

**Teaching  
English  
Language  
Learners**

**the  
Good News**

A guide for  
church-based  
ESL ministries

by Kendale Moore

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—Kendale Moore



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## Introduction

Church-based English as a Second Language (ESL) ministries change the lives of students and teachers. Students learn and develop the skills necessary to function effectively in North America. Lifetime friendships are begun and nurtured. Spiritual lives are transformed as students are introduced to the gospel of Jesus Christ and personally respond by making Jesus Christ Lord of their lives. Many of these students would never have heard or seen the gospel in action if it hadn't been for the local church-based ESL ministry that offered to meet their specific, felt need—the need to learn to speak English more effectively.

Volunteer ESL teacher's lives are changed as they discover and respond to their calling as literacy missionaries. Many volunteers say, "I've found it! I've found what God wants me to do as a ministry of service and outreach." The teacher, like the student, learns many new things. It reveals new teaching skills, and new and interesting things about the English language. Teachers also discover new things about North America, as well as other countries and cultures. Like their students, teachers develop and nurture lifelong friendships. Each teacher says, "My students teach me more than I teach them." Each teacher also develops a closer relationship with God, as they pray continuously for the physical needs and spiritual lives of their students.

Volunteer ESL teachers in church-based ministries impact the world as they demonstrate and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the students that God has sent to their communities and local ministries.

Church-based ESL ministries often result in the beginning of new ethnic language congregations. Bible studies grow to worship services, fellowships, and missions—and new bodies of believers are born.

I have seen these transformations happen all across North America in local church-based ESL ministries. My journey as a full-time literacy missionary began in Kentucky in 1981, as I began helping Southern Baptist churches in Kentucky reach out to the internationals in their communities. Since then, I have traveled all across the United States and Canada as a regional and national literacy missionary for the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board—and its successor, the North American Mission Board—training volunteers to begin church-based ESL ministries as an intentional mission outreach.

This book is a guide for volunteers to begin church-based ESL ministries. It will help you learn how to organize your ministry. It will introduce you to basic language teaching techniques and resources. It will guide you in how to plan and prepare ESL lessons. It will give you ideas about how to incorporate biblical material in your classes and how to share your faith with your students. These ideas are drawn from the experience of a multitude of church-based ESL ministries and volunteers.

My prayer for you as you begin your journey as a literacy missionary is that you let God lead you to effectively and intentionally demonstrate and share His love with the English language students He is already preparing for you.

