

Working with Daisy:

A Guide on Tutor/Learner Relationships and Progress

The following text was written by a Tutor over at the Monroe County Public Library, detailing her experiences with her Learner Daisy. Feel free to reference this as it may prove helpful for you and your Learner!

Working with Daisy

“The first session we had together, we got to know each other - family, trips we’d taken, pets, favorite foods, music, tv shows, those sort [sic] of things. I wrote down what Daisy said and the next time we met I read to her what she had told me, asked her if I had got [sic] it right, and then we read it together. This was the beginning of creating reading material from her stories. Daisy had some reading ability already, but at first I read along with her and then I gave her a chance to try it on her own, and only prompted her when necessary.”

“These first times that we read together I just gave her the word when she didn’t know it, but as we read together more, I asked her [questions] first. What is this about? What word might this be? Sometimes I’d also ask, ‘Can you read the words after this one? What word would fit in here?’ I think that context can help a reader guess a word. The same thing with reading an illustrated book - she loves *Amelia Bedelia* - I’d ask her, ‘What’s happening in this picture? So what word would fit in here?’”

“We do a lot of reading from what she talks about. One time she told me that she remembered reading Emily Dickinson in high school so we read some of Dickinson’s poems. Every so often I’ll bring in poetry to read together. there’s a program on line [sic] that we can access where the learner chooses a book to listen to, and the words that are being read, [sic] are highlighted. We also read from a series, with different levels, that is about everyday things like going shopping, a visit to the dentist, [or] having allergies. [They include] activities like choosing a correct answer [and] completing sentences. We also have regular ESL library handouts that are seasonal, and we have exercises based on the material. Sometimes we have word search sheets . There are two sites [that I know of] where you can go and build your own word search puzzles using words that you are working on: [link 1 & 2]”

- <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com/WordSearchSetupForm.asp>
- <http://www.discoveryeducation.com/free-puzzlemaker/>

“I have a list of Most Frequently Used Words [sic]. Daisy and I read them and the ones that she doesn’t know, We [sic] make up sentences for, write them on the board, and read them back. Then I make copies and we read them again the next week. [I also] have a copy of Social Sight Words [sic] and of Personal Safety Expressions [sic]. Sometimes I’ll pick out words with *th*, *wh*, or *sh* and we’ll write sentences using them. We’ve also read familiar proverbs - don’t cry over spilt [sic] milk - and used them in sentences, writing them on the board. [We also use] tongue twisters - we’ve had a lot of fun with those. There’s a newspaper that VITAL (MCPL’s Program) gets - News for You - which reports current events. The newest has an article about the Polar Vortex. This is the material that we would talk about and then read. I try and find books about things that interest Daisy - her cat, her dog, New York City, Michael Jackson, professional wrestling - the children’s department is

a great place for [finding these books in her reading level]. What Daisy is interested in is an important resource, and if I suggest something and she's not interested in it, she'll say so."

"Events happened in Daisy's life, like finding it hard to get housing, and we worked together on a letter to the Mayor, which she sent, and got back a reply. With [our Adult Education Coordinator] we've worked on filling out various forms. Daisy said that it was dangerous for her to cross the road to catch her bus, because a hill prevented her from seeing oncoming traffic, and we worked together to write a letter to the Traffic Department. [We] got a reply explaining that they were aware of this and were working on it. She received a legal document that upset her, concerning her father. [The Adult Education Coordinator] and I read it with her and were able to explain it. My hope is that experiencing the practical uses of reading and writing will encourage Daisy to keep working on [her] skills."

"There are also concrete materials for our use - word tiles, sentences that can be built (like a jigsaw puzzle) - in amusing ways, like 'the crocodile ate a banana,' or 'the cat drove a red car'. Bingo word games, flash cards, and sets of rhyming words [are also fun for Daisy]."

"This is just a list of my experiences that I hope will be helpful. It's important for me to experience this as a two-way learning experience, in which we are equals."