



Brunswick County Literacy Council



Volunteer Orientation

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Who We Are

- Brunswick County Literacy Council (BCLC) provides literacy instruction to adults in Brunswick County
- We believe that literacy helps adults make a better life for themselves and their families and a better world for all

What We Do

- Reading
- Writing
- Math
- English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- One-on-One Tutoring
- Small Group Classes

Adults need strong literacy skills to

- raise children who have strong literacy skills
- be good employees
- keep themselves and their families healthy
- be active in their communities
- avoid crime
- advocate for themselves

How BCLC Operates

- Volunteers (YOU!)
- Board of Directors (also volunteers)
- Paid staff
- Funding Sources

Our Partnerships

- Internationally: ProLiteracy Worldwide
- Nationally: ProLiteracy
- State: North Carolina Literacy Association
- NC Community College System

Our Local Partners

- BCC
- Three Chambers of Commerce
- Social Services
- Brunswick County Schools
- County Jail
- Employment Security Commissions (ESC)
- Others

Volunteer Roles at BCLC

- Board/Committee Member
- Public speaker
- Librarian
- Special events team member
- Office assistant
- Child-care provider
- Reader to young children
- Student intake
- Trainer
- Tutor/instructor

Characteristics and Needs of Adult Learners

1. Want to be treated as adults even if they are learning basic skills
2. Are self-directed and used to making decisions for themselves or together with peers or family members
3. Have specific and immediate learning needs and goals
4. Are very busy and may have limited time to participate in programs or do homework; may have barriers to regular attendance
5. May feel insecure about their literacy abilities and about learning new things
6. May have difficulty asking questions and expressing opinions about instruction
7. Have values and beliefs based on their cultural and ethnic backgrounds that may be very different from the tutor or instructor
8. Learn best when learning relates to their day-to-day lives
9. Are not a captive audience; can vote with their feet
10. Possess a wealth of experiences that should be used as a resource in learning

The Nuts and Bolts

- You will be matched with a student, geographically, since Brunswick County is so large and tutors and students don't normally travel far
- A record of your time is to be kept by you and turned in each month as well as total mileage. This can be done by mail, email, phone, or website
- Tutoring sessions usually last about 1.5 hours, twice a week
- Our Program Coordinator will be available anytime you have a problem. In the meantime, someone else will help you along the way
- Materials are given as you need them. Student books are free for the students and are consumable. Teacher manuals are the property of the council and are returned when you are finished with them.



Tutor Training Components

- Volunteer Orientation
- Adult Basic Literacy (ABL) or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) are **\$20** each
- Assigned to a tutor advisor (mentor)
- Meet with Program staff, receive student information and assessment goals
- Complete two (2) online ProLiteracy courses. There are 8 to 12 courses from which to choose
- Spend a couple of hours on the BCLC website looking through the **O.I.L.**'s
- Meet your student; begin lessons
- Attend at least 3 of the 6 scheduled "Tutor Talks"
- Volunteers who complete all of the above will receive their *ProLiteracy* certificate!!

Success Stories!

- Many students have passed the GED tests and attended college to learn new careers
- Maria says *"My tutor helped me register to vote. I will vote this year!"*
- Several students now play a bigger role in their children's schooling
- Some students read to children in their neighborhood
- Ken says *"I still have my job! I'm more confident at work."*
- A number of students kept their jobs while attending tutoring and/or classes



What's "right" for YOU?

- Personal achievement, recognition, feedback and growth
- Gain new skills
- Give something back
- Share talents
- Bring about social change
- Friendships beyond work
- Results and challenges



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- BCLC: www.bcliteracy.org
 - ProLiteracy: www.proliteracy.org
 - ProLiteracy Courses: www.proliteracyednet.org/articles.asp?mcid=2&cid=24

The Role of a Tutor

- Work as a partner with your learner to define and plan the work you do together; when necessary, offer your student choices instead of making decisions yourself
- Build instruction on your student's strengths, experiences, needs, and interests. Use real life situations and examples
- Assume your student is smart and capable of learning; have high and appropriate expectations for success
- Encourage your student to bring materials and topics of interest to him/her to the lesson
- Meet regularly with your learner, be prepared for the lesson, and use a consistent, flexible, and instructional format
- Teach by example; explain and model what skilled readers and writers do to remember new skills and problem solve when facing difficulty
- Teach your student what s/he can do (and how to do it) outside the tutoring session to build skill, especially by practicing reading
- Treat your student as an adult and an equal



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- Think about the bullets above
 - If you were to assume the role of a tutor, which ONE of these most excites you?
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- With which ONE might you need some additional support?

Tips from Tutors

- ✓ Meet your student where s/he is; not where you think s/he should be
- ✓ Find out what your learner wants to learn, and teach it
- ✓ Adult learners are different from children. Make adult learning different from school
- ✓ Don't take poor attendance personally, but do ensure you're meeting the student's needs
- ✓ Learning takes time. Don't be discouraged by slow progress. It takes time to develop a relationship and set up a good learning routine
- ✓ Your student is likely to be more nervous than you are
- ✓ Relax, have fun, and be creative



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- ✓ Reflect on these "Tips"
 - ✓ What are **2** key words or short phrases?
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 - ✓ What is **1** point to ponder?