

Region 1 CLC Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 26, 2005

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Winchester Public Library, Winchester

Facilitator: Anna Buxton

Attendees:

Joey Glushko
Marlana Patton
Dennis Brett
Dotty Dexter

Carolyn Houghton
Stephen Baldi
Susan Altman
Jessica Pease

Joe Glendenning
Josh Burchard

Handouts:

Pronunciation tips (handed out to those who couldn't attend the previous meeting)
Slides from pronunciation Web sites presentation

Introduction

Anna Buxton opened the meeting with a welcome of EMLC volunteers and a reminder about the upcoming 2-day workshop on Research-Based Reading Assessments and Methods in the EMLC office. She also made available that SABES news and workshops fall/winter calendar (for upcoming events, check the SABES Web site calendar at <http://www.sabes.org/calendar.htm>).

The group discussed future meeting time of day, morning vs. evening:

→ The group acknowledged that in most cases, mornings are preferable, but that it is also good to have variety of meeting times to include volunteers who cannot attend mornings.

Anna suggested that meetings take place quarterly. The next meeting will be held in January to avoid trying to schedule a meeting during the upcoming holiday season.

Anna requested either a rotating leadership of meetings to help foster a variety of ideas, or failing that, a partner to help her plan.

→ Stephen Baldi later offered to take the leadership role for the next meeting.

Winchester Library

Anna introduced Janet Nelson, the reference/community services librarian and community liaison for the library. Janet described the facilities available at the library:

- **The Literacy Corner:** A collection of literacy-related resources, including brochures, flyers, and books.
- **The literacy collection:** These books are under the responsibility of Marie Ariel, who is welcoming ideas on new books, videos, dvds, etc. to replace Literacy Corner items that have become old and outdated. Janet circulated a form on which attendees could list items that would be useful to add to the collection. Additional ideas can be sent to Marie directly via email: mariel@minlib.net with the words "ESOL & Literacy" in the subject line.
- **Two quiet study rooms:** They can be reserved one month in advance for up to 2 hours at a time by calling the reference desk at 781-721-7171 x20. Janet noted that these rooms are busiest after school hours.



Increasing EMLC's local visibility

Anna asked how EMLC can increase its visibility in the local community. The following ideas were suggested:

- Advertise meetings in the local papers (such as the *Winchester Chronicle* and the *Winchester Star*). (Janet Nelson)
- Last week the Winchester Library held a resource fair for nonprofits and is setting up a mailing list of all local nonprofits. In the future, the *Winchester Star* will display a directory of nonprofit organizations and events. Marlana Patton from EMLC was given a form to ensure EMLC's inclusion in that list. (Janet Nelson)
- EMLC can advertise in the community information center at the library and possibly in the library newsletter, though Janet cautioned that its focus was really library events. Note that Marlana Patton replenished the Winchester Library's supply of EMLC brochures on Tuesday 10/25. (Janet Nelson)
- EMLC could potentially co-sponsor an event with the library. (Janet Nelson)
- The point was made that Region 1 CLC members from other communities, such as Arlington and Medford, should consider what EMLC should be doing in those communities as well and bring ideas to future meetings or to the attention of the staff. (Joe Glendenning)

Pronunciation Web sites

Marlana Patton introduced 6 Web sites that can help with pronunciation and speaking/listening practice:

- <http://www.esl-lab.com> (listening quizzes with tests of comprehension)
- <http://www.englishclub.com/pronunciation/index.htm> (written explanations of English pronunciation characteristics)
- <http://www.learnersdictionary.com> (offers word of the day and interactive pronunciation exercises that focus on single sounds)
- <http://www.fonetik.org/shiporsheep/index.html> (great to teach minimal pairs)
- <http://esl.about.com/cs/pronunciation> (exposure to the IPA and numerous audio files for different levels)
- <http://www.soundsofenglish.org> (offers various exercises on minimal pairs and word endings, as well as interactive testing and work sheets)

Marlana also introduced a Web site that lets you save your bookmarks and access them from any computer with an Internet connection:

- <http://www.mybookmarks.com>

It was noted that the Winchester library has a publicly available wireless network, as do many libraries. Volunteers with laptops that are wireless enabled could bring their laptops to the library and access the Internet with their learner that way.

Marlana brought EMLC's laptops for volunteers to use to visit the sites.

Additional pronunciation resources

Anna presented additional resources/ideas for teaching pronunciation and speaking/listening skills, and group members suggested ideas that work for them:

- Use of a tape recorder to record the student speech and examine which of their difficulties are most significant and must be addressed.



- Re-record your learner's speech after a 3 – 4-month period to gauge progress.
- Make students aware of our own pronunciation and the variety of English accents in the world and how most are acceptable as long as one is understood
- Teach pronunciation rules a little at a time.
- *Clear Speech*, by Judy Gilbert, published by Cambridge UP. Shows great diagrams of the face to aid in production of difficult sounds.
- *Side by Side*, by Steve Molinsky and Bill Bliss, published by Longman. Allows learners to practice drills repeatedly and work on word linking, intonation, and other aspects of pronunciation.
 - It was noted that while *Side by Side* does introduce grammar, it must be supplemented with other resources.
- Teach some phonetic symbols to aid in the learner's ability to look up a word in an English dictionary and understand its phonetic spelling.
 - Anna showed tables 3.1 and 3.2 from *Unlocking Literacy* by Marcia K. Henry, which introduced basic phonetic symbols to aid in pronunciation

Increasing volunteerism

The conversation returned to how EMLC could gain visibility in the local communities and how to increase volunteerism with EMLC and make EMLC of service to the community:

- EMLC members can offer the opportunity to other town members to become tutors.
- EMLC should advertise in church bulletin boards (Anna Buxton) and on local cable networks. (Stephen Baldi)
- The idea of using high-school students was raised.
 - EMLC volunteers (and learners) must be 18 years of age or older because the tutoring context is unsupervised. Interested teenagers could potentially help out with conversation groups because of the supervision available there.
 - Some conversation groups have tried to recruit high-school students but have not had luck (Joey Glushko).
- Local communities have community-focused list serves, and EMLC should post events such as tutor training workshops on those list serves (Susan Altman)

Region 1 CLC Web Page

Marlana Patton showed the group their Web page and explained how to get to it. She encouraged the group to think about the kind of information they'd like to make available from that Web page and encouraged the use of the Web page to collect ideas/votes from group members.

→ <http://www.emlc.org/clc/Region1.htm>

Future meetings:

The next meeting will occur on a Tuesday morning in January in the Winchester Public Library, given its convenience to those that attended this meeting.

Possible future meeting discussion topics include:

- Game evening with tutors and learners
 - Evenings may be tricky for families with children—may need multiple events
- Encouraging learners to take risks with conversation practice outside the tutoring setting.
- How to determine when it's time to stop working with your learner.
- How to say good-bye to your learner when you know the time has come.



Follow-up

The following immediate actions came out of this meeting:

- Meeting minutes will be posted to the Region 1 Web page (Marlana Patton)
- A group roster will be sent out (Marlana Patton)
- The Web sites discussed will be made available from the EMLC Web site (Marlana Patton)
- The next meeting will be planned for January (Stephen Baldi)
- EMLC will register for the *Winchester Star* nonprofit listing (Marlana Patton)

