

Something that mattered



Lubbock Area United Way

I have always wanted to do something worthwhile in my life; something that mattered. This idea has floated around in my consciousness for years, and until this semester, it was, I thought, doomed to stay there. Yet, this semester I was blindsided by this opportunity which, I admit, at first, I was unhappy about. On the first day of class I was hit with the realization that I was going to have to do a lot of work. I was going to have to tutor. I have never tutored anyone in my life and I was terrified that I might teach something wrong and ruin my student's life. Tutoring, therefore, was unnerving, and tutoring an adult was downright frightening.

I had a unique experience in that I was able to be a one-on-one tutor to only one student for the entire semester. My student was all mine, and I was all his. He completely relied on me and we had our own style.

My student had left school in the third grade in Mexico, and never learned how to write. He could read Spanish, and speak both Spanish and English very well. I am still amazed at how a man, who at the age of seven, stopped going to school so he could work in the fields of West Texas to help his family survive, could go from struggling to write his own name to writing full sentences with ease.

Although I always thought it would be later on in my life when I would be able to make a difference, this class gave me the opportunity to do something today. I have been filled with the most amazing feelings



of accomplishment and pride. My student was important to me. He helped me realize that being a contributing part of my community does not have to wait. It can be done in just two days a week for a little over an hour at a time.

I don't know if the workbook I kept will be helpful to other students or tutors in the future, but to me, it will be a lasting reminder that at one time, one student and one tutor came together to become better at something, and we did just that.

About the Author

Rebecca Neitzel is a Texas Tech student majoring in English. She participated as a tutor in the TTU/ESL Initiative, a joint project through Literacy Lubbock.

Find Out More

Funding from the Lubbock Area United Way helps Literacy Lubbock support literacy for adults and family.

Find out more by calling call 806.775.3636