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all write news

FIELD WORK: EXPLORING NEW APPROACHES IN ESOL

by Diane Paxton

Every year creative teachers and administrators at adult literacy programs in Boston are designing new approaches and using DOE funds to serve low level ESOL learners who come to their centers for classes. Often students who want literacy skills and beginning levels of English make up the majority of the waiting lists at these programs. The students at this level are often the most marginalized of immigrants; whether they have been here for two months or twenty years, they are often not able to advocate for themselves in English or work successfully towards such basic needs as financial security, adequate health care and ensuring quality education for their children. Programs aim to bring students in as quickly as possible and find ways to help them acquire basic levels of English and computer literacy.

As the ESOL Specialist at the A.L.R.I., I have been impressed by the ongoing commitment and active role that program directors and educators have been taking to support these learners. The following article details the innovative use of new DOE money and other community resources at three programs with which I have been in contact. Although this is only a sampling of what is being done, these models may be of interest to other organizations. It is my hope that in future issues of the *All Write News* we can feature descriptions of other approaches that are being explored in the area of helping low level learners. (Special thanks to Maria Panico at the Log School in Dorchester, Michael Feher at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center in Boston, and Steve Quann at La Alianza Hispana in Roxbury for the information they provided.)

Creating New Paths

The Log School, a settlement house program which offers adult ESOL classes on six levels as well as GED preparation, has had a long waiting list for

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"CHOOSING TO PARTICIPATE": STUDENTS RESPOND TO EXHIBIT

Last fall the organization *Facing History and Ourselves* sponsored an exhibit at the Boston Public Library called "Choosing to Participate," which explored situations in three communities that highlight the choices individuals face when confronting discrimination and prejudice. A companion exhibit, "Rescuers of the Holocaust," featured individuals who risked their own lives to save Jews in Europe during the holocaust. Several adult basic education teachers brought students to see these exhibits, and three of them, Wendy Hagan and Richard Goldberg from the Asian American Civic Association and Melanie Konstandakis from Project Place, contributed the following pieces which include students responses to these exhibits. —Editor

Letters to the Author/Letters to the High School Student

At least once a cycle, I like to have students in my ABE English Transitional Program at AACA research and present a place of interest to them in the Boston area. After spending a couple of weeks gathering information and sharing their presentations with their classmates, the class votes on which place they'd like to visit outside of class. Once again, the John

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with others at your program.
The deadline for submitting
material for the next issue is:
April 15.

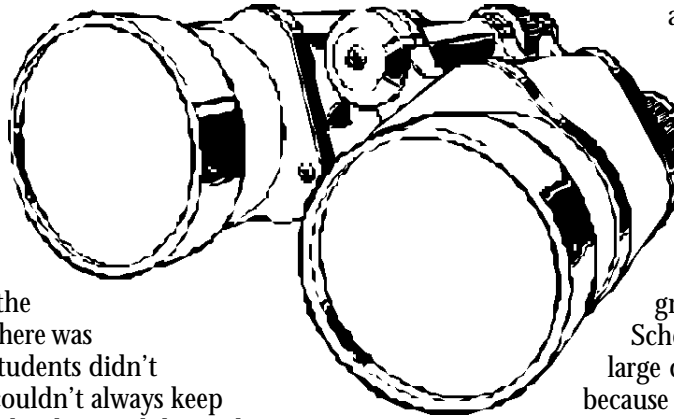
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both day and night classes. Maria Panico, the ESOL coordinator, says that for the large number of low level ESOL students on their waiting list, they used new DOE funds last year to start a new program in which there are two paths for beginning students to travel. One focuses on basic literacy skills and conversation, while the other has a heavier emphasis on writing, grammar and English for academic purposes. Students currently on the separate paths had previously been placed together in the same Level 1 classes; however, there was frustration. The literacy level students didn't feel comfortable because they couldn't always keep up, frequently having to repeat the class, and the students with more concrete goals for the GED and job training wanted to progress more quickly. There was a high drop-out rate especially among the literacy level students. Since the inception of the new paths, there has been positive feedback. The students on the Log School's advisory board are enthusiastic at meetings, asking for more of the literacy classes and saying these classes are meeting the needs of people in the community and that they keep students coming to school. They point out that students are done a disservice when they have to study together, but with the separation, people can study in a class that feels right for them.

Currently, there are two levels offered in the conversation/literacy path, where generally students go at their own pace and can repeat classes as needed. They focus on literacy for lifeskills as well as conversation that develops through their own needs and interests. However, they are not stuck once they start at this level: "Students are welcome to switch to the more academic Level 1 classes; every cycle teachers work with students on self assessments throughout the semester. They can visit other classes a couple of times to see if they think they are ready to switch levels. This happens often, with students moving in both directions; they go back and forth between paths as they see they are comfortable," Panico says. In the future, they hope to set up an informal conversation class that would also be on two levels so that the students who have stayed in the conversation path will be able to continue to keep up their English once they have progressed beyond the two entry level classes currently offered.

Panico described the success of the program: "The students are tremendously comfortable because they are among their academic peers, and for many it's the first time they are experiencing academic success in school. They feel that they belong and are the norm, so there is a lot of enthusiasm that we didn't see before from this group." Many



of the students in the conversation classes are elders from the community in Dorchester and come from countries where they had limited opportunities for education in their first language. "Although this might be considered tracking by some, it is ultimately a respectful way to treat students by putting them in classes where their immediate goals are being met and they feel comfortable as learners. Both groups of students are invited to participate in their own learning process because they feel they are in the right place for them," Panico says.

There are twelve students in each class and still many more on the waiting list. The greatest challenge that the Log School faces is that it can not meet the large demand for its programs, in part because it has limited physical space. In response to this, they were planning to use new DOE funds to start up a similar two-pathway program for Level 1 learners at night in January '99.

Students Tutoring Students

Another innovative program for low level ESOL learners, the TAG tutoring program, started back in 1991 at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC) and continues today in a revised form to reach learners who need extra help. The BCNC had a traditional volunteer tutoring program in place with tutors from the Commonwealth Literacy Campaign and Community Learning Center Volunteer Tutor Trainings, but the students still had to wait 2-3 years to begin classes. To help with this situation, BCNC set up the highly successful TAG program (with tutor training funded by the Boston Adult Literacy Fund), which draws on the resources of students in the learning community, encouraging them to help each other. This program trains their students who have finished the highest level of ESOL (SPL 6) to tutor the beginning level students from the waiting list before they are able to attend formal classes.

Tutors meet with groups of two or three students once a week. They receive intensive training before they begin tutoring with the TAG program curriculum, which is designed to be used in a structured way. The BCNC has developed a bilingual video (English/Cantonese), supplementary materials, and exercises for tutors to use as lessons. Students borrow the video for viewing in their homes, and later tutors work with them at BCNC on the activities for clarification and practice. The intermediate level ESOL classes at BCNC have more openings than the entry level classes, and after participation in the TAG program many students are able to start their formal classes at the second or third step of Level 1.

Today the waiting lists at BCNC are not as long. "This

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is because of the success of the TAG program, and also there are more places for learners to go for classes in recent years," Michael Feher says. Therefore, in the past year, BCNC has capitalized on the TAG structure by inviting TAG and volunteer tutors to work with students who are currently enrolled in classes to give them extra help outside of class. Feher explains, "Teachers identify the students who need the extra help, and tutors work with two or three students at a time, once or even twice a week. This way, students who need the extra help can keep up with what's going on, and we see that they are much more able to get involved in their classes." The bilingual TAG tutors work with the students in the lower level classes while the monolingual volunteer tutors work with students from the higher level ESOL classes. About one-third of the students that receive this help are not able to enroll in classes because of scheduling conflicts, but at least they are able to acquire a base knowledge of English and a higher level of confidence for when they do proceed with formal studies, either later at BCNC or in another program.

In addition to the TAG program, the BCNC has focused on using computers and software to encourage the language acquisition process of low level ESOL learners. In the past two years, they have spent new DOE funds on computer operations classes and new ESOL and keyboarding software. In addition to class visits, students are encouraged to use the software on their own time to learn and practice basic skills during the drop-in lab hours. Initially, the State Street Bank funded a computer lab assistant for twelve hours a week, and now the new DOE funds have allowed the BCNC to expand the program as of January to two half-time teachers who support students in the lab. "Students are so eager for computer literacy that they are even attending classes on Friday nights and Saturdays. They are starting to see it as a useful tool to aid them in their language development," Feher reports. "The goal is for students to get more familiar with software and ultimately for low level internet use. It's just a matter of time until there will be things on-line appropriate for low level learners."

However, as with any new program, there are challenges. Many students at the BCNC are accustomed to traditional, teacher-centered approaches, and these innovations are a move towards education that is student-centered. It is not an option to abandon the traditional activities that make students feel comfortable or they will drop out, so teachers have to find a balance between the familiar methods, which often include drill work, and learner-centered, communicative activities integrated with computer projects.

Using Computers

Teachers at La Alianza Hispana are also working with computers as a teaching and learning tool for low level ESOL learners; in the past two years they have spent new DOE

funds on setting up a computer lab. Steve Quann, an ESOL teacher, reports that since students have started working in the lab, there has been a great deal of excitement. Students say that they feel like they are learning more and find it interesting to practice English with the computers. During one ESOL class, students even organized to ask for a computer course designed to suit them, along with more time in the computer lab. Although La Alianza Hispana doesn't have a special computer class for the low level ESOL learners, there are computer classes offered in Spanish. All students are encouraged to start working on the computers as soon as they feel comfortable with the idea. The goal is that they will start to see the computers as a learning tool and get familiar enough with them to use ESOL software programs on their own time in the lab.

"Computers are integrated into the ESOL classes to do many of the same things that we'd do in ESOL classes anyway," Quann told me. "Learning the functions of the computers and practicing ESOL happen at the same time; for example, students unscramble sentences using the click and drag functions, categorize and group items by creating folders, and practice vocabulary and prepositions with clip art by moving shapes with the mouse." Quann and another ESOL teacher, Diana Satin, have written a teacher resource guide, *Computers in Action*, which describes in detail activities which integrate computers with ESOL content. It is available at the A.L.R.I. library.

Quann has seen speech gains in low level students when they work together using computers. "We have the students work in pairs to make it a communicative activity. Whenever possible we try to have them discuss the content with each other along with manipulating the images on the screen." When doing a comparative grammar activity using clip art animals and phrases like "is smaller than/is larger than," through the repeated pronunciation, manipulation and reading of what they were creating, "for some reason it

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seemed to me that they were reading more fluently and stumbling less over words after the activity. They were improving, using real communication skills and picking up a grammar point along the way." A possible next step for La Alianza Hispana is a greater focus on assessment to find out what students are getting out of their work on the computers. How do they perceive their actual learning gains, as opposed to simply their enjoyment of the work?

There have been some challenges associated with the new emphasis on computers with ESOL students. Some of the students don't find it useful and voice doubts over whether or not this is a valuable way to spend their classroom time. The classes are open-entry, and this tends to happen when new students come into the classes, before they get familiar with the use of computers and their potential gains. "The use of the computer has to be concretely integrated with learning ESOL, or the students may question its role in the class," Quann says. However, the challenges have been offset by most students' excitement and the joy they have shown in working with computers as a new tool for learning. In closing, Quann paraphrases Antonia Stone, author of *Keystrokes to Literacy. Using the computer as a learning tool for adult beginning readers* (National Textbook Co., 1990), when he says that the thing about the computer is, it's a little bit of magic, but we need to not lose sight of the fact that we are also the magicians that make it happen, teachers and students alike.

Not-So-Final Thoughts

So, these are three programs offering diverse models for inviting low level ESOL learners to participate in the language acquisition process. The programs were able to use new DOE funds for computers and additional teachers, as well as capitalizing on community resources to put their ideas into action. Each offers support to adult learners in a way carefully considered to meet their needs while building on their interests and the skills they bring to the learning process. Ultimately these approaches raise some important questions for us all to continue exploring: How can we assess the value of our programs for beginning level students' progress? In what ways do the ESOL Curriculum Frameworks support our work? What effect do programs have on students' confidence in themselves as learners, as well as on helping them develop the skills they need to work towards their goals, advocate for themselves and strengthen their use of community resources? I look forward to hearing and reporting on more voices from the field about teaching approaches and programmatic innovations that address these issues. Please call me at 782-8956, ext. 20, with your thoughts.

* * * * *

Diane Paxton is the ESOL Specialist at the A.L.R.I.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

MATSOL Conference Coming Up

The Massachusetts Association of Teachers to Speakers of Other Languages (MATSOL) is holding its spring conference this year on March 26-27, at Northeastern University in Boston. For more information contact Joan Frutkoff at 667-4065 or e-mail her at: jmfrutkoff@worldnet.att.net

Eastern LINCS Mini-Grants Available

Eastern LINCS, the technology hub for the northeastern part of the country located at World Education, is offering mini-grants to support adult basic education practitioners in developing Web-based projects for publishing on the Eastern LINCS World Wide Web site (<http://easternlincs.worlded.org>). Projects can involve adapting an existing print publication or creating something entirely new and might involve, for example, student writing projects, web-based curricula, virtual visits, etc. Mini-grants are available in the form of equipment/software and/or monetary compensation (probably between \$100 and \$1,000). Recipients will also receive ongoing technical support from Eastern LINCS staff as needed. Applications will be considered through April 1, 1999, on a first-come, first-served basis while funding remains available. For more information or an application, contact Lou Wollrab at 482-9485.



WRITE FOR THE NEWSLETTER!

The *All Write News* is published by the A.L.R.I., but it is meant to be **your** newsletter. Its purpose is to present news and information dealing with adult literacy/adult basic education and to provide an open forum for materials written by and for adult literacy/adult basic education practitioners in this area.

We encourage you to see the newsletter as a means for communicating with others in the field, as a vehicle for sharing your experiences, ideas, and concerns with your colleagues. **We urge you to write for the newsletter.**

Call Steve Reuys at 782-8956, ext. 14, to ask questions, discuss an idea, or get further encouragement. And send all material to Steve at the A.L.R.I., 989 Commonwealth Ave., Boston MA 02215.

"Choosing to Participate"

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F. Kennedy Library won out over Quincy Market, the Boston Tea Party Ship/Museum, and the Bunker Hill Monument. We found out about "Choosing to Participate" shortly after visiting the J.F.K. Library. Having discussed the Civil Rights Movement in American history along with similar movements around the world on larger and smaller scales, I was eager to visit the exhibition and reinforce connections that had recently been made. The exhibition portrayed how we will always be faced with certain inequalities. Its emphasis on how/if we choose to act out against these injustices had a big impact on all of us. Some of my students reflected on incidents in their own lives where they were faced with making difficult decisions. Others shared personal experiences, as witnesses and victims of racism and discrimination.

Encouraging students to set aside the comfort and familiarity of their traditional textbooks and turn instead to the community around them as an interactive textbook may take a bit of work and persuasion, but once you start, there is no turning back. This is what I've discovered again and again with my ABE classes. It's a wonderful way of engaging multilevel classes in meaningful activities while generating authentic questions, ideas and texts. Energy, enthusiasm and confidence increased noticeably as students experimented with new forms, vocabulary, and structures in their writing and in-class discussions. They took greater risks than I'd seen them take before.

Here are some of our students' responses after visiting "Choosing to Participate." I had asked them to choose one of the following writing assignments: 1) You are Elizabeth Eckford in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957. Write a letter to the school board letting them know how you feel about the way you were treated your first two weeks of school. Tell them why you will continue to go to school despite your feelings of fear, isolation and helplessness. 2) It is 1954. You are the lady with the two children, valise and baby in her arm from the New York subway that Jesús Colón wrote about in the story, "Little Things Are Big." Write a letter to Jesús Colón explaining how you would have felt if he had offered you his help that night.

—Wendy Hagan



Dear Jesús Colón,

This is the lady with the children and suitcase from the New York subway station who you wrote about in "Little Things Are Big." I am surprised that you wrote about it and am sure that you must be surprised that I write to you.

Today, after I read your letter, "Little Things Are Big," I felt very happy that you wanted to offer me help. However, to be honest, I would have rejected your help as you thought I would. At that time, every woman would have done the same thing. It was because you were a stranger to me and there were also some strong prejudices about Negroes that existed in 1954. Even

though I was not as prejudiced as other people, I tried to stay away from trouble no matter what.

Now, I want to tell you that I greatly appreciated your offer. Thank you very much for your kindness. If it is possible for us to encounter on the street again, and if I am luck enough to receive your offering of help again, then I would definitely take this pleasure to receive your offer. Good Luck.

Sincerely,

The White Lady From the Subway

—Maisy Cheng



Hi Sir,

How are you doing? I was a lady with two kids on subway that night.

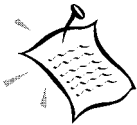
I was really glad to read your message on newspaper. I understood with your face to face that situation. If I were you, I would be hard to decide that helping because I wouldn't know was it bother me.

In America, many things could happen that would make people concerned before doing something for other people. Here have had discrimination like religion, languages, skins colors, etc. Also you could try the best you would do. It would be against yourself.

However, I and my children would like thankful your offer to help, even you could have change, but we knew.

[signed] The passenger late that night

—Ngoc Le



Jesús Colón,

As you said, it was midnight on the evening of Memorial Day. When I was getting off the subway with my children, it also had long concrete stairs to go off the station. It was okay to me because I was accustomed it. This was not difficult like you thought for me to handle my children get off the station, I even had a baby on my arm. I had done that many times, plus my family were waiting for me outside of station. Your determination was absolute wrong. That was nothing you has worry about.

Of course, if you were tried to come to my side to offer your help, I certainly will cry loud and scream. Imagine about a black stranger came to my side in the midnight of station. I will be scared to death. I could not think what you wanted to do to me. Maybe you wanted to robbery my valise or attack me and you were looking for excuse or reason to closed up me because I was only one young lady in the station. Those happen will be appeared in my mind immediately.

What reasons made me believe in your offer could help? I was not deny your offer was from your warm heart, but how can I trust the black stranger would not done anything wrong to me. I am not appreciate your favor. I always in this situation of the train. I knew how to take care of myself. Once again, there has nothing you could do about it. I did not want to receive your offer. You stayed out of me. I would feel much better and sasfley. Thank you.

[signed] The Lady in the Subway

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"Choosing to Participate"

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An attachment by the same student:

In 1950's there had many many discrimination incident around school, street, workshops, stores and many places in the United States. I was able to understand what Jesus Colon was feeling about helping white people especially lady at night in the subway station. It was blame on segregation to decline his offer. He felt under racist incident. The color made separation between them. The prejudice make her afraid to let him hold her children's hands to got off the subway. The discrimination could not let her receive his help.

What can we do about this? Will it keeping happen on your children and family? Could we stop that? Yes, we can. We can tell the stories about discrimination by warning children of danger of intolerance. History gives no promises, but it can by example of hope. Simple things we can do to make a difference in discrimination: stand up and speak up. Let's work it out together.

—Wai Cheng



Dear Mr. Jesus Colon:

Thanks for remembering me. I just am the lady from the New York subway at that night. My name is Margaret. Your essay was excellent. I am excited by your sincerity. It gives me a heavy shock in my soul. You are a writer who has human's intuitive knowledge. In the essay, you blamed yourself deeply. In fact, that is an accusation to segregation. If everybody can criticize this social unjust from him/herself as same as you, this world would be peace a little bit.

Your essay let me recall that night. I remember there was only one black man on the subway's platform beside me and my children. That time I was very tired and looked around just only one black man in the station. He walked in a hurry. He seemed not to see me or insensitive about my situation. I didn't know that was you. I wanted to ask a help, but I thought you might hated a white woman. I feel human's virtue could overcome prejudices. However, I was disappointed. Incredibly. Prejudice can make huge barriers to influence people to be difficult for doing a simple decision. My prejudice tied me. Your hesitancy tied you. Now I don't hat you. The opposition. I admired your courage and spirit of critical thought with this essay. I hate segregation. It can't bring any good thing to our society. It only bring some hatred and some conflictions to us.

Mr. Jesus Colon, your essay, your trembling sound, will call people's intuitive knowledge.

*Yours sincerely,
Margaret*

—Bing Shu Huang



Mr. Jesus Colon:

I have known you wrote about "Little Things Are Big." I am the woman you met that night at the New York subway station.

If you could offer your help for me, I wouldn't have that hard time in that scarely midnight. I'm glad that you wanted to

help me at the biginning, but you finally gave up and went away. I felt so disappointed. It was so difficult for me that night. I looked at the long concrete stairs of the station. I looked at my baby, my suitcase and my two little children. I don't know how to reach the end of the long stairs. It would be so wonderful if you could help me that night.

Now I know what you have been worry about that night. I'm not prejudiced. I think black people are good people just like us. They are kind and friendly.

Anyway, I know you situation at that night.

[signed] The white lady in the subway

—Ping



Department of Central High School,

My name is Elizabeth Eckford. I am a fifteen year old black girl. I live in Little Rock, Arkansas. I wanted to tell you my feelings and the serious problems in the Central High School. The black students need your help to solve this problem of racism between teachers and students.

I knew nothing of the plan. In her haste, Daisy Bates forgot to get word to me. When I reached Central High, I tried to enter the building only to be turned away by soldiers armed with bayonets.

I was sitting down on the bench in front of the school. Thousands of people (adults) yelled at me and said, "I don't like you, go home, you are a dumb girl." I saw a lot of fingers point at me and heard, "I don't understand how she can learn. She looks dumb and doesn't know how to speak correctly." I think if they had guns at that time, they would shoot me.

I went home and didn't cry. I told myself I must go to school every day. Even though people will give me a hard time. I will keep going until I finish high school.

The second day, a student stole my text book after class. I didn't have my book required to do my homework. The next day, I told my teacher. She said, "You are just lazy." The third day, I sat with the black students in the lunchroom. A student poured hot soup on my dress. Another student poured cool milk from on a black student's head. We all confronted them. They were laughing and none of the students cared, not even the teachers. On the fourth and fifth days, 10 students spat on us and pushed us down. We told our teachers. They didn't believe us and told us not to start trouble.

I was hurt and on the verge of tears. Again I told myself not to give up. I'm not afraid of anything.

Please support us and lend us a big hand. We all live in this community. We want this community to prosper. Otherwise, we will go to our local law makers and ask for help. We need teachers to treat us like the other students. If teachers can't give us confidence, how will we survive in this community?

Thank you for your time. I hope you will pay attention to us.

*Sincerely,
Elizabeth Eckford*

—Kitty Lam

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"Choosing to Participate"

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All My Schoolmates,

I am fifteen year old Elizabeth Eckford. Since the way you were treated me first weeks of school, the tears rool down my cheeks everyday, all the time. I am scared. I still remember the large mob surrounded me to spit and scream. I don't know how I can describe sad racist incident again. I feel that I am struck dumb with horror.

I still don't understand what I did wrong to you. There is only one reason. I am black. We are all good kids. We just have different race. I want go school. I want good education. Please let me stay! Please don't hate me again. That will really suffer my rest life.

*I beg you! I beg you! I am just little girl.
[signed] Elizabeth*

—Qi Zheng

The Most Interesting Exhibit?

Activities that we did in my class at AACA prior to visiting the exhibit included reading and discussing articles which provided the necessary background knowledge about most of the racial/ethnic conflicts presented in the exhibition. At the same time, my ABE class was also reading books on different immigrant/ethnic groups from the Tana Reiff series, *Hopes and Dreams*, available at the A.L.R.I. After visiting the exhibit, I asked students to write answers to this question: "What was the most interesting exhibit for you at 'Choosing to Participate'?" These are some of the responses.

—Richard Goldberg



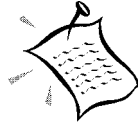
I think all four parts I had seen are very interesting, but the most interesting one is the rescuers. Those brave persons hid lots of Jewish people during the Second World War. As we know, Hitler wanted to kill all Jews. Protecting Jews was very dangerous. The rescuers did a great job and helped many Jewish people stay alive. That's the greatest thing in the world. At that time, China was against the Japanese, and my grandfather and grandmother hid in a farmer's family to stay alive because they belonged to the communist party. Lives are beauty. We need peace and progress, not war.

—Li Che



The most interesting thing for me is the part, "Little Things Are Big." The black man saw the white woman who was with two children and really needed some help. The black man chose not to help because he was afraid of a lot of things. I think maybe he made the right choice. At that time, white people always discriminated against black people. White people didn't want to approach black people. The black man at the T station was really upset about this just because he was different from white people.

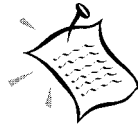
—Anna Wang



The Billings, Montana story was most interesting for me because I didn't know that before. I am surprised that people did some terrible things to Jewish and Indian houses. I felt sad about that.

However, there were some nice people who painted the house for free, but I am not sure if they are Jewish or not. Anyway, they gave the Jewish people big help. I know more about Jewish people after I saw the exhibition and the read the book about Jewish immigrants.

—Christine Chen



Yesterday, we visited "Choosing to Participate" at the Boston Public Library. One thing that made me think was the Jewish people. They didn't have their own country and they lived in many countries with other people. During World War Two, they got inhumane treatment. A lot of Jews died. They didn't do something wrong. It was only because they were Jewish people. That was not fair. A picture showed me a story. A couple of good people saved thirty six Jewish people in their house.

—Di Aini Hu

Doing Good Things

Some days we all need a change of pace. Frequently, the classroom gets a little mundane, and it is time to get "actively educated." This was part of the motivation behind the decision of Project Place's educators to challenge our students to critically and pro-actively look at historical events of the last half a century.

The ten students who attended the "Choosing to Participate" exhibit at the Boston Public Library were variously affected by the exhibit. We all enjoyed the brisk walk to the library and had a great time chatting and debriefing about the exhibit as we returned. We spent about two hours making our way through the exhibit, discussing and evaluating as we went.

When asked which exhibit had the greatest effect on students, one woman said, "I would have to say they all affected me in their own way, but the one that sticks with me the most is the 'Rescuers of the Holocaust.' To me the people that risked their lives and their families' lives to save more lives are heroes. Just imagine what they went through day after day." Several students felt "Crisis in Little Rock" was the most powerful exhibit. "I can't believe that little girl did that everyday!" one woman exclaimed. "I thought they were all very good," one man said about the exhibits.

Following our visit, the students answered some open-ended questions that the teachers had designed before the trip. The questions led to some rich discussion of history and ethics. Students eagerly wrote an essay that night for homework on "What Motivates People to Do Good Things." The class has since been enthusiastically discussing bringing their families/children to the exhibit and hoping to read several of the suggested books related to it.

—Melanie Konstandakis



NEWS FROM THE A.L.R.I.

1998-99 Mini-Grants Awarded

The A.L.R.I./SABES Greater Boston Regional Support Center was pleased this year to be able to award a total of six mini-grants to programs and individuals in our region. This was made possible using a combination of funds from our SABES grant and our grant for the Metropolitan Boston Community-Wide Education and Information Service (MBCWEIS). Our congratulations to the recipients of the six grants:

- Staff at the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Association and the Asian American Civic Association, for a joint project to produce a video promoting the BCNC's health education web site;
- Staff at Centro Presente in Cambridge, to develop new low-level ESOL transitional curriculum;
- Robert Comeau at the Crittenton/Hastings House in Brighton, to create a custom-tailored in-house student database;
- Marie Hassett at the Dorchester Neighborhood Service Center, to produce a "sourcebook" for new teachers;

- Rebecca Pomerantz at the Jamaica Plain Community Center, to develop ESOL literacy curriculum materials for Somali students; and
- Staff at SCALE in Somerville, to create a family literacy "portable library."

Work will continue on these projects through June 1, 1999, and after that we look forward to seeing the results of this diverse collection of mini-grant projects.

Small Requests from the Library

If you have an unused Trivial Pursuit game, the A.L.R.I. Library would appreciate receiving it from you as a donation. A recent mini-grant uses parts of the game for teaching the GED and we would like to have the game available for borrowing. A beginning level yoga/stress management video or audio cassette tape would also be appreciated.

Library Hours:

Tuesday, 12:00–6:00; Wednesday, 10:00–12:00 and 1:00–4:30; Friday, 1:00–4:30. Additional times are also available by appointment; call Sandra Darling at 782-8956, ext. 19.

Adult Literacy Resource Institute

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