



# ESL Conversation Clubs @ Your Library

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## What is an ESL Conversation Club?

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- Casual, relaxed environment
- Fun activities, lively discussions
- Meets once a week
- Offered at most SJPL branches



## Benefits

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- You: A chance to promote library events and connect with patrons.
- Participants: Language learners always need more opportunities to practice talking.



# Promotion

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- System level: Website
- System level: Bookmark
- Flyers
- Announcements in the library
- Inform patrons at the Reference Desk, or to new patrons



# Attendance

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**Typically, about how many students attend your ESL Conversation Club?**

- 1-5 - 45%
- 6-10 - 45%
- 11 or more - 10%

**Typically, does the same group return weekly, or does the membership change?**

Only two respondents have constantly changing membership; most groups tend to stay consistent with some new faces here and there.

- Same group with some new faces - 95%
- Constantly changing membership - 5%



## Different Styles...

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- Impromptu
- Prepare Lessons, handouts
- Group discussion on a topic

It's up to you!



# Fun and Games

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- ESL Bingo
- Liar, Liar
- Statements of Opinion
- What If?
- Advice Game
- Scattegories
- Alibi Game
- RPG
- Alphabet Go-FISH!

You can also celebrate holidays – have a potluck!



## Problem: One person talks too much!

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- Consider using a timer
- Ground rules
- Break the group up into small groups



## Problem: Language levels vary.

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- Have a variety of exercises ready
- Split into groups
- Consider offering different programs based on levels



## Problem: Too much grammar!

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- Encourage group work, and don't get too forced into assuming a teacher role.



## Problem: Silent, shy group.

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- Be prepared with conversation starters
- Pick interesting topics - ask attendees for future topics
- Break'em up!



## Useful Tools...

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- Book: *Look Again Pictures* / Judy Winn-Bell Olsen.
- Cathy's Conversation Cards
- Alphabet cards
- Book: *20 Things Your Beginner Students Should Know* / Heather Hovdebo.



# Equipment Needed

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- meeting room
- copy machine
- white board and pens
- dictionaries
- computer – can be useful



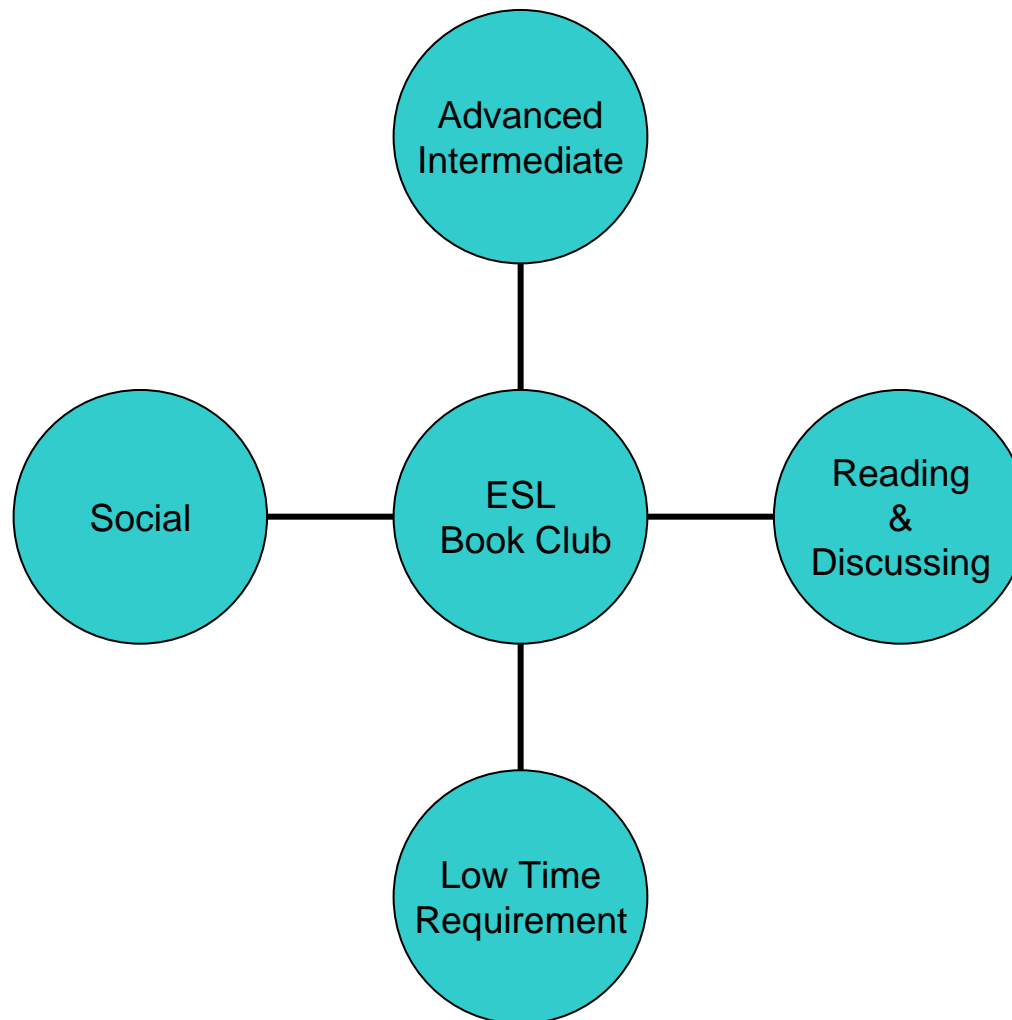
## Extending the ESLCC

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- Start a Teen ESL Conv. Club at a local high school
- Divide it up by levels
- Add a monthly ESL Book Club

# ESL Book Clubs: The original concept

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# The Challenge of Choosing Books

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Balance between too challenging or just right

Plenty of copies

Mature themes

Judging books by their covers

Describing books in limited language





# Considerations

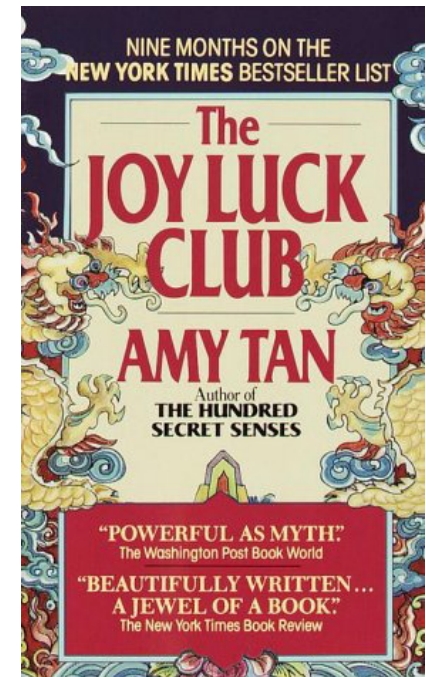
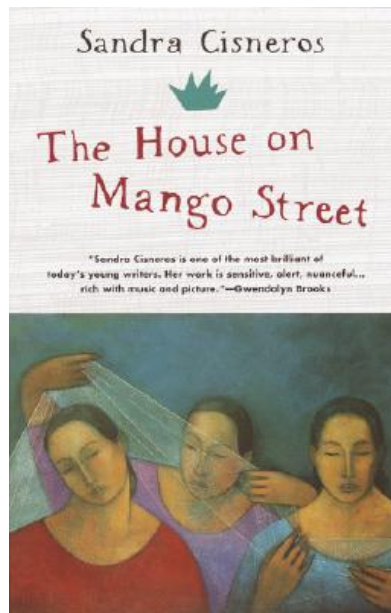
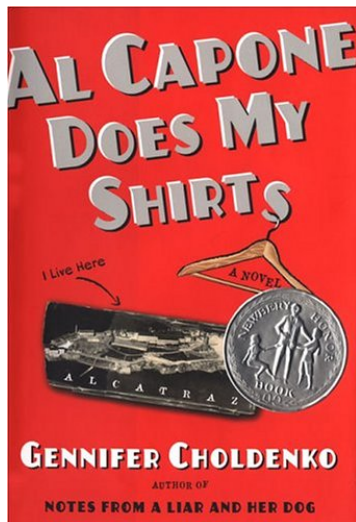
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- Have you ever taken a foreign language?
- Monthly time commitment
- Literary concepts/comparisons may be hard to discuss
- Avoiding classroom element

# Start of Success

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- Mature content
- Detailed handouts
- Books with larger cultural themes





# Encouraging Growth

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- Reading club
- Short stories
- Change the time
- Cross-advertising (CC, colleges, churches)



# Your suggestions/insights?

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- Please share!



## For more information....

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○ Visit our blog:

<http://eslconversationclubs.blogspot.com/>