



## Reflections of a Gold Tutor

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Being a tutor with Literacy Green Bay had long been a goal of mine. When my youngest son went to kindergarten, I went to “tutor training.” Fifteen years and 1000+ hours later, I’ve learned a few things....

English is a HARD language to learn. Those of us who are native speakers take for granted the silent k’s, vowels with different sounds, and how a two letter word such as in, on, at, or to can make a big difference in the meaning or tone of a sentence. What impresses me about our learners is their dedication to learning and their perseverance to “get it right.” Our learners truly want to learn English and improve their skills to help them at their jobs, with their families, and in the community in which they live.

Being a tutor is so much more than simply being “the American who knows English.” In working with many different people over the years, I’ve helped them with questions and concerns about girlfriends, children, jobs, shopping, and health issues. Sometimes, it’s more about being a big sister/aunt/neighbor than it is about teaching past tense verbs. This is a good opportunity to build friendships and bonds in our community which benefit us all.

The most rewarding part of being a tutor is the opportunity to learn about other people and cultures. I try to never miss a chance to learn something new and have my learner teach me. Most learners are so proud of their culture and past experiences and love to share them. Of course, this helps them practice their English skills. In additions, it also provided them with an opportunity to give back. We both learn and benefit.

Literacy Green Bay has given me the gift of being able to work with students on basic English, GED work, and U.S. citizenship. While I know that my learners over the years are grateful for my time and help, I doubt that they will ever know how much they have given me in return.

