

Learning a Second Language Is Good for Children

Bonjour! ¡Hola! Dzień dobry!

Mount Prospect residents speak a variety of languages, and, according to a report by the Cornell Language Acquisition Lab (CLAL), teaching young children how to speak a second language provides cognitive and social advantages, specifically:

- Bilingual children can maintain attention despite outside stimuli better than children who know only one language; in other words, they have a better attention span. This ability to focus in the face of distraction plays a key role in academic readiness and success in school settings.



- Fostering bilingualism in children may help them attain native-like language proficiency, allows them to form relationships with their extended family, and makes it possible for them to access other cultures in ways monolinguals cannot.
- The old theory that learning two languages will confuse a child is not true—children will naturally sort out the languages by themselves.

And the Mount Prospect Public Library offers programs that support the efforts of our families to foster bilingualism. We encourage both native and non-native speakers to attend these events.

Polish

Each year Youth Services hosts four programs in Polish: two storytimes, a Children's Day celebration, and a holiday program. Our Polish storytimes encourage a child's overall literacy and language development through stories and activities. The Polish Children's Day celebration in May offers another chance for children to participate in a Polish storytime as well as a craft and refreshments. Wrapping up the year is Polish Holiday Storytime, where families can enjoy stories and crafts in a cozy setting at the beginning of the winter season.

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The Dichotomous Librarian

Which Julie Collins do you know? The Librarian or the Artist? Julie Collins, Reference and Government Documents Librarian at the Mount Prospect Public Library, can help you navigate the records from congressional hearings dating back to 1980, direct you to the Code of Federal Regulations, or provide you with Cook County's latest H1N1 flu vaccination information. But when she goes home, Collins puts on her artist hat (or beret) and creates art designed to help people see the beauty in nature. She is an artist with a passion for the garden, capturing nature at its peak of perfection through her "sans camera" photography.

Photography without a camera? This new era of digital imagery is an outgrowth of scanner technology. Collins uses a sophisticated scanner, Macintosh computer, high-end Epson printer, and archival-quality inks to produce vivid, artfully arranged images of flowers—not just any flowers, but ones carefully cultivated and picked at their height of beauty from her vast, hand-tended garden.

Working in a darkened room, Collins delicately composes her subject—be it a sturdy coneflower or a fragile forget-me-not—on the scanner bed. With the critical eye of a trained artist, she lays the flowers down in a manner that highlights their features—carefully dusting off pollen, adjusting the petals, and angling the components—until she has created the perfect still life. Then, turning off all the lights and closing the shades (she cannot close the lid without crushing the flowers), she hits the scan button and soon an image appears on her Macintosh computer. Since scanners view images facedown, she is actually styling her scene from the back. She doesn't really see the full composition until it appears on her



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Public Green

Every day the Library is going a little greener and so can you. We are continually working behind the scenes to figure out what we can do to reduce our carbon footprint. Many of the techniques we have identified will also work for you.

Check out our new "Public Green" blog on the **Research & Reference** page of our Web site. Here you can read about local recycling events, access useful Web sites, learn about the Library's green initiatives, and pick up great information and tips on easy things you can do to make the earth a little greener. It is also a perfect forum for you to share your "green" ideas and comment on others' suggestions. We would love to hear from you!

For a more hands-on experience, attend the Library's "Green Fair" coming this fall. We will be bringing together organizations and individuals who can provide you with information on how to live more environmentally conscious.

In the meantime, here are a couple of quick and easy tips:

- Keep appliances and pots/pans clean to save energy (maybe not yours, but at least the kind you have to pay for). The cleaner the surface, the more efficiently it can transmit heat (or lack thereof).
- Bring your own coffee/tea mug to work and reduce paper cup waste. Each day Americans drink 45 million cups of coffee or tea in disposable cups. Using a reusable mug could prevent 7 million pounds of carbon dioxide from being emitted every day, thanks to the energy saved from not having to manufacture or recycle the paper cups.
- Recycle your batteries at the Library. We collect and safely dispose of spent batteries—AA, AAA, C, D, power tools, laptops, cell phones, and camera batteries. Thanks to the Friends of the Library, there is a collection bin in the Lobby by Registration. So the next time you come to the Library, drop off your old batteries and feel good about putting one less hazardous chemical into our landfills.

For more tips, go to the "Public Green" page of our Web site. We look forward to working with the community and sharing ideas on how to help us achieve our common goal of making us all more environmentally friendly.

José Becerril's Experience Shows How South Branch Helps People Achieve Goals



Mount Prospect businessman José Becerril speaks English and Spanish, but he noticed that a large number of the customers for his B&B Taxi Service speak Japanese. He wanted to keep their business, saw an opportunity to increase business among Japanese speakers, but he wasn't sure what to do.

Then, in August, Mount Prospect Public Library opened the South Branch, close to his home. He stopped in and was soon learning Japanese in the car, using CDs the branch's friendly and helpful staff recommended.

Until the South Branch opened, Becerril had never been in the Library. He attended the South Branch's grand opening in August and now comes in at least a couple of times a week to use the computers. A native of Mexico City, he enjoys books and learning. He completed a GED degree after coming to the U.S. ten years ago.

South Branch Coordinator Jacqueline Laramie Christen is "like a friend," Becerril says. "That's why I come here. They help a lot." He's been telling others about his South Branch experience and has brought in a couple of people who needed help.

The South Branch is part of the Community Connections Center, 1711 West Algonquin Road, a joint outreach of the Library, the Village of Mount Prospect, and several partners, including High School District 214 Community Education, Community Consolidated School District 59, and Northwest Community Hospital. The Center's purpose is to provide the coordinated delivery of information and municipal, library, and referral services to underserved area residents and businesses. It is off to a fast start.

Information spread by word of mouth has been the key to the South Branch's rapid growth, according to South Branch Department Head Larry D'Urso. "The usage numbers we're seeing at the South Branch definitely exceed expectations," D'Urso says. "We're at the level now, after less than six months, that we were expecting after a year's time."

The South Branch's collection includes 5,300 items, compared to 500,000 at the main Library, but its turnover rate (circulation per item) is 4, compared to 2 at the main Library. After four full months

of operation, 26,337 people had visited the South Branch and taken out 13,434 books, magazines, CDs, DVDs, and other materials. Its computers were almost continually in use, logging 1,975 hours during the period, while hosting 2,519 Internet sessions. The South Branch issued 453 library cards.

Library officials thought they'd hit an area of real need right away, when 300-500 people attended the Center's grand opening. The Branch has been busy from opening day with little promotion in the community

except word of mouth and staff visits to nearby schools.

Even on New Year's Eve, it was a busy place. All the computers were in use, and patrons with reservations waited patiently. One who was waiting, Janice Maxwell of Mount Prospect, is a self-described "media entrepreneur" who lives just down the street. She uses the South Branch's computers to upload programming for the cable television programs she produces. Another regular patron, health educator Maria Guadalupe Sanchez, reads to her school-age children at the South Branch.

The South Branch's open, inviting, friendly, small-town feel is part of the plan, according to D'Urso, who says it was meant to be "a little more down-home" than many libraries. The Library sought staff people who speak Spanish, the dominant second language of South Branch patrons.



Jacquie Laramie Christen

Greener, Yet!

Recycle your used electronics at the Library. It's easier than ever thanks to an ongoing program with Recycling Fundraiser and the MPPL Foundation.

The list of what is accepted has been expanded!

- Cell phones—no chargers or accessories
- Laptop computers only
- Ink-jet cartridges—small enough to fit in the palm of your hand. No toner.
- Apple iPods
- Digital cameras
- Digital video camcorders
- Handheld game systems—*Sony PSP handheld* and *Nintendo's DSi, DS lite, DS original, Gameboy Advance, or Gameboy Color*
- MP 3 Players—*Microsoft Zune, Sandisk or Creative* only
- GPS devices—*Garmin, Mio, Magellan, and TomTom* only
- Radar detectors—*Escort, Beltronics, and Cobra* only
- E-Book reader—*Kindle, Sony, and Verizon iReX* only

Bring any of these items to the Library and drop them in the bright pink collection bin near the Registration Desk. Your donation raises money for the Library's Foundation, which funds special events and other services at the Library.

Other common languages are Polish, Korean, and Gujarati. The Library receives periodicals in several languages and has extensive collections of books in the major languages of its patrons.

South Branch Coordinator Christen says her Spanish language skill helps her relate to the patrons. In some cases, it's the only way to communicate with them.

She brings an interesting background to the assignment, holding a bachelor's degree in law enforcement from Western Illinois University and two master's degrees—one in legal studies and the other in library and information science. Her diversified experience includes working with the Illinois State Police, with adolescent girls at Maryville Academy, as a crisis interventionist at the Conyers Learning Academy, and, most recently, at the Rolling Meadows Police Neighborhood Resource Center.

Christen believes the Branch's location, near the intersection of Algonquin and Busse Roads, was very well chosen and has contributed to the branch's popularity. "There's a big need in this part of town," she says.

The Library's Deputy Director for Public Services, Cathy Deane, hopes South Branch programs can be expanded to include more storytimes and teen events. "We thought it would be popular, but we're pleasantly surprised with the level of activity," Deane says.

Synergy with the Village's Community Connections Center activities also contributes to the Branch's success. "People will come for an English as a Second Language (ESL) class and then stop in to the Library for materials," Deane says.

Second Language

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Spanish

We also offer a variety of programs for Spanish-speaking families. Each spring and fall a three-week storytime series is held during which stories and songs are presented in Spanish. Preliteracy information for the parents is incorporated to help them support their child's native language learning. Kids also receive take-home activities to reinforce preliteracy skills. Día de los Niños, Día de los Libros is a cultural celebration held each April celebrating children and the love of books. This bilingual program welcomes a bilingual performer, whether it is a storyteller, musician, or novelty act. For many children, the highlight of the night is the free book they get to take home.

French

Our French Festival is a bilingual program cohosted by the Library and the Mount Prospect Sister Cities Commission. The event, introduced in 2007, celebrates the unique relationship between Mount Prospect and its sister city, Sèvres, France. Presented as a "passport" program, the festival highlights fun and educational activities for families in an effort to introduce the French culture and language. The event is capped off with theme-flavored ice cream from Capannari's.

Turkish

This March the Library is welcoming the Turkish American Society of Chicago to present a Turkish storytime for children. Kids will enjoy a genuine karagöz puppet show—traditional shadow puppetry—told in the Turkish language.

These fun, interactive programs, combined with the Library's collection of books, music, DVDs, and numerous other materials in over 25 languages, will help you support the development of your child's bilingual skills.

So come on in and explore the opportunities! *Explora las oportunidades! Découvrez les possibilités. Poznaj nasze możliwości!*

Tips to teach a child a second language

- Surround the child with more than one language through conversations and social groups using different languages, the earlier the better.
- Maintain home (heritage) language when a second language is being learned outside the home.
- Expose children to multilingual settings and give them plenty of opportunities to play with children who speak the second language.
- Provide fun and interactive language-learning environments (e.g., music, dance, and film) in both languages, and often with children of similar age.
- Promote reading and storytelling in multiple languages.
- Maintain a positive attitude toward languages and cultures children learn.

Source: Cornell University's College of Human Ecology

Book Discussion Group Means Friends in More Ways Than One

It began on a cold winter night in January of 1990. A group of six women gathered together to talk about a book they had all read prior to their first meeting at the Mount Prospect Public Library. The book was *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten* by Robert Fulghum.

Led by two long time supporters and members of the Friends of the Mount Prospect Public Library, Laura Luteri and Judy Bennett, the group quickly realized they were on to something novel—in more ways than one. At the time, Oprah Winfrey's endorsement of book clubs was years away, and the concept of a book discussion group had not yet experienced its resurgence in popularity. But these book lovers had such an interesting and fun evening sharing ideas

about what they had read, they agreed to forge ahead and meet again the following month—this time to discuss *Bonfire of the Vanities* by Tom Wolfe.

So began the Friends of the Mount Prospect Public Library Evening Book Discussion Group. Now twenty years and 233 books later, they are still reading strong.

"Little did we think we'd still be here twenty years later," said Laura Luteri at a recent gathering of the book group celebrating its two decades together. "Judy and I thought maybe a year, year-and-a-half, but here we are!"

Today the group has grown in size with an average of between 15 and 21 participants per session. Their ages

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Me? Start a book discussion?

Ever finish a book and wish you could talk to someone else who'd read it? Maybe now is the time for you to start your own book discussion! It's easier than you think, and the rewards are many. By starting a new group, you can tailor the group to your own taste and interests. What's more, the Library can be a great resource to help you celebrate the joy of shared reading with friends, family, coworkers, and neighbors.

Perhaps you've always wanted to take part in a discussion, but you can't find one that meets when you are free. Hosting your own book group means you decide the when, where, and how often. Best of all, you set the tone. Discussions can be low-key, structured, formal, or impromptu. Some groups like to meet in the comfort of a living room, while others choose to treat themselves to a café or restaurant atmosphere while they talk. The ideal size for a group is 6-10 people, but even a smaller number can have fun sharing their thoughts on a story. It's all up to you!

If you aren't sure of how to get started, try one of the Books-to-Go book discussion kits available at the Library. Each bag contains 10 copies of a recommended book, suggested questions, and additional background information. Choose from thirty ready-made options (both fiction and nonfiction), including books by Ann Patchett, Jodi Picoult, and Michael Chabon. New titles are added each year. Looking for even more variety? Check out selections from our book discussion shelves and ask at the Fiction/AV Desk for sample questions. Featuring a variety of titles, including John Steinbeck's *East of Eden*, Adriana Trigiani's *Big Stone Gap*, and Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth*, we have topics that will keep you talking.

One of the most popular reasons people participate

in book clubs is the experience of reading books they wouldn't choose for themselves.

Perhaps you are someone who prefers to read only crime novels. As a favor to a friend, you join a group discussion on *Shadow Divers* by Robert Kurson.

Soon you are immersed in a story that is compelling, action-packed, and absolutely true. You've just discovered a taste for nonfiction that you never knew you had!

Still not convinced? Take a look at a few of the guides available for checkout. *The Book Club Companion: A Comprehensive Guide to the Reading Group Experience* by Diana Loevy and *The Book Group Book: A Thoughtful Guide to Forming and Enjoying a Stimulating Book Discussion Group* by Ellen Slezak

are two excellent introductions. You'll find tips on everything from choosing members to keeping the conversation lively. For those who want more than just talk, try Mary O'Hare's *Recipe for a Book Club: A Monthly Guide for Hosting Your Own Reading Group*, which offers suggested menus and recipes to complement the discussion.

If you are interested in learning more, the Library has a Web page dedicated to book discussion resources: www.mppl.org/books/bookdisc. There you will find links to online discussion guides and to questions that are applicable to almost any book. In addition, all MPPL cardholders have access to Novelist Plus, an online resource containing a wealth of information on specific titles, authors, readalikes, and reviews. Feel free to explore on your own, or come in to the Library for a demonstration. You'll find more than you need to start the ball rolling.

For more information, call (847/253-5675, ext. 4070), e-mail readers@mppl.org, or visit the Fiction/AV/Teen Desk.



Julie Collins

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computer and will often need to make adjustments to the design. She then repeats this process over and over until she gets the perfect picture.

This technique creates a luminous effect, showcasing the flower in all its glory. Against the blackest of black backgrounds, the image takes on a three-dimensional quality. "These images honor the natural beauty that surrounds us," noted Collins. "I really want to capture these miracles of life which happen every day. I am always amazed that the little seed I tended and encouraged turns into a remarkable flower. This particular art form allows me to share this experience with others."

After finishing her master's degree in Library Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Collins worked in the Government Documents section of the school's library while attending art classes at the university. Life took her to Samoa where she taught art classes until she returned to Chicago and, in 1993, became a librarian at the Mount Prospect Public Library. Always the doodler, Collins' interest in art remained a hobby until she discovered this scanner technique. Now, Collins' art is sold at art shows throughout the area, winning awards of excellence at the Glenview Art League Summer Art Fair and Mount Prospect Fine Arts Festival, and "Best of Show" in Photography at the Bucktown Arts Fest. Her piece, *Zowie*, is currently on display at the Library as part of our permanent art collection.

The Library has hundreds of art pieces on display that cover a wide range of mediums. We invite you to pick up a Self-guided Public Art brochure that provides background and information on our major art pieces and to browse the additional art that graces the walls and common areas of the Library, enhancing the environment and stimulating the imagination.

Your Office Away From the Office

Need a place to get some real work done with no overhead costs?

We offer:

- PCs with High-Speed Internet Access and Microsoft Office
- Free High-Speed WiFi
- WiFi printing (10¢ for B/W, 25¢ for color)
- Staff to connect you with resources
- Study rooms—for small group meetings or a quiet work space



Optimize Your Job Search Strategy

Without question, 2009 proved to be one of the most challenging years for job seekers or employees in transition. Admittedly, career postings may be fewer than we've seen in the past, and the national unemployment rate hovers around 10%. However, opportunities do exist, but traditional methods for securing the ideal job have shifted. Job seekers need to change tactics to stay competitive and be recognized as model candidates.

What can the Library do to help you launch or reenergize your job search? The Reference Staff can guide you in selecting the most valuable sources in your search strategy. Let us show you how to tap into our print collection and Web resources as you apply for online positions, create or customize effective résumés and cover letters to individual job descriptions, dedicate time to skill-building, and gather company and industry information for interviews. Contact the Reference Desk or visit our Research & Reference Web page to schedule an individualized appointment. Let us introduce you to our resources and help pinpoint the ones that best meet your most immediate needs.

You can work at the Library or at home. Our Research & Reference Web page hosts a Jobs and Career section (www.mppl.org/research/careers.html), which includes general information about jobs, careers and salaries, online job searching, writing résumés and cover letters, skill improvement and test practice, company research, and interviewing. Sources blend both the Library's online subscriptions and recommended free sites, noting the features of each (e.g. *Riley Guide*, *Vault*, *Quint Careers*). A great place to start is *Ferguson's Career Guidance Center (FCGC)*, which provides job and industry profiles, job-hunting/workplace skills, and identifies in-demand jobs and the skills and certification they require. *Career Transitions* is a new resource that allows users to explore new career possibilities, assess their interests and experience, prepare for a job search, and search and apply for jobs.

Friends Group

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bridge several generations from those in their 20s to members in their 80s. Luteri believes this age span is one of the secrets to the group's success as it provides a breadth of life experiences and perspectives that result in lively monthly discussions.

In its two-decade run, the group has only cancelled its book discussion on seven occasions, each time due to circumstances beyond its control—construction or relocation of the Library. They are quick to add, with a dose of humor, that in twenty years, the group has never missed a December holiday gathering.



Want help perfecting your résumé? Then go to our online *Adult Career Center*. The Library has contracted with *Live Tutor* to provide **free** personal, one-on-one résumé reviews 2-9 p.m. daily.

Need to build your skills to increase your marketability as a job candidate? Take a self-paced online class through *LearningExpress*, which offers courses on workplace skills, business writing, tutorials and practice tests in a variety of career areas, and Microsoft Office applications. If you prefer a traditional classroom setting, sign up for one of our hands-on computer classes. Classes range from computer basics to advanced Internet applications to the three main Microsoft Office applications: Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

The Library can also connect you to local organizations such as workNet, St. Hubert's Job Ministry, Jewish Vocational Service (JVS), Harper College, and Oakton Community College for résumé workshops, job fairs, and other employment issues. Details are available on our Job and Career Board, near the Business Reference collection. Throughout the year, we also offer seminars that help you become a confident and competent interview candidate by gathering background data on specific companies, such as histories, financial positions, and industry forecasts.

We remain supportive in your job hunt and know how important it is to be successful by keeping your job search moving forward. We will continue to offer opportunities for you to attend Library-sponsored employment programs, strengthen computer literacy, and work with our Reference Librarians to help you find the position you seek.

"When you look back on where we started and how far we've come, it really is monumental," says Luteri to the group who has gathered on this Wednesday evening, January 20, 2010, to discuss *Whistling in the Dark* by Lesley Kagen. She then quickly lightens the moment by adding, "I remember at the 10th anniversary of the group, Judy said 'Our group has stayed together longer than some people stay married.'" Everyone laughed and with that the 21st season of the Friends Evening Book Discussion Group began.

If you would like to learn how to start your own book discussion group, where you can share interesting ideas and have a little fun along the way, talk to one of our Readers Advisors at the Fiction/AV/Teen Desk.