

PSC NEWSLETTER

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Families for Literacy celebrates the Lunar New Year!

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Join a PSC conversation or reading club!

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See the glossary to understand words in **red**.

HELLO & WELCOME

With the new year, we have many new things happening at PSC.

We have two new staff members, Gabi Rodriguez and Jazmin Betancourt. They are Library Literacy Assistants. Learn more about them on page 3.

In Concord, we are moving to a new office in the same building. It is a bigger space with more room for pairs to meet. The Concord office will close for two weeks while we move. See page 2 for more.

You can buy new Friends of PSC t-shirts, water bottles, and bags! Congratulations to Seda K., who created the winning design. Read about how you can order them on page 10.

Wishing you a happy new year,
The PSC Team

NEWS & UPDATES



Concord Office Move Update

We are so excited to share our new office space in Concord with you! We will be moving one floor up to 2151 Salvio Street, Suite 310. The new space is larger, with more room for pairs to meet. We will also be getting some new furniture in the tutoring area.

The Concord office will be closed for two weeks while we move. We do not know the exact dates yet. We think we will move in late January.

During this time, you can call our other offices in Antioch and San Pablo. You can also email us at psc@library.cccounty.us. We thank you for your patience if it takes us a little longer to reply.

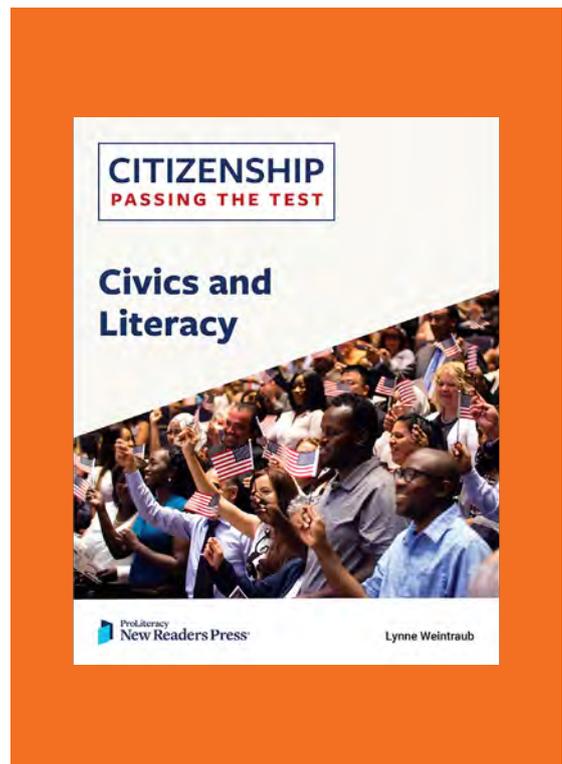
We will send more details soon.

2025 Updates to the US Citizenship Exam

The US Citizenship Test changed in October 2025.

If you are studying for the test, you can get more information about the changes on the ProLiteracy website: <https://tinyurl.com/2025USCitizenshiptest>. (This webpage would be good for tutors and learners to read together.)

If you are using **Citizenship Passing the Test: Civics and Literacy** by Lynne Weintraub (New Readers Press, 2025), you can find a 2025 supplement here: <https://tinyurl.com/CivicsSupplement2025> or contact PSC for more information.



MEET OUR NEW STAFF



Meet Gabi Rodriguez

Before coming to PSC, I worked as a **substitute teacher** for about one and a half years in both K-12 and adult schools.

I enjoy helping people learn and grow. I also love celebrating progress, even small steps. I am happy to be here because I believe in the work PSC does.

As a library literacy assistant, I look forward to supporting you in many ways. I can help with online accounts, connect you with your tutor-learner coordinator, or assist at Families for Literacy events.

Meet Jazmin Betancourt

Jazmin (Jaz) is excited and grateful to join PSC as a new library literacy assistant. She is one of the first in her family to graduate from college. Previously she worked as a teacher, college **coach**, and **nonprofit** manager.

Jazmin is **passionate** about helping community members access library services and resources that will help them live **choice-filled** lives. Her favorite **pastimes** are eating tacos, looking at art, going to concerts, and watching movies on her **comfy** couch.

She looks forward to working with PSC learners and tutors to ensure they have positive and **meaningful** experiences.

EVENTS FOR LEARNERS

Families for Literacy: Lunar New Year Events

In February, we will be celebrating Lunar New Year. The event is best for families with kids ages 3–8, but anyone can come. We hope you can join us!

Tuesday, February 10, 6–7 p.m.
El Sobrante Library

In February, all families with children 12 and younger will be getting a book and craft in the mail. Whether you celebrate Lunar New Year or different holidays, we hope that you will enjoy them!



In Our Words 2026: Start Writing Your Stories!

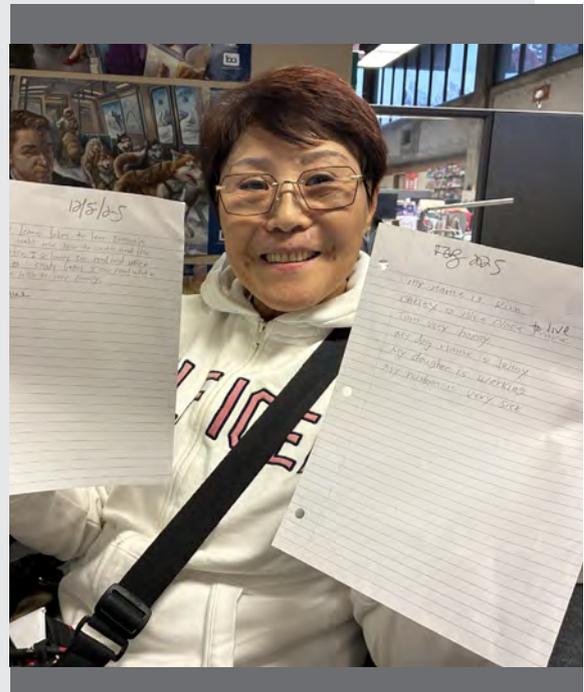
In Our Words, PSC's book of learner writing, will be published in early June 2026. January is a good time to start planning and writing. Talk to your tutor about working on this in your tutoring sessions.

You can write about anything. Some popular ideas are stories about vacations, family, pets, funny or **unusual** experiences, or childhood memories. Some people like to write poems, letters, or recipes, too.

Here are some guidelines:

- You can write one story of up to 1200 words.
- Or, you can write up to three stories, 400 words each.
- Each story needs a title.

Please give or email your story to your tutor-learner coordinator (Laura, Megan, Leslie, Zoe).



CLUBS FOR LEARNERS

Join PSC Talking Club This New Year!

PSC Talking Clubs are a great way to practice speaking and listening in English.

You can attend the in-person or online club (or both).

Look for an email invitation about one week before the meeting dates that are below.

PSC In-Person Talking Club

Where: PSC Concord office, 2151 Salvio Street, Concord

When: First Wednesday of the month, 2–3 p.m.

Dates: 1/7, 2/4, 3/4, 4/1, 5/6, 6/3

PSC Online Talking Club

Where: On Zoom—look for an email with a link

When: Third Thursday of the month, 4–5 p.m.

Dates: 1/15, 2/19, 3/19, 4/16, 5/21, 6/18

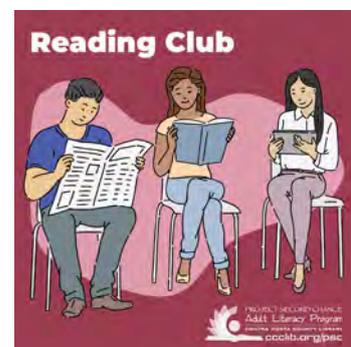


Reading Club Returns in February for More Reading Practice

PSC Reading Club will be returning in February with new articles to read/listen to as a group and talk about. It meets the first two Tuesdays of the month from 12–1 p.m. on Zoom. You can come even if you have never joined before.

We will meet on the following days: February 3 & 10 and March 3 & 10.

Look for an email with the Zoom link in your inbox. We hope to see you there!



ACTIVITY FOR LEARNERS

Learner Activity: What Is Prediabetes?

Use the vocabulary list below to read this paragraph and the information in the link:

Diabetes is a serious disease. Before getting diabetes, many people have higher than normal blood sugar called prediabetes. Often people don't know they have prediabetes. Learn more about prediabetes and prevention by reviewing the infographic at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/pscPrediabetes>. Then discuss the questions that follow.

Vocabulary:

diabetes: a serious disease where there is too much sugar in your blood

prediabetes: when your blood sugar is higher than normal, but not yet diabetes

CDC: the Centers for Disease Control, a United States government agency about health

complications: problems

failure: when something does not work or succeed

half: 50%

infographic: information explained with pictures and facts

prevention: stopping something bad from happening

reduce: make something smaller

risk: chance of something bad happening

stroke: a problem in your brain when an blood vessel (tube) breaks



Discussion Questions:

1. How many people in the US have prediabetes? Does this surprise you? Why or why not?
2. What are two health risks **associated with** diabetes?
3. What are two things you can do to lower your risk of diabetes?
4. Do you know anyone with diabetes?
5. How can you find out if you have diabetes?
6. What do you do to stay healthy?

LEARNER TIP

Writing a New Year's Resolution

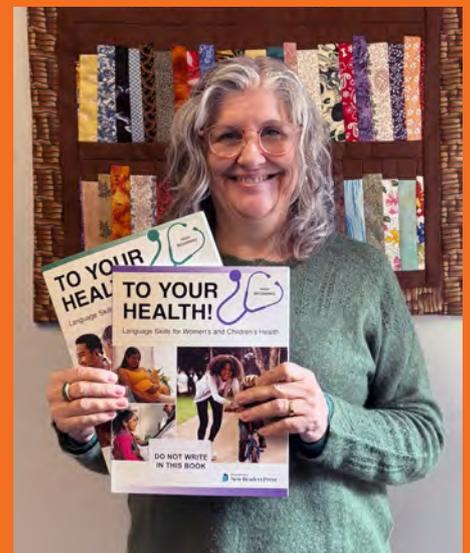
Toward the end of the year, some people write New Year's resolutions. A resolution is something that you decide to do in the future. A New Year's resolution is something you decide to do at the beginning of the next year.

Most resolutions are goals for becoming a better person. Common resolutions are exercising, eating healthier food, spending more time with friends or family, learning a new skill, or volunteering.

Do you want to write your own New Year's resolution? Here are some tips:

- It can be something you want to do or something you want to stop doing. For example, you might want to start running or you might want to stop smoking.
- Try to make your resolution something that you can really do.
- Use a number to make your goal specific. Instead of saying that you will start running, say that you will run three times every week.
- Plan for what problems could come up.

It can be hard to build new habits. **Cheer yourself on** for trying something new this New Year!



PSC has two new books about health. One is called *To Your Health: Language for Health and Wellness*. The other is called *To Your Health: Language Study for Women and Children's Health*.

Contact your tutor-learner coordinator if you would like to use one of these books in your tutoring sessions.

LEARNER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Textbooks Completed

Wilson Reading System

Annie B. (Book 1)
Armando R. (Book 1)
Demetriess S. (Book 1)
Phyllis B. (Book 1)
Robert H. (Book 1)
Shirley P. (Book 1)

Confidence & Connections

Alicia P. (Book 2L)
Ebtesam E. (Book 2R)
Fabiola N. (Book 2L)
Jaime B. (Book 4R)
Mohammad A. (Book 2L)
Roberto G. (Book 2L)
Sandra M. (Book 3R)
Tenpa G. (Book 2L)
Yelena S. (Book 2R)

Journey to Success

Rafiq K. (Level 4)
Tommy H. (Level 1)
Yeshi C. (Level Intro)

Patterns in Spelling

Kalsoom K. (Book 2)



Sentence Mastery
Julia H. (Book A)

English Step by Step

Velia R.

Long Stories Short

Oksana D. (Book 4)

Other Accomplishments

Passed her phlebotomy class

Jessica R.

Got a new job, passed the job's reading and writing test

Byron D.

Got a driver's permit

Xavier O.

Accepted two new jobs

Erika M.

NEWS FOR TUTORS

Join Tutors Together for “Pizza with PSC” Events



Want to talk tutoring with other tutors and PSC staff while enjoying a pizza lunch provided by Friends of PSC? Join us at our winter/spring Tutors Together events, which we’re calling “Pizza with PSC.”

Concord: Friday, February 27, from 11 a.m.–12 p.m. at the PSC Concord office

San Pablo: Friday, March 13, from 11 a.m.–12 p.m. at the San Pablo Library

Oakley: Friday, April 3, from 11 a.m.–12 p.m. at the Oakley Recreation Center in the Oakley Recreation and Parks Department building, 1250 O’Hara Ave.

Tutor Skill Ups



Chat with your fellow tutors while learning about tutoring resources and ideas from PSC staff.

Friday, January 2, from 12–1 p.m.: How to Know Your Match is Ending & What to Do Next

Friday, February 6, from 12–1 p.m.: Helping Your Learner with Self-Editing

Friday, March 6, from 12–1 p.m.: Health Literacy

To join, go to <https://tinyurl.com/PSCSkillUp>. No RSVP needed. Can’t make it? You can find recordings of past sessions in the “Share & Get Strategies” link on America Learns and use “skill ups” as your keyword search or <https://tinyurl.com/PSCskillups>.

Welcome New Tutors!

Andrea Hirsig
Ann Levine
Aubrey Rust
Bella Collins
Bhaskar Dawadi
Bill Kahmar
Bill Strohmeyer
Cris Barthel
Dave Bacher
Edie Glantz
Erin Smith
Frank Monaghan
Janet Appel
Jaron Box
Jasmine McCormick
Jim Wood
Jon Nickens
Joy Chadwick
Laurie Lippe
Leo O'Connor
Lora Easley
Lynn O'Hara
Maria Colvin
May Chong
Noe Vasquez
Parisa McGahan
Phil Vuncanon
Raphael Romea
Shea Griffin
Steve Malmquist
Sylvia Weisenberg
Tara Driscoll
Todd Cook
Tricia Newhart
Vicky Ko

NEWS FOR EVERYONE



Friends of PSC Corner

This fall Friends of PSC held a contest to design art that represented Project Second Chance. We are happy to offer t-shirts, water bottles, and tote bags with the winning design from learner Seda K.

Seda says, "Joining Project Second Chance has been one of the best decisions I have ever made. My tutor has been much more than a tutor—she became my closest friend and a part of our family. She supported me not only in improving my English, but also in **adapting** to life in the United States as an immigrant. The words 'PSC Changed My Life— Learning. Friendship. Family.' **summarize** everything the program has meant to me."

All **earnings** will support Project Second Chance's adult literacy program. You can also order items with the Friends of PSC logo. These items can be purchased at <https://www.bonfire.com/store/projectsecondchance/>. To have your items shipped in the first printing **batch** in late January, **order by January 4**. Thank you for your support!

GLOSSARY

adapting

slowly changing your thinking or actions to be successful in a new situation

associated with

happen with



a **batch** of cookies

batch

a group of things prepared at the same time

cheer yourself on

encourage yourself

choice-filled

full of choices

coach

someone who helps you, like a teacher or tutor

comfy

comfortable

earnings

money you get from work or a project

lunar

about the moon

meaningful

important or useful

nonprofit

an organization that isn't trying to make money

passionate

feels very strongly about

pastimes

things you enjoy in your free time; hobbies



work as a **phlebotomist**

phlebotomy

taking blood from a person using a needle

substitute teacher

a person who teaches a class when the regular teacher is not there

summarize

describe the main idea of something

unusual

not common; special; strange