

TESLetter

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QUOTES FROM WITHIN:

“Storytelling creates a rapport and a strong bond within the classroom.”

“...we can work together and share our thoughts, ideas, strategies in the classroom and concerns.”

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Rose Shah
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The Art of Storytelling

Review: Storytelling and the Art of Teaching

Contributor: Shweta Gupta

Source: Pedersen, E.M. (1995). Storytelling and the art of teaching. English Teaching Forum, Vol. 33 No.1. <http://exchanges.state.gov/forum/vols/vol33/no1/P2.htm>

Martin Pedersen is a professor of English at Università di Messina, Italy. In this article, Pedersen writes about the importance of storytelling, and provides various strategies for teachers to adapt storytelling in their classrooms.

The Importance of Storytelling

Pedersen states that storytelling is an ancient form of teaching, and dates back to the time of Jesus and great philosophers like Plato and Confucius. Its relevance to teaching to this day cannot be undermined for the following reasons:

Students get the opportunity to enhance their oral expression, cultivate creativity, and a sense of connectness. Thus, allows learners to build confidence and pride.

It allows teachers to create a learner-centred classroom, to share feelings in a relaxed atmosphere through shared folktales and legends.

It brings teachers and students closer in a setting that is beyond the typical “teacherese” classroom setting.

Strategies for Successful Storytelling

Pedersen suggests selecting stories according to the age and language level. He further recommends strategies for successful storytelling are the 3P's:

Preparation

Teachers should read the story and become well acquainted with the plot, incidents, and the story sequence. Develop gestures, pauses, intonation and voice projection accordingly.

He cautions from reading word for word.

Allow the audience to guess the unfamiliar words from context.

Presentation

Pre-reading activities include picture-walk, discussions on new vocabulary, and cultural assumptions. Predictions and “wh” questions also set the audience's interests in the story.

Always maintain a good eye contact with the audience to keep them engaged and get instant feedback.

Use a well-lit, quiet and comfortable space in your classroom to keep the audience interested.

(Continued on page 3)

Message from the President

I am truly honored and excited to be the President of the Peel/Halton/Etobicoke TESL Affiliate. I am very grateful to have such a fine team of executive members to work with.

When I first became a member-at-large in October 2000 our membership was at 265. Today our membership is over 500 members and growing. We are the second largest affiliate in Ontario. This professional organization is dedicated not only to the professional development of teachers but also as a voice for your concerns and those of your students. As a large organization we can work together and share our thoughts, ideas, strategies in the classroom and concerns. Together we can become stronger not only as professionals but as a community of teachers working together to better our lives and those of our students. I believe that we all have something to give to this professional organization whether it is through sharing anecdotal comments, great lesson plan ideas, a field trip that was very successful or stories of inspiration. On that note I would like to invite all members to think about making a contribution to our Peel/Halton/Etobicoke Affiliate through a contribution to our newsletter, passing along the name of a great workshop that you attended or simply expressing your thoughts or concerns. You have a voice and it can be heard through your affiliate.

As President I encourage each and every one of you to take a moment and reflect on the important work that you do everyday in your classrooms. Our job description goes beyond teaching English as a Second Language as we teach our students about community, caring and understanding on a daily basis. Congratulations on your continued dedication.

Daniela Del Mastro

Daniela Del Mastro
PHE TESL President
(2006-2008)

Tell TESL
members
about useful
websites
YOU know...



Internet Resources

(Contributor: Barb Lazinski)

<http://members.aol.com/Jakajk/Oneworld.html>

- Excellent for both new and experienced teachers. Activities are not benchmarked so it might be time-consuming to find what you are looking for but it is well worth the effort.
- Promotes dialogue and exchange of experience and methodology
- Ready-to-use activities (basic to advanced levels) and easily adaptable handouts
- A mine of resources from tongue twisters, riddles for listening comprehension to teaching a research paper

(Contributor: Seema Tanwir)

<http://www.onlinenewspapers.com> can access hundreds of newspapers from all over the globe

(Contributor: Rose Shah)

<http://www.rd.com> (Readers' Digest) good reading and listening for intermediate and advanced level students.

<http://www.lingual.net> Learning English through movies

- This site has short films that can be viewed with or without subtitles. There is a movie quiz and script built in for comprehension.

<http://www.fun-with-words.com>

- For teachers – has good fun and play with words.

<http://www.readliterature.com/hodjastories.htm>

- Has good collection of Nasreddin Hodja stories

<http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/330/reading/index.htm>

- This site has a few Nasreddin stories with good follow-up comprehension activities.

Canada's New Food Guide

Contributor: Anita Gupta

"new guidemore personalizedin different languages.

Canada's new food guide - "Eating Well" can be ordered online for FREE at www.hc-gc.ca/foodguide. Copies can also be picked up at a local public library or by calling the Peel Region at 905-799-7700

The new food guide has been updated since 1992 because of the:

- advances in science, resulting in new nutrient requirements
- changes in the foods Canadians eat
- new types of foods available in supermarkets



"Eating Well" is *different* from "Healthy Eating":

- It emphasizes fruits and vegetables by placing them on the outermost curve of the rainbow.
- It is more personalized and is broken down by age and gender. The new guide is geared for adults who are active less than 30 minutes a day.
- It is available in different languages and includes ethnic foods.
- Recommends daily vitamin supplements for Canadians over the age of 50.
- Limits foods that are high in fat, sugar, and salt including granola bars and sports drinks.

The new food guide is user friendly. It has an interactive Internet tool called "My Food Guide" to help students create personalized food guide. It is a great tool for multicultural, adult ESL classrooms. Learners can be informed on healthy eating through creative language activities.

Storytelling *(Continued from page 1)*

Practice

After the read-aloud, Pedersen has suggested many activities addressing the four skills:

Listening activities: retelling, comparing, discriminating, relating, and sequencing the story.

Speaking activities: choral reading, story fill-in, and add-on stories.

Written activities: summarizing, rewriting, paraphrasing, journal writing, research projects, dialogue, poems or plays.

Reading and vocabulary development include comprehension questions and cloze exercises.

Visual and dramatic arts activities: posters, illustrations, crafts, collages, role-plays, skits.

Conclusion

Pedersen sums up to say that stories go beyond education and inspiration. They expand and stimulate the mind of the audience and the storyteller. They lend a sigh of relief from classroom routines.

Reflection

Many ESL teachers including myself have had the opportunity to enjoy the great storytellers like Dan Yashinski and Fran Marshall. We have shared cultural stories of Nasreddin Hodja and personal stories with our students. In turn, students have shared their stories with us. Hence, it creates a rapport and a strong bond within the classroom. Storytelling allows us to indulge learners of multiple intelligences.

To see the Pederson's theory in action, participate in "Using the Picture Books in ESL Classroom" workshop on May 17th, 2007 at PHE TESL Conference at 100 Elm Drive.

Selecting Appropriate Storybooks

Contributor: Shweta Gupta

Through research and personal experiences, I have outlined here some characteristics of leveled books, and strategies for selecting level-appropriate books.

Characteristics of Leveled Books

** Please note the levels below do not reflect reading levels of Canadian Level Benchmark. These are leveled books by the publishers. Generally, the reading levels can be found on the cover page of the leveled books.

Levels 1-4

- Patterns and Syntactic pattern
- Minimal story line
- Basic core words present
- Return sweep begins

Levels 5-8

- Less picture support for text
- Varied text placement on page and in book
- Ending of stories vary from pattern in book
- Introduces vocabulary endings (ed, ing), conceptual words and contractions
- Sentence lengths become longer on page
- Size of print varies on pages
- Language is descriptive and expressive
- Language pattern emphasizes phrasing
- Language is more natural
- Less concern for patterned language
- Familiar action words in language: around, across, behind, through

Levels 9-12

- Variety of genre & more sophisticated vocabulary
- A refrain in present
- Sentences are more complex
- Can't rely totally on pictures clues -although still support

- Print is in a variety of places
- Many sentences on a page
- Pattern changes within the story or one is not present
- Return sweep begins

Levels 13-15

- Pictures less supportive of text
- More details in story
- Some simple, some complex sentences
- Vocabulary is more difficult
- More dialogues present
- More book language
- Variety of layouts in one book
- Longer pattern
- Traditional tales and folk tales

Advanced story books

- Variety of punctuation used
- Much dialogue present
- Location of text changes
- Print changes in size, font
- Text goes beyond pictures
- Paragraph arrangement
- Genre: fables, non-fiction
- Beyond high frequency vocabulary
- Full pages of text
- Elaborate episodes

Choosing an Appropriate Book

- Consider the concepts in the book.
- Look at the layout of the book – confusing? Consider the language structures. Are they familiar or unusual?

- Does it have a story? Is it nonsensical? Does it follow common syntax?
- Use pattern books for early levels

- Try more than one book at a level – some are more difficult than others. You should be at the students' "cutting edge" for instruction – not too easy, not too hard, but just enough work to learn and move forward.

- When selecting stories, a single and clearly-defined theme, a well-developed sequential plot, a consistent written style, relevant visuals, interesting and humorous subject matter and strong emotional content will prove successful.

- Source: Foundations of Teaching Reading and Literacy lecture series by Michelle Ceferatti in June 2005. Michelle Ceferatti is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Education in D'Youville College, Buffalo NY.

- I believe parents and teachers can play a vital role in cultivating reading skills among our children and students. Good reading habits form a foundation of a well-rounded individual.

Review: Internet Site - Homophones

Contributor: Haleema Jafer

Don't Wait to put the Weight on Teaching Homophones in Your Class!

What are homophones? Homophones are words that sound the same but have different meanings and spellings ("ate" and "eight," for example). Students often find homophones interesting and it can be fun teaching about them! You may like to teach them as they come up in everyday spelling and reading, or you may like to teach them directly. Regardless of how you choose to teach them, it is important for our students to be able to use the correct word in their writing. For a wide variety of ideas on how to teach homophones visit the following link which is especially useful:

www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/words/spelling/recognising/homophones/index.shtml

An excellent resource from the internet, this site is divided into four groups: a fact sheet, a quiz, worksheets, and a game. The fact sheet gives a list of common homophones. The quiz allows the students to test their understanding of homophones. There are three levels of difficulty, which can be adapted to the varying levels of students in the class. Two printable worksheets are provided with fill in the blank exercises. These sheets can easily be used as a model to create more of your own exercises. Finally, there is a game where students have to match the homophone pairs, by remembering which counter the matching word is written on. Each of the words in this game is voiced. The game not only allows the students to test their skills, but more importantly allows the learners to enjoy what they've just learned! If you have never taught homophones to your students in class, you may want to give it some careful consideration as it is a fun way to encourage your learners to improve their vocabulary. Here is a poem for inspiration. It is written by Donni Bridson.

My brain won't work, it gets worms wrong,
 But who can blame it anyway
 When check and cheque are said the same,
 But written with a different name?
 And too, two, to and their, there, they're
 And in and inn and pair and pear.
 Whether the weather is right or write,
 If I see or sea with my site or sight.
 How can we expect our students to learn
 When we sew or sow and turn and tern?
 I would, or wood, change the words if I could
 To make more sense, or is it cents?
 The bells were tolled, or were they told?
 The shoes were soled, or where they sold?
 Chips and place, your plaice, or mine?
 The English language is divine!
 The words we ewes, the hair I died,
 Or the hare dyed, I sighed or side?
 Even teechers sumthymes get it wrong!
 I hope ewe like my little song.

"ate ... eight"
 "write ...right"
 "see ...sea"

"pear ... pair"

"would ...wood"

"tolled ...told"

Interview with Pratima Singh

Contributor: Rose Shah

During the last TESL Ontario Conference, in November 2006, Pratima Singh, a teacher at India Rainbow Community Services' LINC program in Brampton was interviewed by CBC radio. I caught up with Pratima wanting to know how it felt to be on national radio. Initially she was so overwhelmed and dazed, she said that she couldn't remember who interviewed her. The day after the interview she received a big bouquet of flowers from TESL Ontario and it felt as if everyone was treating her like royalty; she was on cloud nine. In response to my question whether she had finally returned to earth, she replied that yes she had, but a lovely glow of warmth still surrounded her.



The CBC interview highlighted the purpose of the TESL Conference and the ESL teachers' needs for professional development. Some of the questions put to Pratima were:

- What is LINC?
- How do newcomers benefit from this program?
- What's the difference between young adult students and those who are seniors?
- How do you select your topics for teaching?

Pratima explained the significance and importance of ESL by illustrating from her own first-hand experiences as a newcomer. She talked about difficulties that she and her family faced in spite of the fact that she spoke English fluently. Along with the language there are a lot of cultural specific things that newcomers need to learn to help them integrate into the Canadian way of life.

Originally from India, Pratima lived in Bahrain for 14 years before coming to Canada in 1992. She was a vice-principal of a school in Bombay. In Bahrain she taught domestic science and English as a Second Language. Later she presented workshops and compiled ESL materials for beginner level students.

Apparently Pratima is highly energetic; she is constantly involved in a variety of activities. An ESL teacher in the LINC program at India Rainbow, she also teaches adult beginner level classes at night school with Peel District School Board and is also an assessor there on the weekends.

Pratima has written a book titled Pratima's Literacy Wheel. She has done workshop presentations at TESL Ontario, TESL Canada and also presented at many different school boards. Pratima who has earned a 10 year TESL pin from her affiliate in Peel Halton Etobicoke, has also earned a special achievement award from TESL Ontario for her contributions to the field of ESL.

A woman with many talents, Pratima also manages to do a fair bit outside her profession: she does some of her own tailoring at times, has taught Ikebana – the Japanese art of flower arrangement and also does henna application to help raise funds for India Rainbow Community Services.

*“Learning from a teacher who has stopped
learning is like drinking from a stagnant pond”
Indonesian Proverb*

“...she was on
cloud nine “

“ finally... to
earth... a lovely
glow of warmth
still surrounded
her.”

The ESL Week Writing Competition November, 2006

“My journey
–
tears to
tears of joy.”

Last Fall, students in the **Peel/Halton/Etobicoke** area were invited to take part in a writing competition. The topic was, “**My journey – tears to tears of joy.**” More than one hundred students entered excellent work – from pre-benchmarks to CLB7. The stories were judged by CLB level. The panel consisted of three judges. There were fifteen winners and one honourable mention.

The winning entries were:-

CLB	Student	Teacher	Organization
Pre-BM	Parwin Rezaee	Vitalia D'Souza	Afghan Women's
CLB 2	Nurhasanah Jaenal	Vitalia D'Souza	Organization
CLB 3	Firaidoun Shamshoun	Rose J. Shah	India Rainbow CSP
CLB 3	Amisha Chetan Pavdigheda	Rose J. Shah	IRCSP
CLB 4	Sahar Al-Muzaffar	Rose J. Shah	IRCSP
CLB 4	Huwaida Dkaidk	Rose J. Shah	IRCSP
CLB 4	Yang Zhao	Rose J. Shah	IRCSP
CLB 5	Neelam Bhayana	Seema Tanwir	Muslim Comm. Services
CLB 5	Abeer Abu Taleb	Seema Tanwir	MCS
CLB 5	Nadeem Sarwar	Angela Amin	IRCSP
CLB 6+	Elizabeth Reji John	Rose J. Shah	IRCSP

The P/H/E Affiliate of TESL Ontario is waiting to receive clearance to publish the names of the remaining winners. When this information is received, the names will be added to the above list.

On behalf of the Executive of the P/H/E Affiliate of TESL Ontario, Denise Copland would like to offer grateful thanks first and foremost to all students who took part in the competition, to the supervising instructors and to the Program Mangers of the agencies who decided to take part in the competition.

All winning students will receive a \$25 Chapters voucher.

Denise Copland
Affiliate Director
April 15, 2007

Words from the Wise...

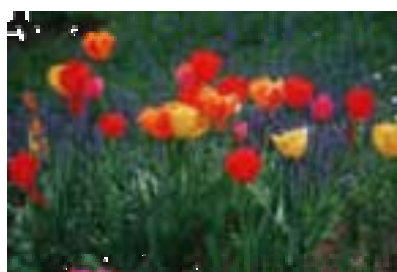
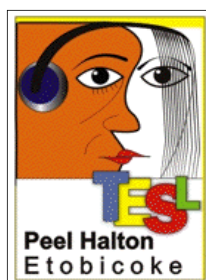
- To teach is to learn twice. - Joseph Joubert
- Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.- Henry Ford
- I hear, and I forget. I see, and I remember. I do, and I understand. –Chinese Proverb
- If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere. – Anonymous
- You can't direct the wind but you can adjust the sails. - Anonymous
- A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops. –Henry Adams
- To be able to practice five things everywhere under heaven constitutes perfect virtue ...gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness. - Confucius

Wacky Wednesday Workshop

On April 4, 2007, we held our first Wacky Wednesday Workshop at the Peel Adult Learning Centre. Participants had an opportunity to network, enjoy some refreshments and attend one of the two workshops being presented. The workshops were: QUICK-FIX 3: The Arabic Speaker by Denise Copland and Three Birds with One Stone by Andrew Taylor.

P/H/E Affiliate of TESL Ontario would like to thank the Peel Adult Learning Centre for allowing us to hold our professional development evening at their centre, the two presenters for giving us their valuable time, and last, but not least, all the members who registered and attended and made the PD night a success.

Our next Wacky Wednesday Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday April 2nd, 2008. Hope to see you there!!!



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SPRING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS FOR ESL AND LINC TEACHERS

When: Thursday May 17, 2007 4:30-8:30 p.m. (early registration deadline is Monday May 7, 2006)

Where: Adult Education Centre South, Peel DSB (100 Elm Dr. West, Mississauga)

What: For more information and early registration form, check the Affiliate's website (address is below) or the flyer circulating together with this newsletter OR phone Maria Ivanova at (905) 629-1873 ext. 234.

Cost (pre-registration only): TESL members (\$10), non-TESL members (\$20); on-site registration on the day of the workshops available for \$25

Informing and Training ESL

