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all write news

HOMEBUYING READINESS: HELPING TEACHERS TO EXPERIMENT

by Deborah Schwartz and Sam Bernstein

The students at Project Hope's adult education program are or have been homeless. After studying about the process of homebuying as one of fifteen classes involved in this year's A.L.R.I. Homebuying Readiness Project, the class invited the center's Shelter Manager to speak to them about how she herself was preparing to buy a two-family house in Mattapan for her and her son. The Shelter Manager had also been a guest at Project Hope more than ten years earlier, and the students felt inspired by her story and grateful to her for sharing it with them. The following are excerpts from letters which the students wrote to her the next day in class:

I think that it's great that you worked hard and saved your money—a single woman got her head on strong and wanted something and you went for it. I hears you! Go Girl. When you get in your own home you can fix it up anyway you want to and when you get tired of that you can do it over!

—Gwendolyn Roberts

It is very interesting to hear about how to buy your own home. We need more women like you with us. Very independent and strong too. Just to go for what they want in life. You also let me know that we can do it too if we just put our minds to it. I will pray for you and wish you much luck in your dream home.

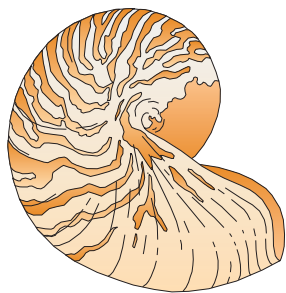
—Sereta Thomas

These student writings are just a few of the many products of this year's A.L.R.I. Homebuying Readiness curriculum project. This project, under the auspices of the FannieMae Foundation, was created to offer a vision of hope for low-income ABE and ESOL students who are studying with the intent

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SUMMER READING

During the course of the year, this newsletter includes occasional reviews of various books that are in some fairly-direct way connected to the world of adult basic education. Well, summer is different. Here we include several brief reviews of books that are not directly related to ABE but that various A.L.R.I. staff would generally recommend as great summer reading.



"High Tide in Tucson," by Barbara Kingsolver (HarperCollins, 1995)

I know I'm behind the times. Everyone has read Barbara Kingsolver's books and is waiting impatiently for her next. "Everyone" being Maria Gonzalez and my sister who frequently shape my leisure reading choices. Because I read *Animal Dreams* a long time ago and didn't love it, it's taken me a while to borrow Kingsolver's book of essays, *High Tide in Tucson*. You have probably already

read it. But if you haven't I hope you will. This book I love. I can imagine owning it, rereading it, using it as a source for quotes on various occasions.

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Inside...

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(summer office and library hours, remember the job book!)

Please share this newsletter with others at your program. The deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: August 15.

Summer Reading

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And if you have read it, what better present for a friend?

Some of Kingsolver's lines will be with me a long time. She can switch between chatty, pedestrian prose and the poetic so quickly it takes my breath away.

I had always watched single working moms with awe, wondering how on earth they did this with no one on standby to help or even cheer them on. Now I was learning. The key is something called "multitasking." You figure out how to combine compatible chores: phone consultations with your editor and washing the breakfast dishes. Writing a novel in the pediatrician's waiting room. Grocery shopping and teaching your child to read. Balancing the budget in the hardware store. Sleeping and worrying. Sobbing and driving. (p. 125-126)

"Sobbing and driving" might be my favorite line in the book. This paragraph is situated in the essay entitled "Confessions of a Reluctant Rock Goddess." I vaguely remember that a while back Amy Tan and other authors performed in a band to raise money for literacy. In this essay, Kingsolver packages the whole story, including the amusing details of how she was coerced into performing and vivid descriptions of her stage fright: "You have to picture the whole thing: in our jitters, the men have turned to alcohol and the women to makeup" (p. 132). I was so drawn into the story, that I forgot I was reading an essay until she transcended sheer entertainment,

When I was a child, if anyone asked what I wanted to be when I grew up, I would reply first of all that I didn't think I would grow up, but on the off chance it happened, I planned to be a farmer and a ballerina and a writer and a doctor and a musician and a zookeeper. This is not the right answer. I know that now.... A business card that lists more than one profession does not go down well in the grown-up set. We're supposed to have one main thing we do well, and it's okay to have hobbies if they are victimless and don't get out of hand, but to confess to disparate passions is generally taken in our society as a sign of attention deficit disorder. (p. 131)

How true. It seems if you are capable of more than one idea at a time, you too could be accused of being ADD. I've always wondered how to integrate all the different interests I have. It's an ongoing struggle whether to keep them in a separate sphere from work or whether to bring them into the workday world. Does it have to be a lose-lose proposition where they suffer from time neglect on the one hand or

where, on the other, they lose the fun-filled joyousness if they are brought into contact with timesheets and quarterly reports? Kingsolver has found her own solution:

I'd like to think it's okay to do a lot of different kinds of things, even if we're not operating at the genius level in every case. I'd like to think we're allowed to have particolored days and renaissance lives, without a constant worry over quality control. If the Rock Bottom Reminders were a role model of any kind, I think that was our department: we went on record as half-bad musicians having wholehearted lives. (p. 132)

Kingsolver's band performance isn't the only way she is a role model for combining her interests. Her essays, like her novels (I think), include scientific theories and environmental issues. Kingsolver's scientific side enriches her book. Her understanding of animal behavior and the fact that she has read widely and can synthesize many ideas add to her insights about humans and their relationships. "Creation Stories" is particularly timely if you, too, are in contact with the soil after a long winter. I have many friends who garden in areas more rural than Jamaica Plain. While I am jealous of their space, they constantly struggle with woodchucks and rabbits. I, meanwhile, may be outnumbered by slugs and snails, but neither species runs particularly quickly. Kingsolver contextualizes her own garden struggles with the javelinas in "Creation Stories," where she examines teenager behavior, the idea of ownership, and what happens when humans and javelinas compete for hollyhocks. Through it all, Kingsolver's sense of self-irony and general good humor kept me entranced.

A hallmark of excellent novelists is that they really understand how people work. An autobiographer understands the self. What about an essayist? It's these plus the ability to understand the reader. This comes through in Kingsolver's essays. An essayist, at least in this case, seems to understand me. In the face of daily headlines that make me shake my head with non-comprehension, I found it reassuring to read, "Confronted with knowledge of dozens of apparently random disasters each day, what can a human heart do but slam its doors? No mortal can grieve that much. We didn't evolve to cope with tragedy on a global scale." (p. 231-232) She goes on to talk about the role of writers and artists and the principles that govern her writing. I have exited many conversations about politics in art because they became so abstract. Kingsolver made me want to think about these questions more.

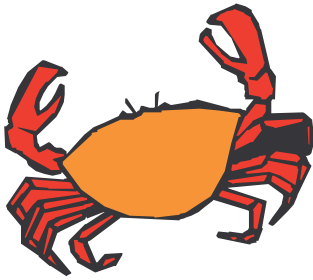
Ultimately I feel gratitude for this book. I am grateful for the thought-provoking issues, for the poetry, for the insights, for the forgiveness, for the entertainment. The book is a good companion for summer reading.

—Martha Merson

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Summer Reading

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"Drown," by Junot Díaz (Riverhead Books, 1996)

Junot Díaz' *Drown* contains ten short stories in which individuals struggle for a sense of place in the urban and rural Dominican Republic and the barrios of New Jersey.

While the stories are not specifically written as a novel, the narrator remains nameless in several of the stories and it is tempting to follow the thoughts and explorations in the voice of a single character. Díaz starts with a quote which evokes his immigrant characters' search for identity, but also their restlessness and lost voice:

The fact that I
am writing to you
in English
already falsifies what I
wanted to tell you.
My subject:
how to explain to you that I
don't belong to English
though I belong nowhere else
—Gustavo Pérez Firmat

The stories detail a search for belonging which is tasted in Díaz's rich sensory descriptions of elements from his Dominican family, friendships and community. The prose is spare, written from a gritty male first-person perspective that is at times disturbingly far from familiar ground. However, the storytelling is so raw and honest that it is surprisingly easy for the reader to be drawn into a world of lifestyles and motivations which are likely to be distant from the known.

The book's content is confrontational in its descriptions of the harsh realities of the immigrant characters' lives: drug abuse, sexism, domestic violence, adultery, abandonment and longing. It also contains descriptions of the characters' sexual encounters, both heterosexual and homosexual. While the diverse situations depicted may be offensive to some readers, the reward is a clear and unobstructed view into the experiences and feelings of the characters, and, for adult educators, we may hear in these voices the stories of many of our students and their families.

Díaz's environments show the state of mind of his people. Envisioning the setting, we are drawn into the emotions we see there. In "Fiesta, 1980," describing his father's affair, Díaz writes:

Me and Rafa, we didn't talk much about the Puerto Rican woman. When we ate dinner at her house, the few times Papi had taken us over there, we still acted like nothing was out of the ordinary. Pass the ketchup, man. No sweat, bro. The affair was like a hole in our living room floor, one we'd gotten so used to circumnavigating that we sometimes forgot it was there. (p. 39)

The novel follows the developing disaffection of the characters from a younger, carefree version of city boys' boredom when they are sent to the country for the summer so their mother can work "long hours at the chocolate factory":

We caught jaivas in the streams and spent hours walking across the valley to see girls who were never there; we set traps for jurones we never caught and toughened up our roosters with pails of cold water. We worked hard at keeping busy. ("Ysrael," p. 4)

This moves to a more aggressive description of teenaged restlessness during summertime in New Jersey:

Days we spent in the mall or out playing stickball, but nights were what we waited for. The heat was like something heavy that had come inside to die.... Nothing moved fast, even the daylight was slow to fade.... ("Drown," p. 92)

By its end, *Drown* has invited readers to know yet another side of the immigrant story, one without romance
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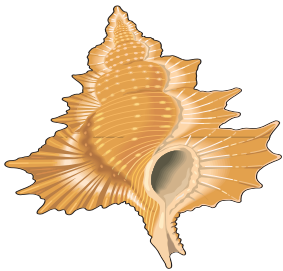
The A.L.R.I./SABES Greater Boston Regional Support Center is primarily funded by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the Boston BRA/EDIC/Jobs and Community Services Department, and the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. The material in this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Massachusetts Department of Education or the federal government.

Summer Reading

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and without pretense.

Whether you find time to do your summer reading on the beach or on the MBTA, *Drown* is a powerful book and deliciously crafted. The stories are so compelling that it is tempting to rush through them in a few short bites, but, as in Spanish the word *saber* indicates both “to know” and “to taste,” I recommend that you nibble on this one slowly enough to savor its unassuming flavor. —*Diane Paxton*



“The Power of Mindful Learning,” by Ellen J. Langer (Perseus Press, 1998)

Ellen J. Langer, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at Harvard University, recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and numerous other awards, has written a powerful, innovative book offering

a fresh perspective on the nature of learning. This book is quick to point out and dispel familiar notions of learning which rely on right answers, the basics, rote memorization, and paying attention. It asserts a “why to” rather than a “how to” approach and it gives plenty of examples and experiments she has done which have focused on ways to learn mindfully. She writes,

A mindful approach has three characteristics:

1. The continuous creation of new categories.
2. Openness to new information.
3. An implicit awareness of more than one perspective. Mindlessness, in contrast, is characterized by an entrapment in old categories, by automatic behavior that precludes attending to new signals; and by action that operates from a single perspective. Being mindless, colloquially speaking, is like being on automatic pilot.

She asserts that mindful learning happens within an awareness of context and changing information. A case in point is this excerpt from her book which is a retelling of the familiar children’s story “Little Red Riding Hood”:

Once upon a time there was a mindless little girl named Little Red Riding Hood. One day, when she went to visit her ailing grandmother, she was greeted by a wolf dressed in her grandmother’s nightclothes. “What big eyes you have, Grandma,” she exclaimed, clueless as ever, although she had seen her grandmother’s eyes countless times before. “What big ears you have, Grandma,” she said, although it was unlikely that

they would have changed since her last visit. “What a deep voice you have, Grandma,” she said, still oblivious to the shaggy imposter beneath the familiar lacy nightcap. “What big teeth you have,” she said, too late, alas, to begin paying attention.

This story is illustrative of the dangers inherent in not paying attention to a new context and not adjusting behavior accordingly.

You may be asking yourself how can this be related to a real life situation. In the chapter “When Practice Makes Imperfect,” she asks us to imagine reading a programmed text on cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Using a step-by-step approach you learn how to rescue an adult and you’ve learned it so well you could recite it in your sleep. Another part of this CPR manual teaches you how to rescue an infant. The steps are very specific and methodical. A week later she writes, you are at a friend’s pool and her seven-year-old daughter gets in over her head and needs CPR. What do you do? You haven’t learned the material conditionally and now you need to adjust the information to suit a fifty-pound child. Her argument is that material needs to be taught in ways such that it can be modified to fit changing situations and taught with an emphasis which is framed not in absolute terms but in more conditional ones.

In my own experience as an ESOL teacher, I find it troubling when in class we’ve been studying past tense questions for some time and someone asks: “What did you do this weekend?” I realize how hard it is sometimes for students to truly apply new material into their everyday communication and how essential it is to allow learners time in the classroom to do so. The general ideas in this book are based on a flexible, adaptive teaching approach that is essential to allow students to apply material learned in a personal, more exploratory way. Langer’s approach opens up greater possibilities for thinking more broadly.

Langer explains that her idea of conditional learning is based on the value of doubt. She writes: “This new way of teaching is based on an appreciation of both the conditional, or context-dependant, nature of the world and the value of uncertainty. Teaching facts in a conditional way sets the stage for doubt.” You may be asking yourself how that would work in a situation where students are working towards the goal of passing a test. The following is an example of a pilot run of the conditional teaching of facts.

High school students were taught a lesson in physics. This lesson was on videotape and all students viewed the same tape. As a pre-viewing activity, half of the students received an instruction sheet explaining that they would participate in a program that involved two parts. Part I was a 30-minute program that introduced a few basic concepts of physics. Part II involved a short questionnaire in which they would apply the concepts shown in the video. Their “conditional” instructions read: “The video presents only

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one of several outlooks on physics, which may or may not be helpful to you. Please feel free to use any additional methods you want to assist you in solving these problems.” The other half of students were told the same information but without mentioning several outlooks or alternative methods to solving the problems. The hypothesis here was that the instructions to allow for alternatives would encourage more creative outcomes. The results of this experiment showed that the groups performed equally well on direct tests of the material, but, for questions that required students to use the material and to apply what they learned, a very different level of comprehension came through. Only the students who were asked to use additional knowledge to assist them actually did so. This example especially reminded me that the way in which we phrase our questions to our students strongly influences the level of thinking that occurs as a result.

She explains that there are seven pervasive myths, or mindsets, that weaken the process of learning. These myths are as follows:

1. The basics must be learned so well that they become second nature.
2. Paying attention means staying focused on one thing at a time.
3. Delaying gratification is important.
4. Rote memorization is necessary in education.
5. Forgetting is a problem.
6. Intelligence is knowing “what’s out there.”
7. There are right and wrong answers.

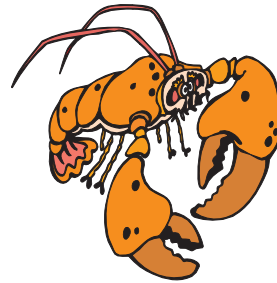
Each chapter is concerned with dispelling one of these notions, and to support her ideas she cites examples from her research and taps into a wealth of sources from science, psychology, gerontology, literature and philosophy. Her perspective in each is lively, original and, in some respects, radical.

You may not agree with this list, and in fact I have a hard time figuring out how some of these concepts would actually work in very pressured test-related situations. I do appreciate her concern with respecting the fact that everyone does not see the same information in the same way and with the need to encourage individualized teaching/learning styles. In our current climate where school performance is being judged by scores on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System tests, I am very drawn to teaching philosophies which promote “mindful learning.” At the recent teachers rally, where 20,000 teachers marched up Beacon Street in Boston to show their concerns with Education Reform, teachers held signs that read, “This is your mind on MCAS,” and that showed an egg sizzling in a pan.

There is a unique voice in this fascinating book which leads me to think that mindful learning causes us to ask more questions rather than less. It also seems pressing, in the Age

of Information, that in our role as teachers and learners we focus our attention on strategies that enable us to interpret information in a truly thoughtful way. Ellen Langer might not have all the answers but at least she’s willing to admit it.

—Kathleen Hartnett



From the A.L.R.I. Library Shelves

Occasionally on Friday afternoons, when looking for weekend reading, I have complained that the A.L.R.I. Library has “nothing” to read. And since I am the main selector of materials, whose fault is this? Where are the mysteries, field guides, travel and garden books? I hope that your local public library has weekend and evening hours in the summer and that you will visit it as well as the A.L.R.I. Literacy Library. This spring, many new books have been added to our collection. We still do not have “beach books,” but we did buy new resources on ESOL, multiple intelligences, grammar, citizenship and curriculum. And we added many thoughtful, very readable and enjoyable books that would be excellent for front porch reading with your feet up and iced tea on your chairside table. Visit the air conditioned A.L.R.I. Library and borrow some of these:

Teaching Tolerance, Starting Small: Teaching Tolerance in Preschool and the Early Grades; Martin Espada, *Imagine the Angels of Bread: Poems* and *City of Coughing and Dead Radiators: Poems*; Esmeralda Santiago, *Quando era Puertoriquena*; Daphne Key, *Literacy Shutdown: Stories of Six American Women*; Milton Meltzer, *Non-Fiction for the Classroom: Milton Meltzer on Writing, History and Social Responsibility*; Enid Lee and others, eds., *Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to K-12 Anti-Racist, Multicultural Education and Staff Development*; Jessie Carney Smith, *Epic Lives: One Hundred Black Women Who Made a Difference*; Anne Raimés, *Identities: Readings from Contemporary Culture*; Lisa Delpit, *Other People’s Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*; Stephen Egaller, *Nerds: A Brief History of the Internet* (also the video); Sarah Lawrence Lightfoot, *Balm in Gilead: Journey of a Healer*; Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man*; Beverly Daniel Tatum, “*Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?*”; Michael Coffey, ed., *The Irish in America* (also the 3-part video); Dave Morice, *How to Make Poetry Comics*; Kenneth Koch, *I Never Told Anybody: Teaching Poetry Writing to Old People*; Herbert R. Kohl, *The Discipline of Hope: Learning from a Lifetime of Teaching*.

—Sandra Darling

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At the A.L.R.I., Martha Merson is the Literacy/ABE Specialist, Diane Paxton is the ESOL Specialist, Kathleen Hartnett is the Curriculum Frameworks Specialist, and Sandra Darling is the Librarian.

Homebuying Readiness

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of creating a better life for themselves and their families. For the fifteen teachers and over three hundred and twenty-five students who participated, it was also meant to provide an opportunity to experiment with content-based instruction and learning. Encouraged to develop their own teaching approaches and lessons—ones that were suitable to the particular needs and wishes of their students as well as challenging and of interest to the teachers themselves—this year's project generated more than fifty new homebuying lessons.

Because the project's goals also included the advancement of student and teacher access to new and meaningful technologies, one of the products of this year's work will be a user-friendly manual designed to introduce students and teachers to some of the available homebuying resources on the World Wide Web. The manual, together with this year's homebuying webpages, will be available this summer through the A.L.R.I.'s web site. We would love it if you take a look, give it a spin, and tell us what you think.

The following, by Sam Bernstein of the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, is an excerpted sampling of one teacher's creative approach to this complex topic. The remaining fourteen teachers' lessons, homebuying resources, and students' writings will be available on the web site.

—Deborah Schwartz

Home Buying Babes in the Woods Go for Broker

Early in the semester we started the material in our program-designed text which includes an introduction to very basic banking concepts. I introduced the thought that we might be working a lot on apartment finding (a topic from their text) and maybe—a new twist—house-buying. Students liked that. We also incorporated grammar into these lessons: "How long does it take to _____?" "It takes (time) to (do something)." That Friday I gave them a writing assignment that combined the above elements. The assignment included questions about the difference between banking in China and in America. It also included the questions: "How long will it take you to be comfortable in America?" and "What will it take you to be comfortable in America?" It seemed to me that housing and banking and the idea that time was an important factor would probably lead a lot of students to begin the process of establishing some goals; buying a house was a predictable goal for many Chinese families.

Throughout the homebuying unit, we moved back and forth through old and new ways of teaching and learning. For example, as I mentioned earlier, our regular curriculum includes some fundamental concepts about banking and house repairs and the search for an apartment. But I also wanted to incorporate the FannieMae Foundation materials and to try some new approaches as well. At a certain point, I decided that the pictures in the FannieMae Foundation's ESOL curriculum, *How to Buy a Home In the United States*,

could work to catalyze a good discussion and might lead students into some initial research about homebuying. So I copied and cut out all 40 pictures from the workbook.

During that class, I spread out the pictures on the table in front of pairs of students and asked them to choose two pictures per pair, talk about them together and write a question about each picture. The students hemmed and hawed. They had a lot to say in Chinese, but not much in English. They were hard-pressed to wrap themselves around the specific



details of the pictures; they were equally hard-pressed to put themselves in a questioning mode. I walked around trying to encourage them and corrected grammar here and there. Then I asked a student from each pair to write their question on the white board. The questions were pretty bad. For example, one pair of students wrote an out-of-focus question about the different types of houses, colonial, duplex, etc. How much does a Victorian house cost? Finally, I helped the whole group revise everything and we came up with a list of about six questions that I could e-mail to a realtor that we had invited to class in order to address the students' more technical homebuying questions.

In early March, Dekahn Wong, a realtor who is based in Chinatown, came to the class to meet students, make a presentation and answer their questions about first-time homebuying. Dekahn knows our student population well because he's been a substitute and part-time teacher at our school for many years. He speaks fluent Cantonese and some Mandarin. Dekahn spoke mostly in Cantonese. He had excellent bilingual materials. He compared the advantages and disadvantages of renting and owning, highlighting the tax advantages to owning a home. He showed pictures of different kinds of homes so students could compare them. He explained in detail how a broker functions. And he presented a monthly payment chart based on a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage. All of this was very much what students were ready for and they had good questions. Here are some examples of the students' questions:

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Homebuying Readiness:

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1. How can you buy a house if you don't have money?
2. Is it cheaper to buy a condo?
3. How much does a condo cost?
4. What's the lowest down payment one should pay? (Some students thought it was 50%.)
5. How much do you have to pay a year?
6. How do you get a credit card?

Another route to finding answers to these student-generated questions was via the Internet. Because we have a 12-piece Pentium Lab at the school, and because we now have our own homebuying web site created by eight students and myself as part of a FannieMae Foundation/A.L.R.I. mini-grant, I imagined that we would be able to answer many of the students' questions using the technology now available to us. I demonstrated how to type in the site address and hit "Enter" using our one 17-inch monitor. Students picked up the idea quickly, but typed very slowly. They all made mistakes in typing in the address, too. So I had to move around to every machine myself and type it in for them. This was very time consuming. Many of the students found that the English level on visit description pages was too high. And of course, the specialized real estate jargon intimidated them. A good deal of patience was required for our level 2a students to stick with the program.

On top of that, some of our students wanted to print out student interviews with a banker and broker, but our printer was only grudgingly cooperative. Finally, a group of students started looking at some of the current ads on "realtor.com," a large industry site with lots of information, including the listing of particular houses in particular neighborhoods complete with maps and photographs of houses. Four or five students thought this was fascinating. Other students were beginning to get interested too, but time was running out and not one person had answered any of the six questions. In fact, the students had stopped looking for the answers, and instead were looking around at whatever seemed of interest to them.

In our final week with the homebuying project, I asked students to try to remember something they had learned from Dekahn, the realtor. I wrote down their comments and translated some of them into English. I also asked them to review their initial set of six questions and try to see if they now had some answers. Students told me they had learned a lot, but that the most useful aspect of the unit was meeting Dekahn in person and knowing that he was a resource for them. Now they know they have someone who will help them when they decide to buy a home. For their final assignment, students wrote up a report of the visit from Dekahn based on the in-class notes that I had taken for them. Then, I set up some photographs of Dekahn's visit in a table on Web Page Editor and asked a group of student to try and

write the report into the HTML document. They partially completed it, and later I filled it in with excerpts from some of their writing. The following are two samples of student reflections about homes and homebuying. —*Sam Bernstein*

When I was young I liked big beautiful houses. I used to dream about the future. In my dream if I get married I will have a very beautiful house. A lot of years passed, but I can't realize my dream. Maybe it's just an image that I can't realize in my lifetime. But I yearn for it because all people yearn for nice things.

Now I came to America, I think if I have enough money, I want to buy a three-family house in Brookline. One apartment for my family and two apartments for rent so I can have money to pay off the bank loan.

If in the future I have a lot of money. I want to buy my dream house. The house I dream of will be built in one of the beautiful places in America, like Hawaii. It will use a bigger land area for a bigger house. It will have its own golf course, race track for horses and its own indoor swimming pool. I will have a garden to enjoy a nice life. I can't realize this desire, but the desire is enough because the idea makes me so happy.

—*Hu Gui Fen*

Someone asks me if I would like to rent a house.... No, I have never liked it. If you rent a house, you will pay rent to landlord and you only \$2,500 maximum for the deductible on Massachusetts income tax. But if you want to buy a house, you will pay mortgage to the bank and all your interest is tax deductible on federal income tax. Especially you only pay for a period of time such as 10, 15, 20, 30 years.

Well, I am too poor to buy a house. If one day I have much money, I would rather buy a house than rent a house. What kind of house had I to buy? Condo, single house, family house? If you buy a condo you won't pay fees for insurance, maintenance and bills for water and sewer, but you must pay condo fees. There is less privacy and you don't own the land by yourself. If you buy a single house you will have more privacy, space and own a piece of land, but you must pay the water and sewer bill, maintenance and insurance. If you buy a family house, you must pay the same as a single house. But a family houses is different from a single house. It has more space to rent.

—*Helen Lee*

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Deborah Schwartz is the Coordinator of the Homebuying Readiness Project at the A.L.R.I. Sam Bernstein is an ESOL teacher at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

DOE Workplace Ed. Materials Distributed

The Massachusetts Department of Education has published a collection of materials on workplace education, written by workplace education program staff and edited by staff at the SEIU Local 285 Worker Education Program. One copy of this publication has been sent to each DOE-funded program, and they currently don't have enough to send out any additional copies, so if you're interested in reading these materials, check with your program coordinator to see if your program's copy has been received.

National Student Organization Moves Ahead

VALUE, the national organization of adult learners which recently held a very successful leadership institute in Indianapolis, has embarked on a membership drive. Membership categories include individual adult learners, learner organizations, and other individuals and organizations which support the idea of adult learners as leaders. Their web site (www.literacynet.org/value/) has a membership form you can use to sign up. (If you sign up before Sept. 1, you get a free one-year membership.)

NEWS FROM THE A.L.R.I.

A.L.R.I. Summer Hours

During the summer months of July and August, the A.L.R.I. library will close at 4:30 on Tuesdays, rather than at 6:00. Our summer library schedule is therefore: Tuesday, 12:00-4:30; Wednesday, 9:30-12:00 and 1:00-4:30; and Friday, 1:00-4:30. To be safe, we urge you to call ahead before coming in; appointments aren't necessary for library use during these open hours, but summer vacations can occasionally make library coverage thin and we don't want you to come in and find our door locked.

Also, the A.L.R.I. office and library will be closed on July 5 due to the holiday and on July 19, 20, and 30, and August 5 due to planning days that have been scheduled for all staff.

Remember the A.L.R.I. Job Bank!

People seeking jobs in the adult education field are urged to come in to look at our Job Listings Book to see what jobs are out there at programs in our region. And adult basic education programs, especially those in the Boston area, are reminded to send or fax us copies of job announcements anytime you have openings.

Adult Literacy Resource Institute

989 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215

*Massachusetts
Readers: Please
Open Promptly—*

******July*****
Announcements*

*of Upcoming
Staff Development
Activities at the
A.L.R.I. Enclosed*