Blended Learning was the topic of a presentation by Marlene Delaney, a long-time tutor, at the January Read to Learn Volunteer Tutor Training.

“We’re in a world now where technology is very important,” said Delaney, to a crowded room filled with Read to Learn volunteer tutors, both new and returning. “It encourages your students to be self-directed and self-motivated.”

**What is Blended Learning and why is it useful for Read to Learn?**

“Blended Learning is a teaching and learning model that has a face-to-face class or tutorial component combined with an online learning component,” explained Delaney.

Delaney shared that Blended Learning is an effective tool for many reasons; most learners have access to the Internet, at least on their phones, and online work can be performed anywhere. This enables learners to practice more in order to develop mastery of weaker skills.

Delaney advised tutors to discuss with their learners their level of comfort with technology, because everyone’s comfort level is different.

Some suggestions she gave are to send an email to your learner after class to remind them of what they learned, send an email outlining homework for the week, and send an email with a link to an online learning site.

Delaney said tutors can also encourage their learners to watch You Tube videos to learn more about something they are interested in or watch a short television show, such as “Friends.”

Although technology is important, there are also several other ways to continue learning outside of the classroom.

Some of these activities are journal writing, writing about an illustration, working on their semester goal, and more. Another suggestion was to assign meaningful homework that adds to the value of the lesson, such as writing a story using new vocabulary words.

Speaking English for 30 minutes a day at home with family members and reading labels at the grocery store are also helpful activities for the learners.

Joining or starting a book club at a learner’s Read to Learn site was also a recommended activity learners can participate in to keep the learning flowing outside of the classroom.

Tutors are also encouraged to visit the Read to Learn website at www.Rtl4you.weebly.com. On this site, tutors can get links to important information regarding the program, links to worksheets for learners, links to videos on pronunciation and other websites such as Readers Digest and Word of the Day.
Volunteering & Going the Extra Mile

JoAnn Fletcher, Program Coordinator of the Read to Learn Adult Literacy/Volunteer Program, and Laurice Hoffman, Coordinator of Volunteer Services attended the 2019 ProLiteracy Conference on Adult Education in San Diego. The ProLiteracy conference, held September 25-28, 2019, provided an opportunity to attend workshops designed to build instructional capacity and best deliver innovative, and effective literacy services for the benefit of adult learners.

This opportunity was made possible thanks to the in-kind donation from Southwest Airlines and especially the generosity of our volunteer tutor, Amy Williams, who is a pilot with Southwest Airlines. Amy has been a volunteer tutor with the Read to Learn program since August 2018 at the Mount Prospect Public Library location. Amy states, “My mother is a retired English and History teacher, and I was read to as a child by both my parents. Reading continues to be something that I do for hours every day, and I cannot imagine what it must be like to live without that skill.”

After volunteering for one semester with Read to Learn, she decided she wanted to do more for our programs and inquired about our citizenship program. Amy stated, “My grandfather arrived at Ellis Island on August 21st of 1923 aboard the S.S. Resolute with his parents and his brother. The family had many reasons to leave Germany after the devastation of the Great War. Late in his life, he went to great lengths to get a US passport for himself and my grandmother. They had no plans at all to ever travel abroad and use the passport for its intended purpose. He just wanted to have a document that proved his citizenship and show his friends. His pride in this country was a great inspiration to all his grandchildren.”

Many of your companies may offer a volunteer incentive program. However, it is not without the gracious gift of time and dedication that our volunteer tutors provide that these donations are possible. Thank you, Amy, for going the extra mile for the Read to Learn Program!
Mike Mokate: Volunteer Read to Learn Tutor

When Mike Mokate retired, one of his ambitions was to contribute more to the world, and he has definitely been fulfilling that goal.

The Mount Prospect resident retired from the corporate world in August 2017 and started to volunteer with the Read to Learn program.

“I enjoy the one-to-one interaction,” said Mokate, who has been a Read to Learn volunteer tutor for three years and has worked with four different students from various countries.

“I enjoy learning about other countries,” said Mokate. He said he would encourage people to sign up for the Read to Learn program, because “it provides the students with an opportunity to speak English and practice reading and do so in a safe learning environment.”

“All the site supervisors do a great job of providing materials so the instruction can be productive every week,” said Mokate.

In addition to being a Read to Learn tutor, Mokate also helps every semester with learner registration and grading tests.

Going above and beyond, while assisting with student registration at Wheeling High School, Mike noticed a student had tested at a reading level too high for the Read to Learn program to accept, but wanted to help him with his career goals. He contacted the College and Career Ready Coordinator and assisted in getting him registered for the Manufacturing Career Pathway Quality Control class offered through District 214 Adult Education. Mike continued to meet with the student on a weekly basis to help him with his course work by reviewing the material he learned in the manufacturing class during the week. Following the class, the student passed the test and received the NIMS Credential for Measurement, Materials & Safety.

And Mokate’s volunteer work does not stop there. He is a site supervisor for the PADS homeless shelter at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church in Mt. Prospect, organizing the volunteers to help with providing meals, etc. In addition, he started to volunteer his time at Little City in Palatine using his professional skills. That has led to a part time job where he is helping them build their strategic plan.

“One of my ambitions was to do a lot more to contribute to the world than I had when I was raising kids and working,” said Mokate.

Mokate has certainly been reaching that goal and has been making a positive impact on the community in several ways.
Strong Learner Goals from Fall 2019

“Learn 8 vocabulary words from school email and use them in sentences and conversations. Each week I’ll review a message from school or teacher and discuss them with my husband or children and my tutor.”

“Prepare for son’s parent/teacher conference at the end of November by roleplaying.”

“Be able to apply for a job. We will do this by practicing interview questions and completing job applications.”

“To understand recipes because I love to bake. I will learn 15 new words used in recipes. I will have weekly spelling tests. My tutor will give me a new recipe with missing words, and I will write the correct words.”

“To get a driver’s license.”

“I want to join the PTA at my son’s school and communicate with teachers and other parents. To do this I will discuss school-related topics for 15 minutes every week.”

“Learn 20 new vocabulary words from practice job interview questions to prepare for job interview.”

“Learn 20 new vocabulary words from work manual to improve comprehension of work materials.”

“To complete a resume.”

“Learn 25 vocabulary words about wedding planning.”

“Learn the answers to 30 questions to prepare for citizenship test.”

These are strong goals because they meet all the S.M.A.R.T criteria:

- **S**pecific
  - Says exactly what is to be learned

- **M**easurable
  - Can see that progress is being made and goal completed

- **A**ttainable
  - Has the time and resources to accomplish the goal

- **R**elevant
  - Goal is meaningful and helpful in daily life

- **T**ime Based
  - Able to complete goal within a ten-week semester

Upcoming 2020 Census

Important for District 214 & Our Communities

Census Count Day is April 1. Households will be able to respond to the 2020 Census online, over the phone, or through a paper questionnaire. In March, households will receive a letter with a unique identifying number to use for your response. The new online process is quick and secure! You can respond to the census in less time than it takes to finish your morning coffee.

It is important to make sure EVERYONE IS COUNTED! Responding to the 2020 Census affects the allocation of funding for our schools and our communities’ public resources, how we plan for the future and our voice in government. Every count matters, supporting funding for D214 schools and government-funded adult education programs.

The Adult Education & Family Literacy Program will be incorporating Census-based lessons in all program components, and will provide education and questionnaire assistance for our program participants. A Census staff member will visit the Read to Learn sites to provide more information.

District 214 and its communities can gain or lose hundreds of thousands of dollars and representation based on the Census count. Thank you for doing your part to help.

To learn how census data impacts you and your community, visit 2020census.gov.