it.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Think about when you started your learning journey. How heavy was your bag of rocks then? How heavy is it now?
- 2) What are some examples of “small rocks” and “big rocks” that you have?
- 3) What are some of the stresses and hopes you have?

Stress From Learning Challenging Things	Hope from Learning Challenging Things

News for Learners and Tutors

Bag of Rocks (continued from page 5)

There are counselors available to help with **mental** health across the county.

Contra Costa County Crisis Center:
1-800-833-2900

Mental Health Access Line: 1-888-678-7277

Countywide Mental Health Liaison:

East: 925-521-5724

Central: 925-521-5727

West: 925-521-5225

*This activity is **adapted** from ProLiteracy's Spring 2022 Newsletter.*

Learner Achievements

Al E. completed *Wilson Step 6* with Susie T.

Angela S. completed *Wilson Step 2* with Leslie M.

Ferozan M. finished reading *The House on Mango Street* with Leslie S.

Maria M. completed *Journey to Success 2* with Nancy A.

Nusaiba A. completed *Journey to Success 2* with Marie D.

Onesha E. completed *Wilson Step 7* with Sue K.

Stella K. completed *Journey to Success 5* with Elaine H.

Velia R. completed *Challenger 7* with Carmen O.

Lucie S. completed her longtime dream of reading the first book in the Harry Potter series with tutor Sandy B. Way to go, Lucie!

Tutor Judi K. shared that **Misty G.** voted in the November 8 election. Way to use your voice, Misty!

Roy D. read his first novel, *The Cell Phone Lot*, with tutor Julie H. He enjoyed it so much that he read it again! Go, Roy!

Martha S. read the entire Lite Reads book *Rosa Parks* out loud during a session with tutor Connie F. Amazing job, Martha!

Tutor Sandy S. reported that **Veronica M.** finished reading *The Power of Habit* and recently found a new job. Congratulations, Veronica!



PSC staff at the PSC Fall Celebration: Elaine, Megan, Laura, Matilde, Christina, and Leslie.

News for Tutors

America Learns Calendar Update

Tutors, you'll notice some new language in the December Monthly Calendar Report. Instead of asking for progress on long-term goals, we're asking you to share more about where you and your learner focused the time in your sessions each month. This will help us better report our pairs' progress to the State Library. Watch this short explanation at <https://tinyurl.com/PSCcalendarupdate>. If you need assistance, just contact the PSC office and we'd be glad to walk you through it.

Skype and Google Meet and Zoom, Oh My!

For pairs who are meeting virtually who would like to explore alternatives to Zoom that don't have a 40-minute time limit for one-on-one meetings, PSC has created tutorial videos:

Google Meet tutorial:

<https://tinyurl.com/PSCGoogleMeet>

Skype tutorial:

<https://tinyurl.com/PSCSkype>

Tutor Survey Coming Soon

Our annual tutor survey will be going out in January by email. Please take a few minutes to complete it and let us know what's working well for you in our program, along with what we can do to improve the tutoring experience.



Thanks to longtime PSC friends the Beyer Family for sponsoring the publication of our 2022 volume of *In Our Words*.

Tutor Tip

Did you know that PSC tutors are considered a part of the California Library Literacy Services (CLLS) community? Visit <https://libraryliteracy.org> and choose "Tutoring and Tutor Training" from the Resources drop-down menu for a list of useful links and tutoring tips!

Glossary

adapted

changed to make it work better for a group

advise

to help by saying what they might do

brag

to talk about in a proud or happy way

craft

something you make with your hands

donations

gifts of money to help an organization or group

enriched

made better

expect

to think something will happen

generous

kind and giving

guidelines

rules that tell people how to do something

in advance

before it happens

income

the money you get from working

inspiring

giving people a feeling of hope or of wishing to do something great

intrigue

secret plans to hurt someone

invisible

not seen

mental

related to the mind

original

newly made

pressure

the feeling of being worried or stressed

release

letting something be used by another person or group

reorganized

planned in a new way

sponsoring

supporting, usually by giving money

suspenseful

making you want to know what will happen next

to-be-continued

not finished yet but will soon be

translating

changing words from one language to another