

The Lapdigger too

Learning English

I am learning to read, write, and speak English better. Learning English helps me to get better at my job. It helps me earn more money. It also helps me help my children to learn in school.

I translate work orders for the Hispanics who work with me. I speak for other workers who are hurt at the clinic.

I got a raise in pay for learning the English names for the plants and tools that I use on my job. I got a raise for translating work orders.

I have four children. Their names are Blanca, who is 9, Rogelio, who is 7, David, who is 6 and Alexandra, who is 3. Blanca and Rogelio need help with their school work. Speaking English helps me help them and helps me talk with their teachers.

Every Tuesday and Thursday I spend one hour with my tutor learning English. I am learning English because English is a part of my work and my family life. The better I know English, the better I can make my life.

*Luz F. Jaimes, Shadow Wood Literacy Program
Maureen Forest, tutor*

Thank you, Teacher!

Hello, my name is Herlinda Alvarez. I'm going to tell you some things that happened in my past. When we arrived in Florida, I worked in the fields planting tomatoes. Then I went to work in hotels. In all that time I wanted to learn English but I never got the chance to study English. Now that I got the opportunity to study, I'm going to try to learn as much as possible and now I'm happy for this opportunity to continue to study and thank you, teacher, for helping and trusting me.

A newsletter by and for the students of the Literacy Council of Bonita Springs

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An Unusual Job Interview

Two weeks ago I went to the ice cream shop to fill out an application after work. I had the interview with the owner of the ice cream shop. I was not nervous for the English interview. He told me have a seat. After that he introduced himself. I did the same. When we were sitting down, he asked me some questions:

- Why do you want to work with us?
- How do you know about us?
- Do you like the ice cream shop?
- Do you like children?
- How much do you earn in your other job?
- Where you from?
- Where do you live?

I answered all the questions because I understood all that he told me; but he asked me one question: How do you feel when you when you don't understand English? I did not expect this question. I understand perfectly the question, but I did not answer because I did not expect it. He repeated it slowly: How do you feel when people speak so fast? But I understand when people speak slowly, but when I don't understand something, I ask people to repeat it again or I look for help. So I try to answer the questions. When I finished, he told me, when he knew that people don't understand English, he felt bad and he tried to help them. I told him that he was a good person but there are people that laugh or don't help because they are not patient.

*Nancy Montoya
Carmine Verna, tutor*



OFFICE SCHEDULE

Katie Verna, Program Director
Sonia Heredia, Office Assistant
Monday to Friday: 9:00 to 12:00 noon

Jeanne Sachs, Student/Tutor Coordinator
Nora Martinez, Lab Coordinator
Monday to Thursday: 6:00 to 9:00 pm
website: www.bonitaliteracy.org
email: bonitaliteracy@comcast.net

STUDENT COMPUTER LAB

Monday to Friday, 9am to 12:00 noon
Saturday, Sunday, 9am to 3pm
Monday to Friday, 6:30 to 8:30 pm

CONTACT INFORMATION

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My Sweet Dream

Every woman dreams for the gift of life, having a baby. That was our dream, after being married for many years; my husband and I understood that in order to complete our happiness all we needed was to fulfill our sweet dream.

It was Christmas and the only thing I wanted was my precious gift. No material gift was going to replace or distract my thoughts from that beautiful and tender being I was longing for.

The following month, in January, at last my dream came true. I found out I was pregnant and nothing was going to ruin the happiness I felt. Each day, I imagined how that tiny being was forming inside of me; I imagined his face, the look of his eyes; and I would also thank God everyday for making my dream come true. I couldn't wait until I could hold him in my arms and feel his breathing next to mine. The days passed and without even realizing it, that wonderful day was getting closer, all I could think about was carrying him and naming him "Andrew."

It was already September and since I already was 41 weeks pregnant, my doctor decided to schedule the delivery date. In the morning of Monday, September 15th, we went to the hospital, but before leaving I called my mother in my country (Colombia) so she would give me her blessing. She is the one being who truly understands the happiness I was feeling and what I was going through.

After 12 hours of labor, my "sweet dream" was born. This is when I really understood my mother's tears and all of her words of wisdom. My baby was so precious and tiny, but at the same time this was my biggest dream come true. My child keeps me company; he is my daily joy and motivation. When I feel sad he cheers me up; he is like the glass of water I need whenever I'm thirsty. In other words, my baby is my world, my life.

Mi Dulce Sueño

Toda mujer sueña con un regalo de vida, un bebe. Ese era mi sueño, despues de tener varios años de casada mi esposo y yo comprendimos que para nuestra total felicidad faltaba cumplir nuestro dulce sueño.

Era Navidad y yo solo queria un dulce regalo para mi no era nada lo suficientemente importante que pudiera desplazar o distraer mi pensamiento en aquel tierno ser.

Al mes siguiente, por fin mi sueño se hizo realidad, estaba en embarazo y nada podia opacar esa gran felicidad. Cada dia, dibujaba en mi mente como podria ser aquel ser que dentro de mi cuerpo se estaba formando, me imaginaba su rostro y lo dulce de su mirada, agradecia a Dios cada dia, por cumplir mi dulce sueño y anhelaba tenerlo en mis brazos para sentir su respiracion junto a la mia. Pasaban y pasaban los dias y sin pensarlo se acercaba el gran dia para tenerlo en mis brazos y poderlo llamar por su nombre "Andrew".

Era ya Septiembre y como tenia 41 semanas, mi doctor prefirio programar el parto y asi lo hicimos. A la madrugada del lunes 15 de Septiembre nos dirigimos al hospital, pero antes llame a mi Madre en mi pais "Colombia" para pedir la bendicion de aquella persona que comprendia mi felicidad y que a pesar de la distancia yo sabia que sus pensamientos estaban junto a mi.

Despues de 12 horas de labor nacio mi dulce sueño "Mi bebe". Ahora comprendia el llanto de mi madre, sus palabras fueron ciertas, es algo indescriptible, es un ser tan pequeño, pero a la vez es mi gran sueño hecho realidad. Ahora El es mi compañero, es mi alegría en los momentos de tristeza, es mi luz para seguir adelante en los momentos de oscuridad, es la gota de agua en los momentos de escases, en una sola palabra El es mi vida. Es mi bebe.

Astrid Moscoso

Paula Cohen, tutor

Funny Things in the Grocery Store

One Sunday we went to the grocery store and, while my husband and I were putting the things in the cart, there was someone else who was doing the same job. Well, all of us crossed the store aisle by aisle until we finished and we went to the checkout counter. There we realized there were a lot of more items—that little Julia had put in the cart. So we had to leave them. *Maria Cristina Perez de Meza*

One time when me and my daughters were at the store and we finished our buys, Claudia, April and I came to the car to put all the stuff inside. We went inside the car, when we were ready to go with the seat belt on, I turned back and, you know what, I didn't see my little daughter. She was outside waiting for somebody to open the door! *Esmeralda Castañeda*

One time I went shopping in Publix and I was putting fruit in a cart and suddenly an old lady said, "Hey, lady, that's my cart!" and I said, "Oh, I'm sorry." I left fast and I was embarrassed. *Josefina Gonzalez*

"Coming Clean" in the Laundry

I go to the laundromat and look for a washer machine in good condition to put my clothes to wash. *Federico Ventura*

I remember a day I was putting my clothes into the wash-ermachine and my kid scared me, and my other kid told me to put him on the top of the washer machine to stop the machine shaking. *Elizabeth Alonso*

One day I put in the white clothes with clorox and my daughter put in one black shoe. *Roxana Guzman*

When I'm washing the clothes of my family, I always forget to put the softener. I don't have money to buy a lot of softener. *Marisol Esparza*

I like to wash my clothes, specially my husband's clothes because always I find some money. I remember one time I put my clothes in the washer machine and there was a lizard and I washed it by accident. *Sonia Muñiz*

Hi. My name is Alejandra Perez.

I was born in Mexico. I grew up in a small village, began school when I was five years old. I did all my school and I graduated from high school. I worked for myself for six years. I was twenty three years old when I came to the US. It was difficult but I thank God because I was not alone; my older brothers were here but I still worked in the fields. I picked tomatoes, cucumbers and other vegetables. Later I started working at the hotel; it was very hard. I was a housekeeper, then my boss gave me an opportunity. I didn't clean any more rooms. In the evening I worked at the restaurant; I was the supervisor there. I met my husband, Julio. We married and after 5 years we have our child; her name is Julie. I don't work because I watch her. She is "terrible." I'm very busy all day, but I'm happy with my family.

Alejandra Perez

Jim McHugh, teacher