

Welcome to the self-study version of Tutor Training for Literacy Volunteers of Wayne County.

This self-study program was developed as an alternative to our regular classroom-based Tutor Training sessions. As lives become busier, we have found that some people can't make the regular training schedule. Others want to get involved right away without having to wait for the next training. Moreover, some people learn better when they can work quietly at their own pace. We hope that self-study meets *your* needs as you seek to become a Literacy Volunteer.

Self-study Tutor Training uses a variety of activities – videos, online learning, reading assignments, and other fun tasks – to guide you through the theories and practical skills of teaching someone to read. In many cases, you are given a choice so you can pick the activity that fits your own learning style. You may borrow books, videos, and other materials and take them home. You are also welcome to use our high-speed Internet or our video equipment to complete the lessons right in the office. At specific points in the training you will be asked to meet with staff to discuss your progress and demonstrate the skills you have learned.

We want you to know up front that self-study is more, not less, demanding than regular tutor training. Depending on the pace you set for yourself, self-study may also take more time than the 18 hours used during classroom training. This is intentional and for a very good reason. In the classroom, trainers have more opportunity to observe participants and assess how well they are learning. In self-study you also lose the advantage of sharing knowledge and ideas as you interact with other trainees. We want to make sure that you have the skills you need to make tutoring a successful experience for both you and your student.

If we schedule a Tutor Training while you are enrolled in self-study we encourage you to consider attending the classroom sessions. The ideas and topics addressed in self-study are parallel to the regular training, but the lessons are not exactly the same. This makes it possible to switch from self-study to classroom-based training without much repetition.

Finally, Self-study Tutor Training is also an experiment. We need your help to improve this program. Please give us feedback on the activities and materials used in self-study. If something doesn't seem to make sense or is just “not working” for you, please let us know. Are there better questions we could be asking? Is there something in the section that doesn't fit? Do you know of other activities or materials that could be used to make the same point? We want to hear from you.

Once again, welcome to Literacy Volunteers! We look forward to getting to know you.

*Special Thanks to Erica Younglove for all her efforts – reviewing materials, developing questions, and putting the whole thing together – to make this self-study possible.*

Literacy Volunteers of Wayne County, Inc.

# Orientation

A self-study introduction to literacy and volunteering

Dear Prospective Tutor,

Welcome to Literacy Volunteers of Wayne County. We are pleased that you are interested in becoming a volunteer tutor. We have developed this orientation lesson to help you learn more about the literacy needs in our country and some of the issues that adult learners face. You will also learn more about tutoring and the specific ways that you can help. There are a variety of activities for you to choose from and you are welcome to borrow materials or to use them at our office if that is more convenient for you. As you go through the activities, feel free to ask questions or to discuss your ideas with the Literacy Volunteers staff. We would be very glad to assist you.

Once again, thank you for your interest. Welcome aboard.

Sincerely,

Chris Edgar  
Director

**Step One:** Learn about LV Wayne

Read through Literacy Volunteers of Wayne County's literature: Tutor Handbook, Brochures, Website (<http://www.redsuspenders.com/~lvwayne/>), and Tutor job description.

- These materials explain LV Wayne's programs and who they work to serve in the community, as well as some of the details of the specific literacy needs of Wayne County and the aspects of a tutor position.

**Step Two:** Pick one or more of the following to complete to learn about illiteracy in the US:

- 1.) Read the excerpts below from *A Way With Words* – a book by LV founder Ruth Colvin (45m)  
Chapter 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 AND p. 4-6, p.16-18, p. 62-66

- These segments give some personal stories and also explain the need for literacy tutoring as written by the founder.

- 2.) Complete a course at *Verizon Literacy Campus* (<http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/Free-Online-Courses.21.0.html>) – “Orientation to Volunteering” and the “review” section at the end (45m)

- The website and its courses help prospective tutors understand the size of the literacy problem in the United States, learn about the work of adult and family literacy programs and their effect on participants, recognize the opportunity for volunteer contributions to literacy work, assess skills and abilities, and relate them to possible volunteer opportunities, and find a literacy program to which you might contribute your time.

- 3.) Watch a *Dateline NBC* special on literacy (45m)

- The video, hosted by Tom Brokaw, shows a year in the life of four literacy students and the process by which learning fits into and changes their life and the struggles they face in the process.

- 4.) Watch three short videos:

“Life Without Literacy”, Part Two of “*Training by Design – Literacy Challenge*” (10 m)

“Learners Speak Out”, Part One of “*Training by Design – Adults as Learners*” (12 m)

“We the People”(15 m)

- These videos let you view literacy students telling their stories about how low literacy affected their lives and how tutoring is important to them.

**Step Three:** View an example of a Tutoring session.

Watch the LVA Training Video #1, Introduction (30m)

-The video introduces several literacy students, explains the tutoring process, and shows an example of tutoring using four basic approaches. Don't worry about memorizing specific techniques now. These will be explained in detail during the training.

**Step Four:** Answer questions for thought:

1.) How did the materials, such as the videos, help you understand how the tutoring process works?

2.) How did the materials, like the online class, help you understand that literacy is a larger problem than most people realize?

3.) After reading/viewing the materials how do you better understand the struggles of low literate individuals?

4.) What did you learn that was new information for you?

**5.) After reviewing these materials, is there anything else you have questions about before you begin training?**

**Checkpoint:**

At this point, please make an appointment to come into the office to review your progress and to discuss whether you want to continue tutor training or would like to explore other ways to help.