

Learning Connections has announced that the fourth round of The Big Plus Campaign will start this month. Television and radio adverts will be aired during the period 17 January to 7 February 2005. A second edition of the 'Go For It' newspaper, featuring adult literacies learners, will be distributed during that period. This is the last stage in the current campaign and Learning Connections encourages partnerships to raise the profile of adult literacies through their own work. Promotional materials are still available if required. It is hoped that The Big Plus identity will continue and that local campaigns will continue to use the publicity and marketing materials for some time to come.



DIARIES CLAN Edinburgh's 2005 diaries are available for learners. If you would like a batch of the pocket-sized diaries to distribute, please contact Fiona Holmes at CLAN (contact details on back page).

John Clark has been attending adult learning groups for the past seven years.

His first experience in Adult Basic Education (ABE) was at Riddles Court. John, who is 53, told me that initially he was quite wary about going back into education. His mother said that if he could have gained a qualification in homework he'd be top of the class but when it came to doing work in school he found it difficult to concentrate and his spelling suffered greatly.

In the early sixties when he was about to leave primary school the headmistress had a meeting with John and his parents. She told them that he would never work with his head but always with his hands.

At the age of fifteen when it was John's last day at secondary school, his register teacher came and apologised to him for always getting on to him because he thought he was not interested in learning. The reason why he apologised was because it had been discovered that John was deaf in one ear.

Despite these setbacks, John decided to get help with his basic education and over the past seven years has achieved qualifications in Communications Modules 2 & 3 and Caring for the Elderly level 2. He can now use a computer, his grammar and spelling have improved considerably and so has his confidence.

John said,

"At one time I wouldn't even attempt to put anything on paper. My first job was with a flour mill so you didn't need to do much writing. I've been working for the council for the past eleven years in the Social Work Department. When I first joined it wasn't necessary to have any qualifications but now the minimum required is a level 3 qualification. I work in a care home for the elderly and the job involves writing up lots of reports".

John has spent the last three years going to Leith Learners at Leith Academy on Tuesday evenings. John commented,

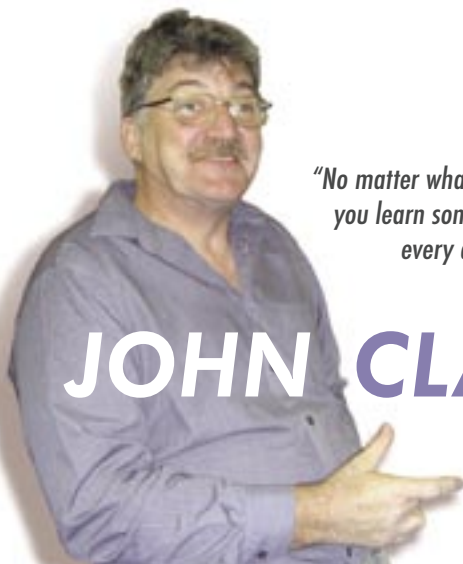
"I did try going to college but I found it quite daunting and a strain to keep up with the work. I'll continue to learn at this level because I feel comfortable and this type of learning suits my needs. My wife used to fill out forms for me and help me with spelling but she doesn't need to do it anymore because I have more confidence and I can do it myself".

John has many interests one of which is writing stories about his life and he feels this is a great way to improve his English.

In October, the BBC Skillswise site featured a piece of his writing on their writing page. As well as having his work on show, he received a spellchecker, calculator and mousemat and he can now find himself on Google!

Talking to John and reading his stories it's hard to imagine that he had such a struggle with his basic skills. John feels he has gained so much from adult education and is very keen to promote the benefits of learning to others.

Fiona Holmes



*"No matter what age you are,
you learn something new
every day."*

JOHN CLARK

Read John's story, 'Growing up in Newcraighall', online at www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/yourstories/2004/octoberstory

FOR MANY PRACTITIONERS, youth literacies has become a new and exciting area of work prompted by the Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland Report (ALNIS) recognising young people as a literacies priority group. The profile of youth literacies was raised further in November, when Learning Connections held a conference aimed at both the literacies and youth work sector.

The conference began with Liliias Noble (Head of Learning Connections) and Irene Kennaway (Development Manager at Learning Connections) highlighting the commitment that Learning Connections has made to drive youth literacies forward.

Sheila Doogan (Learning Connections) spoke about the Youth Literacies Discussion Group. This rolling focus group of stakeholders involved in literacies provision for young people across Scotland, represented the first stage in the exploration of youth literacies and identifying effective practice. The group met from December 2003 to July 2004 and will continue to meet as the Youth Literacies Network.

David Wallace (The University of Strathclyde) was commissioned to record the process of the discussion group. The result being the 'Youth Literacies Practice in Scotland: an initial exploration' report. The report looks at the methodology of using a rolling focus group as a vehicle for research, published research on youth literacies, the role of youth work in youth literacies, examples of effective practice and recommendation. The report is available from Learning Connections.

Gillian Lithgow (Youthlink) spoke about the 'To the Max' project which is being run by Youthlink and funded by Learning Connections. This project is funding nine pilot projects across Scotland to increase our understanding of youth literacies. Edinburgh is involved in two of the pilots, one developing integrated literacies training for youth workers and the other working with young people to design and use innovative research tools to help gather the opinions of young people with regard to youth literacies.

conference

During the day, conference participants had an opportunity for discussion. The discussion groups provided a lively debating ground around issues such as partnership work between the youth and adult literacies sector, whether the literacies elements of projects should be made explicit and how youth literacies is promoted to young people. Feedback from the groups should be available on the Learning Connections website: www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk

Bethia McNeil (NIACE/National Youth Agency) spoke about the research project, 'Success factors in informal learning: young adults experiences of literacy, language and numeracy', which she has been leading in England and Wales. Findings of the project complement many of the findings of the Youth Literacies Discussion Group in Scotland. A summary of Bethia's findings can be found on the NIACE website: www.niace.org.uk

The conference was a very positive contribution to raising the profile and understanding of youth literacies among the literacy and youth sector.

Ann Bradwell

A game of two halves

The City of Edinburgh Council's Community Education Youth & Children's Team won the Innovation in Learning award for their Reading the Game project at the Standard Life Education Awards. Reading the Game focused on football as a tool to teach young men, aged 14-17 years old, literacy skills.



The participants all had negative experiences in mainstream education but by choosing a subject they were interested in, the project was highly successful. Each session of the project was divided into two halves - the first half was focussed on learning more about football, the second was centred around developing football skills.

Commenting on the project, the judges commended the staff for the innovative way they had developed a course based on the interest of the group and how this had given them the incentive to succeed.

Between five to fifteen young men attended the group each week and four of the men gained two parts of their Duke of Edinburgh Award through the Award inclusive scheme. By completing the literacy work they gained their 'Skills' section and through the football training achieved their 'Physical Recreation' section.

CLAN Project Worker, Ann Bradwell (pictured above) developed the project and she has written it up as a resource pack which can be used by youth workers who would like to run similar projects.

If you would like a copy please contact Ann. Tel: 0131 469 3970. Email: ann.bradwell@educ.edin.gov.uk



JEVC Awards Ceremony



In November, Jewel & Esk Valley College held its annual graduation ceremony at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. Against a backdrop of personal difficulties, two students who have both worked with CLAN funded literacy tutors over the past year picked up the CLAN award for 'Achievement in Learning'.

● **VAL COLEMAN**, aged 39, from Niddrie, a single mother with two sons, came to College in 2003 to do the 1-year Entry to Further Education course, following a locally run 'Women onto Work' course.

Over the year, Val has worked with tutors, Eleanor Symms and Kate Just, to develop her confidence and skills in Communication/Literacy and Numeracy and has successfully completed the course, achieving Intermediate 1 in Numeracy and Communication.

She worked very hard on her course and was also very supportive towards her fellow students, even coming to talk to a group of new students on the Adult Returners' Course about how to plan and give a presentation. Val, who is now applying for work and hoping to pursue a career in Social Care, said,

"I hated Maths at school and thought, 'I can't do this', but the classes helped me to have confidence and believe in myself. I thought the tutors were very patient and supportive and explained things in ways I could understand. This gave me confidence in myself."

● **JACKIE MATTHEWS**, aged 39, from Pilton, first came to College to attend the Sensory Centre to learn new skills in IT because she had lost her sight.

Jackie had no formal qualifications and limited uses for literacy and communication skills when she had her sight. She identified difficulties with writing – spelling, grammar and punctuation – that she needed to develop in order to maximise her use of IT and to gain future employment within an office setting.

Jackie started working on her writing skills with CLAN tutor Eleanor Symms, when she came to the Sensory Centre in the summer of 2002. She then went to the RNIB Centre at Jewel & Esk Valley College in Autumn 2003 and they continued to work together.

In January 2004, she joined a part-time Communication class, on a part-time in-fill basis with the Mi-tech group, taught by Kate Just and supported in class by Eleanor Symms. She has now achieved Intermediate 1 in Communication. Jackie is planning to continue to study in Further Education and is exploring part-time courses that will enable her to gain qualifications in administration and IT. Jackie said,

"I feel that improving my communication skills really improved my confidence in myself and that I achieved a lot. When the certificate came through the door I felt even better, especially when I think back to where I started from!"

WEB RESOURCES

BBC Skillswise Numbers

The Skillswise site has new material covering distances and temperature at www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/numbers/measuring

Measuring Temperature's fact sheets cover reading different types of thermometers and understanding the difference between Celsius (Centigrade) and Fahrenheit. They go on to explain about negative numbers, scales and the use of marked and unmarked divisions to represent degrees. Next there is a quiz to test your knowledge and six worksheets on different aspects of the topic.

The Distances' fact sheets cover using scales and tables to work out the distance between places. As usual, there is a quiz and worksheets to check and reinforce learning.

There is also new material on Skillswise on decimals at www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/numbers/fractiondecimalpercentage

In Introduction to Decimals, the fact sheets cover reading and writing decimals, place value and place holders and comparing decimal numbers (here there is a clear explanation of why, for example, 3.4 is bigger than 3.27). Rather than a quiz, there is a lively game where you drag decimal numbers into order, trying to keep as many of your five lives as possible by getting the order right. Three worksheets are available.

Using Decimals takes the work a step further by covering adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, followed by approximating and rounding decimal numbers.

The multiplying and dividing fact sheets are very clear, with the digits that are 'carried' shown in red and arrows to help the learner see how the sum is done. Again there is a quiz and worksheets to go with the fact sheets

Protecting your Computer

If you and the learners you are working with don't already have anti-virus software, you should look into what is available (and make a backup copy of your files regularly). There is a useful program called AVG Anti-Virus with a free version for home users. It runs in the background, protecting as files and programs are opened and as email is sent and received. It also has a scheduler that checks every file on your computer automatically at regular intervals. Free virus updates are available too. The software can be downloaded from <http://free.grisoft.com/freeweb.php/doc/2/>

INTEGRATING LITERACIES

What's been happening?

CLAN has been offering training for almost two years and the resource base has been operating for six months. As these new forms of support are open to a broad range of organisations¹ (including those working with homeless people, young people and refugees), many are exploring new ways of engaging learners by integrating literacies learning into their ongoing programmes. The kinds of people involved are support workers, SVQ assessors, training providers, keyworkers, volunteers and community workers as well as tutors.

So now we think it's a good time to reflect on how to integrate literacies by contrasting writing an email in a computing setting with writing an email in an integrated literacies context.

Email in computing setting

Examples of skills, knowledge and understanding:

- using the mouse and keyboard
- menu bar & folders, icons for send, reply, print, address book, etc.
- address format, subject line and message area
- understanding connecting to a server to send and receive emails

Email in integrated context

In addition to the above examples of skills, knowledge and understanding:

- considering situation, audience and purpose in order to make choices about words, layout, graphics, etc.
- editing for punctuation, spelling and capital letters
- knowing the conventions for email can be different
- other ways you can communicate: benefits and drawbacks of email
- revising for meaning, tone and style
- critical awareness of the impact on us as readers and writers
- changing power relations through accessibility and speed of email

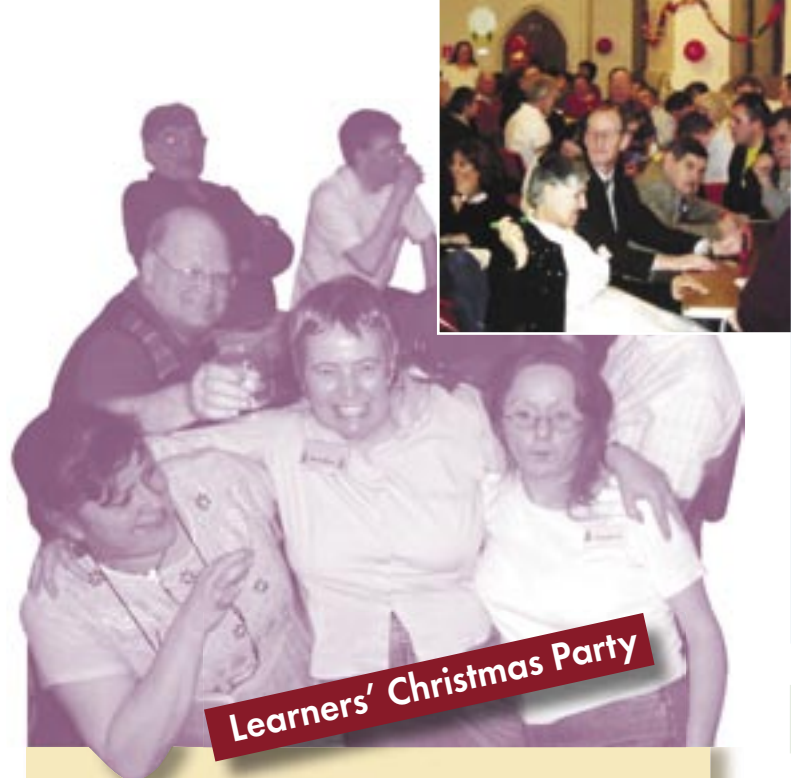
New ideas

We welcome your contributions and comments on this topic and invite you to drop in to the resource base or contact us about training.

- Gillian Lawrence, Training Officer
Tel: 0131 270 6070. Email: gillian@clanedinburgh.org
- Catherine Macrae, ICT & Literacies Officer
Tel: 0131 270 6034. Email: catherine@clanedinburgh.org
- Lorraine Borwick, Project Worker
Tel: 0131 270 6072. Email: lorraine@clanedinburgh.org

¹ Some have been supported by the CLAN Challenge Fund

MORE BYTES The next edition of Beans will be out in February. If you would like to contribute to Beans, send your contribution to Fiona Holmes, CLAN Edinburgh, 1-3 Canon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5HE. Tel: 0131 270 6073. Fax: 0131 270 6074. Email: fiona@clanedinburgh.org
Web: www.clanedinburgh.org



“ I thought it was really super ... the food was super ... the company was really good ... the music was super, there was Abba. I was able to find it alright. It was fantastic ... I think it was the atmosphere, everyone mixed and we all looked after each other. The bingo was quite fun. I've made a lot of friends. We must have a party again ... a wee get-together in the summer.

We thought the Christmas party went really well, impressed with the number of people that turned out for the party. Everyone enjoyed themselves by dancing and generally having fun.

It was great, I won a DVD player! ... I also met an old school friend there ... the party was fun ... we all enjoyed the party and hope there will be other events throughout the year.

Food was absolutely terrific ... music brilliant ... nice space to dance ... I think we have all really enjoyed ourselves, yes, even more than I thought I would.”

Due to the thought, planning and creativity that learners put into organising the Christmas party, the event was a great success. Ninety learners came along to meet others and to join in the festive fun.

To kick-start the party bingo was played and prizes were won. A runner-up prize of a £10 HMV token went to Tricia, and Bret went home delighted with his 1st prize of a new DVD player.

After the greatly anticipated buffet was demolished, folk got their dancing shoes on and got down to some serious grooving on the dance floor. All this was accompanied by an atmospheric light projection of snowflakes falling on Edinburgh Castle. Learners later took to the mic and gave us a treat with a couple of top tunes!

Thanks to Irene, Katy, Deb and Jo for all their ideas and time.