What previous participants have said about the *Teach Me Grammar (TMG) Program…*

- *"Over the years, I have attended anything and everything on grammar in an attempt to get a handle on it. This is the first PD course that delivered what I wanted and needed to know. My classroom practice has completely changed. I feel more rounded as a teacher …; the practices and knowledge gained from doing this course have become part of the way I now think about creating lessons and teaching them. It would be impossible for me to go back to my old ways of teaching." – Sara Splatt, Polytechnic West, Balga*

- *"Vastly improved my understanding of grammar. I came away with not just a better knowledge of grammar but as importantly, a lot less fear, and dare I say a bit of confidence. I look forward to using all I have learnt with my students in the future." – Jenni Wieland, Challenger TAFE, Fremantle*

- *"I now firmly believe that grammar [teaching] must be embedded in the material that students are learning and I'm beginning to understand why some of my earlier 'grammar' lessons made no impact on students, because they had no context." – Gillian Pow Chong, Curtin College and CentaCare, Perth*

- *"I have learnt to integrate grammar with reading which helps me see the relevance of teaching the grammar and, I believe, makes it more real for the students." – Chesson Henshaw, Polytechnic West, Perth*

- *"My ability to teach grammar to my students has improved to the extent that it has become so much easier, in fact exciting, to teach grammar in class." – Silvano Fasolo, Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison, Kalgoorlie*

- *"TMG opened my mind to a whole new 'grammar world'." – Charmaine Marshall, ATA Training, West Perth*

- *"One student missed out an article and preposition. He wrote "I felt hero." I used the terms 'article' and 'preposition' when discussing his editing with him. He corrected his mistake very easily. It was really good to be able to use these terms with him and have him know what I was talking about." – Sharyn Dauti, South Western Institute of Technology, Bunbury*

- *"Nothing was too much trouble (or so it seemed) and no question was too small; I was not made to feel as if I didn't know anything so it did boost my confidence to try new things." – Penny Blackburne, Centacare*

- *"Although I was a complete beginner, I have gained invaluable skills… [Grammar] is now one of my favourite hobbies!" – Susan Bates, Emmanuel Centre, East Perth*

- *"I found that my delivery, including changes as learnt from the course, has raised [my students'] motivation and awareness. There has been a marked improvement in both their writing and speaking." – Seema Mazumdar, Polytechnic West, Balga*

- *"An awesome course that was presented in a fun, enjoyable and informative way [and] modelled excellent learning techniques." – Diane Vosganoff, WA Institute for Deaf Education, Belmont*

In their Program Exit Surveys, all participants since 2011 have said they would highly recommend the *Teach Me Grammar* Action Learning Program to other ESL / Literacy Teachers.

So, what is the *Teach Me Grammar* Action Learning Program?

Teach Me Grammar is an Action Learning Professional Development Program funded by the WA Department of Training and Workforce Development and is open to all Adult Literacy and ESL teachers working in Western Australia.

Now entering its sixth year, TMG is a program through which language and literacy teachers of adults learn both the fundamental concepts of grammar themselves and how to teach this in engaging, positive, integrated ways, tailored to the specific needs of their particular learner group. It explores, through learning activities, discussion and personal exploration, the best ways to teach English grammar and sentence structure to adult learners.

In 2016, the Department will be running another 12-session TMG program for a competitively selected group of 12 language and literacy teachers who, between them, teach a broad range of adult learners, including native English speakers, CaLD people, indigenous people, Deaf people, and others. It is hoped the each group will include teachers from both metropolitan Perth and regional Western Australia[1].

The participants will attend, free of charge, a series of twelve half-day (4.25 hours) professional development sessions to learn about and discuss specific grammar concepts and learn about / practise a range of grammar-teaching strategies / methods. The participants will practise what they have learned in each session with their own adult learner classes, and reflect on their experience in an online blog developed for the purpose.

It is intended that the sharing of ideas, perspectives, experiences and reflections amongst this eclectic mix of teachers will enable an understanding to emerge of what is most relevant and works best for which learners and why, and whether what works for one learner group can also be used as a successful strategy for teaching another learner group.

Between sessions, the project leader will first respond individually to the participants' blog reflections and then will collectively summarise these on a central project blog for everyone's benefit. Issues raised will be open for further online discussion and / or discussion /clarification during the subsequent PD sessions.

An alignment of the program to the following Units of Competency from **TAE80113 Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice** is currently being explored.

- TAELLN801 Analyse and apply adult literacy teaching practices
- TAELLN803 Develop English language skills of adult learners
- TAELLN804 Implement and evaluate delivery of adult language, literacy and numeracy skills

Once they have completed all the program requirements (as detailed below), participants will receive a *Certificate of Completion* to add to their professional development portfolio. This *Certificate of Completion* will detail the program content so that participants may in future use this together with their blog posts as evidence for RPL against these Units of Competency.

Training Venue

All sessions will be conducted at the **Department of Training and Workforce Development, 1 Prospect Place, West Perth WA 6005**. Parking is available, and Transperth buses 15 and 990 are routed close to the venue.

[1] The training is free, but successful applicants may be eligible for a scholarship to cover other costs of attendance at the sessions in Perth. A separate application and approval process applies. Please call Cheryl Wiltshire on 6212 9715 (Mon-Wed) for more information.

The *Teach Me Grammar* Sessions

The 12 PD sessions will run on **Mondays from 8.30am – 12.45pm**, as per the dates below. Sessions will occur on average at three-weekly intervals, starting in mid-February and finishing in late November 2016. (Each session will include a 15-minute break for morning tea) The session dates are:

15 February	16 May	5 September
29 February	20 June	17 October
14 March	25 July	7 November
4 April	15 August	28 November

PD Session Content

At each session, the 12 participants will:

- learn about / extend their knowledge of fundamental grammar concepts;
- explore positive grammar-teaching methods and strategies;
- discuss these methods and strategies with the other participants who collectively teach a range of adult learner types; and
- as required, practise the learned concepts and teaching methods / strategies with the other participants.

The content of the sessions will include the following:

- What is grammar and how can explicit knowledge of it be valuable for both LLN teachers and learners?
- Fundamental concepts of grammar:
    - key word classes (nouns, verbs, pronouns etc.) and grammatical terms (subject, object, subordinate clauses etc.)
    - basic sentence patterns
    - simple, compound and complex sentences
    - identifying the grammatical functions of words, phrases and clauses in context
    - links between vocabulary and grammatical structures
    - tenses (the 12 main past, present and future tenses in English)
    - practical applications (how does context dictate the language we should use?)

The sessions will also emphasise:

- the importance of focussing on positive, grammar teaching and feedback methods, and the need to avoid deficit-centred, error-focussed teaching methods
- using *The Grammar Disc – Pah!*[2] with different adult language and literacy learner groups
- adapting this (and other grammar teaching and learning resources) for use with adult learners from different linguistic backgrounds and with different learning needs
- the importance of using visual and kinaesthetic teaching techniques with all learners, not just the Deaf
- integrating grammar-teaching and learning into relevant, learner-centred, communicative tasks
- using PowerPoint, organic charts, function cards etc. to support visual / kinaesthetic / auditory learning

[2] *The Grammar Disc – Pah!* is an Australian interactive DVD-Rom initially designed as a visual resource to teach the basics of English grammar to Deaf adults. It also contains a voiceover for hearing learners. For further details, visit: www.thegrammardisc.net.au

On the Application Form, applicants are asked to indicate what else they would personally hope to learn from the program, both grammar and the teaching of it. Due to strict time limits, we cannot promise that all such suggestions will be catered for, but, where possible, these will be built into the program.

What is Action Learning?

Action Learning is a process of learning by doing, reflecting on the experience, and then sharing these thoughts with others in order to reach a collective understanding of what works, what doesn't and what needs to change in order to improve outcomes next time. During previous programs, this has proven to be an invaluable way for participants to review and consolidate their own learning.

Before attending the next PD, participants are required to:

- preview / review the relevant sections of *The Grammar Disc – Pah!* (and other grammar-learning resources) and complete the associated exercises (approx. 1.5 hours per session); and
- pre-read and be prepared to discuss various readings on the teaching of grammar (approx. 30 minutes per session).

Following each PD session, the participants are required to:

- use an action learning project blog to complete an initial reflection on personal gains, thoughts and questions relating to the content of the PD Session (approx. 15 minutes);
- practise teaching the new grammar concepts to their own group of adult learners using the various teaching strategies / methods presented during the PD sessions (3-4 hours); and then
- use the action learning project blog to complete a second personal reflection, recording questions, thoughts and suggestions for improvements / modifications to the teaching strategies used in light of this teaching experience. (approx. 20 minutes).

The project blog is designed specifically for (and open only to) the 12 participants in the particular group, plus the project leader and the program administrator. (For those new to blogging, the first session includes a hands-on introduction to the blogs, and ongoing support is provided by the project leader.)

What are the knowledge, skills and experience requirements?

1. Teaching / Experience

All successful applicants **must have their own adult learner[3] group running for the duration of the program**, and be able to attend **all** the PD training sessions.

In addition, they should have **at least one** of the following:

- a teaching qualification which qualifies them to teach English language / literacy skills to adults
- a minimum of three years' continuous experience teaching English language / literacy to adults in a formal setting[4].

[3] For the purposes of this program, "adult" is defined as "Year 11 age or above".
[4] Any educational institution following a formal learning program. If you are unsure, please contact Geoff Pearson on 9330 8989 to discuss.

Note: If you are interested in participating and believe you have the necessary skills to do so, but cannot meet either the qualification or experience requirement, the selection panel will consider your application on its own merits. You are therefore still encouraged to submit an application with a clear statement of why you feel you should be selected. This statement should be made on a separate sheet attached to the application form.

2. Knowledge of Grammar

There is NO requirement for participants to have any formal knowledge of English grammar. However, it is probable that some will have some basic knowledge of grammatical terms, such as verbs, nouns, and adjectives etc. Others may have more than this, particularly if they are ESL teachers / linguists.

The Application Form includes a brief assessment of your current level of grammatical knowledge. **This is not a test or a method of screening applicants in or out.** It is simply a way to ascertain the background knowledge of the group prior to the start of the program. As such, it will have no bearing on the selection process for this program.

Whatever your level of knowledge of English grammar, it is important to recognise that **the program will assume no prior knowledge** and will teach the fundamentals of English grammar from scratch, focussing primarily on those items indicated earlier in this document. In light of this, any potential applicants who already have a significant knowledge of English grammatical terminology may wish to reconsider their reasons for applying before doing so.

So, is the *Teach Me Grammar* Program for you?

The time commitment for the program is roughly 10-11 hours every three weeks (i.e. 3-4 hours per week on average):

- 4.25 hours at the PD session and
- 6-7 hours on the various activities between sessions. (Teaching, reflecting, session preparation)

The value of the training (i.e. cost to the funding body) is estimated at $3600.00 per participant. As the selected participants will be offered a place in the program **free-of-charge**, and as it will not be possible for replacement people to join after the program has started, it is essential that the selected participants commit to:

- attending and actively participating in all sessions; and
- completing all the between-session viewing, reading, teaching and reflecting (action learning) activities, as described above.

  These will need to be completed in a timely manner to ensure the participant is prepared for moving into the next session

If you cannot honestly make this commitment, you should not apply.

Please Note: Withdrawing from the program once it has started without a valid reason[5], backed up by relevant medical certificates or other documentation, will leave the individual participant (or their employing organisation) liable for a cancellation fee of $300 for each of the unattended sessions.

SUBSTITUTE PARTICIPANTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

[5] Valid reasons are: serious illness or injury, death, or death of an immediate family member requiring the absence of the participant.

Submitting your application

Ultimately, the selection process will seek to establish a group of adult language / literacy teachers who, between them, teach a broad range of adult learner groups and who individually are enthusiastic, energetic and passionate about going on a learning journey with a group of like-minded others to discover how to teach grammar to their students in the most positive, effective ways.

If, after reading the above, you are interested in participating in this program and are able to make the commitment required, you are strongly encouraged to complete the attached application form.

Please return your completed and signed Application Form to Geoff Pearson by:

5.00 pm on Monday 23 November 2015

You can do so in any of the following ways:

by email to: gpearson@agendacommunication.com.au
(Please use **Application for Teach Me Grammar Program** as the subject line of your message)

by post to: Agenda Communication Pty Ltd
A7, 550 Canning Highway
Attadale WA 6156

by fax to: (08) 9330 9736

Successful applicants will be notified by **5.00pm on Friday 27 November 2015**.

Please direct all queries to:

Geoff Pearson (Project Leader) on 9330 8989 / 0412 893 897 or via the above.