

Saint Paul Public Library English Conversation Circle Volunteer

Summary:

The English Conversation Circle is an opportunity for arriving immigrants who are English learners to practice with native English speakers. It is part of the St. Paul Public Library's initiative to improve the English literacy of our immigrant library users. The class follows a structured drop-in model. There are no grammar lessons or homework; the goal of the class is to give English language learners an opportunity to converse with native English speakers. The students have varying levels of proficiency, from those who are just beginning to learn English to those who are developing in fluency. For Conversation Circle Assistants, this program offers a chance to engage with members of St. Paul's new immigrant community, to hear their stories and learn about their cultures.

Duties:

Adult Conversationalist:

- Review and discuss selected topics with the learners by practicing their English conversation skills.
- Participate in group activities and lead small group conversations.
- Encourage learners to practice actively listening and speaking.
- Promote use of library resources to improve English skills.
- Review conversation session and provide constructive and positive feedback.

Qualifications:

- It is not necessary that Assistants speak a second language.
- Comfort with meeting and speaking with new people.
- Patience in listening and communicating.
- Keen perception of a person's current English language ability.
- Ability to correct mistakes in a constructive manner.
- Ability to speak slowly and clearly and an awareness of whether a learner understands what is being said.
- Respectfully curious, accepting and non-judgmental attitude toward immigrants and differing cultures.
- Work well with facilitating group activities.
- A background check (no fee) is required.

Commitment:

Two consecutive evening hours per week

Training/Supervision:

On-site training and ongoing supervision

Wendy Neurer, Library Volunteer Coordinator, is available to answer questions and discuss any concerns at 651.266.7420 or wendy.neurer@ci.stpaul.mn.us