

From the Editor



The workshop “How to Get Published in *Essential Teacher*” at the 2007 TESOL convention in Seattle attracted a full room of participants. People in attendance heard three newly published writers describe their experiences with *ET*'s extensive peer review process. Participants seemed surprised at how accessible the *ET* team is, with one describing the editorial process as “writer friendly.” On a discouraging note, the *ET* team was told that *Essential Teacher* may be cut from four to three issues per year. We are opposed to this change and encourage you to e-mail us your thoughts about it (et@tesol.org).

Many thanks to Andy Curtis, whose last In-Service column appears in this issue, and to Mercedes Rossetti, who has passed the Portal baton to Bill Perry. Bill is ready to look at your Portal manuscripts (perry@kumamoto-u.ac.jp). See the description in the Submission Guidelines at <http://www.tesol.org/et/>.

This issue contains a number of lessons for teachers, many of which will resonate long after you first read them. The lessons surface from both ESL and EFL perspectives. Some lessons come from individuals who have embraced struggle and have emerged empowered. Other lessons reveal great creativity and care in the classroom.

- **Communities of Practice:** Judie Haynes (Circle Time) presents practical ideas for guiding students to become proficient readers of nonfiction. Jim Hughes (Home Room) describes the stresses teachers endure when changes in the school principal also bring a change in principles. Debbie Zacarian (The Road Taken) illustrates how one teacher taught her students that breaking up isn't so hard to do. Is there a difference between teaching and learning English in ESL and EFL environments? Ke Xu (Multilingual Momentum) looks into the matter. Andy Curtis (In-Service) encourages you to consider the metaphors you use in internal dialogues about profession and practice. Dorothy Zemach (From A to Z) relates how visual learners can get burned in the world of text and gives a list of strategies for making lessons more visually accessible.
- **Out of the Box:** San Shwe Baw reflects on the difficult path from a background of poverty in Myanmar to a university teaching post. After Dennis Terdy caught a baseball in the face, he found that people's reactions to his mumbling speech were instructive for language acquisition research. The geographical displacement experienced by many TESOL members is detailed by Pat Colabucci, who describes his reentry into the U.S. job market after twenty years overseas. Finally, Chris Jenkins laments the unsupported position of many new ESOL teachers.
- **Portal:** Joseph Tomei and Richard Lavin encourage you to look before you leap into using wikis in class, supported by a range of practical advice. Holly Krech Thomas teaches her students the International Phonetic Alphabet in a fun way. Kellie Molden shows how creative teachers can be when they can teach only with feathers. Alice Lee explains why and how she contextualized a course book to make it reflect her students' reality.
- **References & Resources:** Charles Duquette reviews a resource book on pronunciation. Leslie Huff introduces an interactive CD-ROM designed for students to practice using English grammar. Chris Smith emphasizes the importance of sharing with colleagues by outlining a Web site for teachers working abroad at international schools. Lastly, Susan Kelly shows you how to make use of the tools available at SurveyMonkey.
- **Compleat Links:** Laura Menzella reveals how she helps second-grade students learn reading strategies. Gillian Grant shares the joys and challenges of teaching abroad before coming home again. Brian Tomlinson details ways to humanize, localize, and personalize textbooks to connect with students. Tracy Lin Edou, who taught in Gabon for ten years, describes the daily hardships her students endured in order to stay in school. Richard Firsten answers a query about the difference between gerunds and present participles and settles a bet between colleagues. Go online to read his column and solve the Brain Teaser.

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