**Best of the Best: Tutors’ and Teachers’ Materials Recommendations**

**A. Beginning Level Reading/ Writing**

*Laubach Way to Reading 1: Sounds and Names of Letters (Dorothy W.)*  
I recommend the first Laubach book, "Sounds and Names of Letters". Teddy recommended this book for Drissa after he observed us. He said Drissa is a visual learner, and this book gives a lot of visual cues to letter shapes and words. Every lesson includes work with letters, words, and simple sentences, and includes writing practice, which is good for homework. We especially like the sentences – he feels like he's really making progress when he can read a whole sentence!

*The Curtiss Yamada Comprehensive Language Evaluation (CYCLE) Assessment (Jeni Y.)*  
The CYCLE is an in-depth language assessment instrument that tests linguistic knowledge and performance in semantics, syntax, and morphology, testing structures and features that emerge between 18 months to 10 years of age, the years of active language development. Linguistic knowledge across a wide range of ages and cognitive levels can be assessed. (See [www.thecycletest.com](http://www.thecycletest.com)) The CYCLE is a comprehensive instrument that enables the examiner to assess comprehension and production of basic grammatical features of English. I use this test to sort out what the student does and doesn’t know linguistically.

*Reading Reflex by Carmen and Geoffrey McGuinness (Jeni Y.)*  
*Reading Reflex* is a how-to guide for the reading instruction method called Phono-Graphix. This approach stresses the 43 sounds of the English language, treating letters as symbols of these sounds. Phono-Graphix teaches children to separate each phoneme in a word. (Also recommended, the book: Why Our Children Can't Read, by Diane McGuinness, Geoffrey's mother). The Reading Reflex chart helps me organize what I am teaching. I can easily see which vowel combination and consonants I have taught. The book also emphasizes that pattern recognition and not just rule learning can be used to teach spelling.

*Sounds and Letters for Readers and Spellers by Jane Fell Greene (Sandy L.)*  
My resource to share is a wonderful book for phonemic awareness. It is called Sounds and Letters for Readers and Spellers and the author is Jane Fell Greene, Ed.D. The contents of this book are Phoneme Awareness Drills for Teachers and Speech/Language Pathologists. It includes Phoneme Production/Replication, Phoneme Isolation, Phoneme Segmentation and Counting, (Spelling the Sounds), Phoneme Blending, Rhyming, Phoneme Deletion, Phoneme
Substitution, Phoneme Reversal and yes, Pig Latin drills. The drills are sequenced for specific letters and sounds for each unit. It starts with vowel a and goes through sound letter relationships, place value for encoding, digraphs, initial blends, clusters or 3 letter blends, final blends and tch. It is a wonderful resource for our students because many of them are learning disabled and these drills help reinforce sound/letter relationships that they are missing.

Alphabet Cards Manipulative (Louise M.)
I have found these useful in a variety of ways. For absolute beginners, it is useful to lay out the alphabet and identify the letters. Beyond that, you can mix up the cards and get the tutee to put them in sequence (knowing the sequence being essential for using a dictionary or other alphabetical list.) You can also pull out the vowels to identify them. (At least for my tutee, learning that each syllable and word needed a vowel seemed to be new information.) Cards can be used for your tutee to make words, to create word groups (changing the initial or final consonant), and to combine two short words, or words with endings or prefixes to make other words. For tutees who are reluctant to write, I have found this to be a useful approach.

I would also like to briefly mention the use of "I Can Read" children's books with tutees who have a small child or grandchild. Bonus is that you are introducing your tutee to quality children's literature and encouraging your tutee to read to his/her child or grandchild.

B. Intermediate Level Reading/ Writing

GCF Learn Free Website (Elizabeth S.)
This is a great website to use with learners who need to develop or increase their computer skills. It offers instructions ranging from Computer, Internet and e-mail basics to using Microsoft Word, Excel and Power Point. I asked my learner to complete the Adult Learning Center's Computer Skills evaluation sheet so that we could see what skills she already had (for example, e-mailing) and what skills she wanted to learn. We then started going through the GCF Learn Free lessons focusing on the programs that she wanted to learn (for example, Microsoft Word). The lessons are posted on the site both in text and in video so it works well with both visual and auditory learning styles. It also has information about other free sites for learning how to type.

Parts of Speech Bingo (Kasey K.)
Use to identify parts of speech, see them in the context of a sentence, read sentences out loud. I like it because it's both fun and useful. It's also highly adaptable to where the learner is (can work together or compete, can use many boards or one etc).

Mad Libs (Kasey K.)
Use to generate parts of speech and read out loud. I like it because it's an opportunity to solidify knowledge of parts of speech, expand vocabulary and have a good laugh with your learner.
**Funbrain (Kasey K.)**
Identify parts of speech from options highlighted in a sentence. I like it because difficulty is variable (one level only has nouns and verbs, higher level has all parts), list of definitions is available if learner needs a reminder, and learner gets practice reading aloud.

**Challenger 4 Adult Reading Series Workbook by Corea Murphy (Pete P.)**
I am using the Challenger 4 Adult Reading Series Workbook with Donald. I really like the stories in this book and I think they are more interesting for Donald than the previous workbook. The primary reason is that the stories are about real life topics and people from the sun to Thomas Edison. Besides having good exercises to insure reading comprehension, there are also good exercises on word meanings, word formations etc.

**Monthly Calendar (Ruth E.)**
This tool (Monthly Calendar) was created to help my learner to be accountable for his learning as well as a study tool. It helps my learner to stay focused and aware of what we will be working on each week. The calendar consists of daily mini assignments based on my learner’s needs. There is a space for the learner to keep track of his spelling progress, books read during the month, and word list. I also recommend that you include a space on the calendar for goals during the month. This tool is great for me as well because it is sort of a condensed lesson plan. Wednesdays are the days I tutor; notice the difference in the assignments. Wednesday entries are my instructional plan. It is a good idea to give your learner 2 copies of the calendar: one to keep in his/her notebook and one to put in a conspicuous space. After a couple of months of using the monthly calendar my learner has mentioned to me how it has helped him to stay focus and that he notice progress in his learning...that's what it is all about progress.

**C. Math**
**Word Problem Card Deck Manipulative (Pete P.)**
Besides the workbook I am using for math, I also have found the word problem card deck helpful. Word problems are a challenge for most learners. Doing word problems not only reinforces math skills but it also forces solid reading comprehension. Last class Tallie brought in some math handouts he said he received from a friend who was in the South Baltimore Program. I made copies for my group. They were very good problems because they covered real life situations such as deductions from pay checks.

**Base Ten Number Concept Set Manipulative (Sylvia E.)**
I find that adult learners of math (and those stuck on learning math) tend to have a hard time grasping the way our number system works. I use graphics, games, and manipulatives to help illustrate how simple it is, rather than how complex they think it is. I like this particular manipulative because of its versatility. It can be used to illustrate place value, decimals, (some) fractions, per cent, and even volume, (if working with solid geometry). The pieces are cubic centimeters, and can also be used to explain the metric system. This item is available at GHCC in the library, kept on the shelves with games and other manipulatives.