



FORUM



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ETAI Mission Statement

ETAI (English Teachers' Association of Israel) is a grassroots, voluntary organization concerned with the professional development of its close to 1000 members. The membership list includes English teachers from all sectors and at all levels of education – elementary, junior high and secondary school, college and university.

ETAI offers professional support, information, forums for discussion and practical suggestions and resources to help English teachers deepen their expertise and grow in their careers through its local events, regional and national conferences and its journal *The ETAI Forum*.

The main driving force behind all the organization's activities is to encourage teachers to seek the appropriate avenues to keep up-to-date with the latest research in the field, materials, methodologies, technology, essential for their lives as English language teachers.

It is our job as a teachers' association to supply a variety of arenas to foster professionalism. These include organizing events throughout the country, keeping in touch with the English Inspectorate and the Ministry of Education and maintaining our connections with international English teachers' organizations as an affiliate of TESOL and an associate of IATEFL.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Sometimes we are working so hard and feeling so frustrated that we would like to revolutionize the whole education system. But as the saying goes, “a change is as good as a holiday” and small changes are enough to release the tensions and free our minds to look at and respond differently to the people, situations and events in our schools and classrooms.

When it comes to change in education, elected officials sit around the table discussing what they think needs to be changed and making decisions about how those changes can be achieved. When it comes to policy, teachers rarely get an invitation. So it is up to us to be the initiators, planners and participants.

The main change at ETAI this year has been our mini-conferences and workshops taking place all over the country from north to south bringing English teachers together for enriching, stimulating and practical professional development. As one teacher (Leah Wolf) said about the Yavne event: “Great speakers, great atmosphere, the book displays, great sandwiches and I really felt that we got the MAXI out of the mini!”

So without a revolution, we have created change which is crucial because “It is quite likely that the revolution needed in public education requires not perfecting a broken system but freeing up visionary educators to imagine and implement new models.” (Sarah Kass, “*Revolutionize education*”, Jerusalem Post, February 4, 2008)

We, the teachers in the field, need to focus on the importance of education and, by meeting at various events, put a face on the contribution of the many thousands of dedicated teachers who touch the lives of children daily. We are the ones who have the creative thinking skills and collaborative experiences to change each others classrooms and stretch our students. “Many kids can only go as far as their teachers will take them, and their teachers will take them only as far as they themselves are able.” (Sarah Kass, “*Revolutionize education*”, Jerusalem Post, February 4, 2008)

I hope that this year with ETAI has helped create some change for you. If so, I feel sure you will continue to benefit from our upcoming activities, especially the National Summer Conference with special guest speakers. If you haven't yet attended a local event this year, make a change and take advantage of whatever ETAI offers you and join us in our “mini-revolution” at our mini-events.

Nava Horovitz
Chair

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

This edition completes one volume of ETAI Forums that we have edited. So it has been a year, and what a year it has been! When we took this task upon ourselves, we didn't really know exactly what it entailed. Now we know. A great deal of time and effort goes in to editing the Forum, but a great deal of time and effort is also invested by all of you who write the articles published here. Without all your contributions, there would not be an ETAI Forum. Anne Rice, an American author of horror and fantasy stories, said: “To write something, you have to risk making a fool of yourself.” (<http://thinkexist.com/quotation>) Many of you have shared your experiences and wisdom, spent time and have taken a risk in exposing yourself to the scrutiny of an entire community of English teachers without making a fool of yourself. On the contrary, this community has been enriched by your professionalism. We would like to thank you on behalf of all ETAI members who enjoy your articles each time the Forum is published. And we hope that many other ETAI members will join those who write articles, take a risk, and contribute to the Forum.

Here's to you who have contributed to these three issues (in alphabetical order): Meir Abelson, Judy Astary, Linda Barron, Ora Baumgarten, Prof. Emily Budick, Jennifer Byk, Dr. Richard Curwin, Yakir Feldman, Shelly Ganiel, Rafael Gefen, Xavière Hassan, Regine Hoffman-Schwartz, Susan Holzman, Nava Horowitz, Valarie S. Jakar, Elinor Karsagi, James Kennard, Elizabeth Karvonen, Lea Kirshenberg, Eduardo Lina, Debbie Lifshitz, Esther Lucas, Phyllis Oded, Joan Orkin, Sue Osher, Debi Partouche, Adele Raemer, Naomi Roffman, Gilad Shapira, Aviva Shapiro, Iris Shenkman, Barry Silverberg, Pete Smith, Marna Snyder, Prof. Ellen Spolsky, Jennifer Sternlicht, Beverley Stock, Maxine Tsvaigrach, Penny Ur, Coby Wilner, Miri Yochana, David Young, Shoshana Avrahami Young and Ruthie Zimberg.

We would also like to thank past editors of the Forum whose advice has been indispensable: Judy Yaron, Margaret Porat, Batya Lederfein and Susan Holzman. Thank you to Eric Cohen Books for laying out the ETAI FORUM. Thank you also to Marna Snyder, ETAI office manager, for your help and support.

Michele Ben and Amanda Caplan, Co-Editors

Susan Holzman – Recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award 2007 Winter Conference, Kaye College, Beersheva

Nava Horowitz (*horovm@netvision.net.il*)

Susan has been a member of the ETAI National Executive Committee for 20 years or more. As a member of this committee she acted for many years as Editor of the Forum where her input and initiatives shaped the important document we have showcasing ETAI today.

Susan was the strength behind the publishers' exhibitions at many a conference where her organizational skills and hard work were invaluable.

During her five years as Chair of ETAI, Susan worked tirelessly for the benefit of the association and contributed generously of her time and energy.

Susan has represented ETAI at countless IATEFL conferences in England and always made our voice heard at the Associates Day preceding the conferences.

At present, Susan is acting as outgoing-Chair and has made herself available through meetings and emails to assist the current Chair, Nava Horowitz and incoming-Chair, Penny Ur in numerous consultations and decision-making situations.

Susan Holzman is, indeed, a very worthy recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award.



David Lloyd – Recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award 2007 Winter Conference, Kaye College, Beersheva

Amanda Caplan (*amandacaplan@gmail.com*)



At the Beer Sheva conference David Lloyd was awarded a life time achievement award for managing the ETNI (English Teachers' Network in Israel) site and its mailing list. ETNI was set up by David Lloyd in 1997. Its aim is to provide professional support for English teachers and to help teachers to use the Internet in their classrooms.

In an article about ETNI published by the Jerusalem Post on 16.5.2002, Maxine Dorot refers to ETNI as an angel for English teachers in Israel. The dictionary defines 'angel' as a 'Divine messenger or a representation of such in human form.' This definition was written before the Internet became part of our daily lives, but ETNI is indeed a representation of something from beyond the real world in virtual reality. The messages that appear on ETNI do not come from a 'Divine messenger',

but rather from flesh and blood teachers like ourselves and that is why Maxine's praise is so appropriate. And this is exactly why ETNI is so useful and important. In our classrooms and schools we may often feel isolated from other English teachers, especially if we work on a small team. With my ETNI mail waiting for me every day upon returning from school, I know that the problems that I must deal with daily are not mine alone. There are many teachers, many more experienced and better than I, out there struggling with the same issues. This support that exists in virtual reality and is always available is much cheaper and more convenient than therapy!

All in all, I'm proud to be part of ETNI and feel that David's life achievement award is ETAI's sincere gesture of recognition for all the work he's done and continues to do.

WHAT HAS ETAI DONE FOR YOU LATELY?

Marna Snyder (*etaioffice@gmail.com*)

Since the ETAI national conference in Jerusalem, Summer 2007, there have been numerous activities around the country – north, south and center – planned and executed by the hardworking volunteers of ETAI.

In the far north alone, we've held 3 mini-conferences organized by Fran Sokel, each one larger and more successful than the previous one. On January 24th, no fewer than 100 participants attended the mini-conference held in Maghar.

In the south, Beer Sheva residents and others were treated to a free (for ETAI members) concert by Tommy Sands, the famed Irish folksinger, his son and daughter. This was organized by Laurie Ornstein and Mitzi Geffen. And of course, the traditional Chanuka conference in Beer Sheva, organized by Riva Levenchuck and Inessa Roe, in early December just gets bigger and better every year!

No less an achievement was the first-ever mini-conference in Eilat, held in January and organized by Rose Whitman, with over 40 participants attending. At last those in the "far south" feel that they've been included on ETAI's agenda!

In the center of the country, a wonderful mini-conference was held in Kfar Saba, organized by Ahuva Kellman and Elaine Alcalay, in October, and hard on its heels was a very successful mini-conference in Azor, organized by Laura Shashua, in November, and that despite the teachers' strike! More recently, another mini-conference was held in Yavneh, organized by Amanda Caplan and Michele Ben, in February, and participants extolled it as one of the best events they had attended. To quote one participant, "I really felt that we got the MAXI out of the mini!"

In addition to the conferences, ETAI, together with the British Council, has sponsored five workshops in different areas on the topic, "The Use of Film in the Classroom". These were hands-on seminars, limited to 30 participants, in which teachers received materials (worksheets and DVD's) enabling them to build lessons around the film clips. The first workshop was held in January in Beit Safafa (east Jerusalem), and the participants had very enthusiastic responses. The other workshops took place in March in the following locales: Jerusalem, Ashdod, Azor/ Holon, and Kfar Saba. These workshops were all free to ETAI members.

If you know someone who would like to become a member of ETAI, please mention that we've been offering a special reduction on membership rates since the summer. At the moment, if a teacher joins ETAI at a mini event dues is only 120 NIS for the year. Urge your friends and colleagues to take advantage of this low rate, and to contact me at the office as soon as possible, before this offer ends.

If you are currently an ETAI member, please check to see when your membership expires. If you are unsure about it, you can ask me at the office. Remember that it takes money to implement all of these activities, wherever they may be!

Last but certainly not least, we have one more special event coming up soon: our ETAI spring conference in Haifa on April 14th. Be sure to mark down the date on your calendar! All in all, ETAI has provided a plethora of activities for its members in the past months. What has ETAI done for you lately? Just take a look!

With warm wishes,
Marna Snyder

ETAI Membership Dues

Members	175 NIS
Full-time students*	120 NIS
New immigrants / New teachers	120 NIS
Retirees	120 NIS / 100 NIS**
Overseas members	250 NIS

*must present a valid student ID card

**a special reduction given to retirees who bring in a new member

New member / Membership renewal form can be downloaded from the ETAI site:

<http://www.etni.org.il/etai/dues.html>.

LEVINSKY COLLEGE STUDENTS WENT TO ETAI CONFERENCE IN BEERSHEVA

Iris Shenkman (*iris1648@yahoo.com*)

We teach our students methodology, subject matter and a potpourri of other courses.

They do their student teaching, trying hard to taste what being in the classroom is all about. We give them feedback and they reflect. We require that they read professional articles and write academic papers in the quest to make them more knowledgeable and novice researchers.

But this year on Thursday December 6th, Levinsky College of Education gave 40 students much more. Under the initiative of Dr. Carol Goldfus, Dr. Lea Kirshenberg and Iris Shenkman the 2nd and 3rd year English majors from the elementary school track and 1st, 2nd and 3rd year English majors from the Junior High School division plus a few "hasava" students were given the opportunity to experience a conference for English teachers, which took place at Kaye College in Beersheba.

It was 7:30 on a chilly, rainy morning when the chartered bus left the college and the students began their introduction to a total ENGLISH DAY. The atmosphere in the bus was warm and cozy. Dr Lea Kirshenberg and I were the teachers on board. We explained to the students about ETAI, the English Teachers' Association in Israel, which sponsors conferences, gives local workshops, publishes the ETAI Forum and contributes to ETNI (the English teachers' website).

Several copies of the conference program were downloaded so that the students could choose the two presentations they would attend, in addition to the opening and closing plenaries. During the bus ride we discussed the program and answered students' queries.

In order to cover as many different presentations as possible, no more than three students were supposed to attend any one specific session. The students were encouraged to choose a topic of real interest to them, regardless of what their best friend wanted to hear or whether it was designated for elementary school teachers or teacher trainers. They were also asked to bring all the handouts to class to share with their peers. They were told that they would report on what they had heard and learned.

The students paid a token 10 NIS for registration, and received a conference packet with pen, paper, conference information, a voucher for a sandwich and drink, and other material. As common procedure at any conference the students were given name tags to wear throughout the

day in order to enter presentations. The conference took place on the second day of Hanukah when teachers are on vacation. Literally hundreds of teachers participated. They came from the four corners of our tiny country, and many had to travel up to three hours to arrive. The excellent reputation of ETAI conferences and fond memories of conferences past, spawn excitement and eagerness to attend.

The plenary session from 10:00 to 12:00 included brief greetings in English from:

Dr. Gila Katsir, Vice President of Kaye Academic College of Education

Ms. Nava Horowitz, ETAI Chairperson

Ms. Zeba Reyazzuddin, Deputy Cultural Attache, Public Affairs Office, Embassy of the United States of America

Dr. Inessa Roe, Chair, English Department, Kaye Academic College of Education.

The guest lecturers were:

Dr. Judy Steiner, Chief Inspector for English Language Education, Ministry of Education who spoke about "Imprints".

Jennifer Sternlicht, a teacher and teacher trainer from the Israel Arts and Sciences Academy in Jerusalem who dynamically spoke about "Teaching to a captive audience: using negotiation skills to rethink the classroom".

David Lloyd, founder of ETNI – A virtual English Teachers' Network: for Teachers, by Teachers. He explained that today, ETNI and ETAI complement each other. ETNI provides the virtual framework for a daily exchange of ideas, and ETAI continues to provide the physical environment in which teachers come together at conferences and workshops and learn from each other. Hopefully, through ETAI, more and more teachers will learn about the ETNI virtual community and take an active part, and vice versa.

The morning and afternoon sessions included presentations, such as:

"Multicultural Communication between Jews and Arabs in English Teacher Training"

"Let's Sit for a Spell: the History of Spelling"

"Improving Students' Oral Proficiency"

"Summer Magic? A program for elementary school children"

"24 Unique Visual and Phonetic Lessons to Teach Beginning Reading"

"Add Some Drama to Your Teaching-why and how"

"Reading Comprehension and Writing Tasks"

The above are just a few of the many interesting presentations and we have enjoyed hearing the students' reports and reactions in class.

The closing plenary session was graced by folk singer, Laurie Ornstein who thrilled us with an original song about teachers. The conference ended with Prof. Penny Ur who, in "Variations on a Theme," investigated textbook exercises and explored ways to do them differently.

The ambiance of Hanukah was felt with gratis coffee and doughnuts.

The book exhibit housed tens of publishers and companies some of whom gave samples to the participants. The enormous variety of textbooks, authentic literature, big books, small books, games, CDs and DVDs kept

the students enthralled. They were thrilled with their purchases and spent a major part of the trip home showing them to each other. The chatting continued even though they were quite exhausted. The comments and questions made it quite obvious that the students had had a marvelous social and learning experience. The remark repeated over and over again was: "I AM SO GLAD THAT I CAME. I FELT LIKE A REAL TEACHER".

Thank you Levinsky College of Education for giving our students this memorable opportunity. Many thanks to ETA I for a superb conference and a job well done. I am extremely satisfied with the conference, the day and our students. I highly recommend other colleges do the same. Their students will never forget it.

A WARM GLOW FROM THE BEER SHEVA CONFERENCE

Marna Snyder (etaioffice@gmail.com)

As the saying goes, "You had to be there..." All those who came to the ETA I Winter Conference in Beer Sheva on December 6th left with a very satisfied feeling. There were even a number of participants who traveled to the conference by bus and train from the north, and they declared it a wonderful experience. Furthermore, ETA I helped people with their travel arrangements by subsidizing the cost of two buses to the conference, one from Ra'anana – Tel Aviv, and the other from Jerusalem.

So what exactly took place in Beer Sheva? First of all, the site of the conference, Kaye Academic College of Education, is always an extremely user-friendly venue. The College provided many special touches – flowers, drinks and cookies – which gave a warm, homey feeling to the proceedings. There were also Hanukka doughnuts, courtesy of the publishers, in honor of the holiday.

The participants arrived, eager and enthusiastic, many of them students from the nearby (and not so near) colleges. They were greeted, first by Dr. Judy Steiner, who spoke on the topic, "Imprints", and then by our very own Jennifer Sternlicht, a teacher and teacher trainer from Jerusalem, whose topic, "Teaching to a Captive Audience: Using Negotiation Skills to Rethink the Classroom," focused on ways to bring out the best in

both teachers and students.

The "Lifetime Achievement Awards" were presented to David Lloyd, founder of the ETNI website, and Dr. Susan Holzman, our past ETA I chair (see separate article). Then the participants went off to the sessions they chose, ranging from presentations on the history of spelling to Shel Silverstein's poetry, from using drama to teaching stories, from songwriting for "dummies" to learning to like literature, and on and on. There were many tantalizing choices and new presenters. The final plenary session was delivered by Penny Ur, always a crowd-pleaser, on the topic, "Variations on a Theme", exploring ways to do textbook exercises differently.

All in all, as Nava Horovitz so aptly put it, the Beer Sheva Conference was best described with superlatives: "It was the biggest, with over 400 participants. It was the liveliest, thanks to the participation of many young college students. It was the brightest, being a beacon of light during a very difficult period in many teachers' lives. It was the tastiest, thanks to the food sponsored by the publishers. And, of course, it was most beautifully organized and hosted by our most gracious conveners, Riva Levenchuk and Inessa Roe." Many thanks to the conference organizers for providing a very special event, a day to be remembered!

Error correction: Winter 2007 edition of the ETA I Forum

Please note: On page 35 the title of Professor Ellen Spolsky's article should read: "Teaching the Conflicts in Literature by Acknowledging Our Own Conflicts" and not "...Your Own Conflicts" as is printed.

We apologize for the error.

Michele Ben and Amanda Caplan, Forum co-editors

Institutional Membership

As stated in the ETAI mission statement, our aim is to promote the professional development of teachers of English in Israel and to provide a range of services for this aim to be achieved.

In addition to other initiatives taken by ETAI recently, we have decided to introduce Institutional Membership. We know that many English teachers are interested in being members of ETAI but find the expense burdensome. We feel that since pupils, schools and principals benefit directly from teachers' professional development, principals should be asked to fund their teachers' membership in ETAI. Institutional Membership also gives teachers who have not previously been involved in ETAI the opportunity to do so through their school.

Please show this letter and the registration form overleaf to the principal of your school and encourage him / her to take advantage of this worthwhile offer. You, your colleagues and your school have much to gain from Institutional membership in ETAI.

English Teachers' Association of Israel - **ETAI** - **אגודת המורים לאנגלית בישראל**
 Incorporating ISRAATESOL **رابطة المعلمين لتعليم اللغة الانكليزية في إسرائيل**
 ETAI is an Associate of IATEFL and an Affiliate Member of TESOL
 58-013-925-5 דס" עסותה 02-5001851 .0קפ 02-5001844 .טל 91076 7663 ירושלים

חשון תשס"ח

לכבוד מנהל/ת בית הספר,

הנדון: חברות בית ספרית באגודת המורים לאנגלית בישראל.

אנו פונים אליך כדי להציג את הארגון שלנו - אגודת המורים לאנגלית בישראל English Teachers' Association of Israel (ETAI) שמטרתה היא פיתוח פרופסיונלי של המורים לאנגלית בכל שכבות הלימוד ובכל המגזרים וכן שיפור רמת ההישגים של התלמידים הלומדים אנגלית.

אנו מארגנים ימי עיון אזוריים במשך שנת הלימודים בחיפה, תל אביב ובאר שבע, וכנס ארצי שנתי בירושלים בקיץ. אחת לארבע שנים כנס זה הוא כנס בין לאומי. כמו כן, שלש פעמים בשנה, ETAI מוציאה לאור עלון שתוכנו מאמרים, משאבים ורעיונות מעשיים לכיתה המוצגים על ידי מורים מנוסים בתחום הוראת האנגלית בבתי ספר הלכה למעשה. האגודה עומדת בקשר תמידי עם הפיקוח על הוראת אנגלית במשרד החינוך, ועם המוציאים לאור של ספרי לימוד באנגלית. כמו כן קיימים קשרים הדוקים עם הארגונים הבינלאומיים המקבילים של המורים לאנגלית.

עם העצמת הנהלת בתי הספר לדרכן ולדאוג להתפתחות המקצועית של מוריו, והרצון לשפר את ההשגים באנגלית של תלמידים/ות, אנו פונים אליך בהצעה וביוזמה חדשה כדלקמן:

חברות בית ספרית באגודת ETAI, שתכלול:

- השתתפות בימי עיון אזוריים והשתתפות בכנס הארצי בקיץ במחיר מופחת.
- קבלת עותק או מספר עותקים של העלון ישירות לבית הספר.
- קבלת מידע והודעות הקשורים לפעילות האגודה ישירות לבית הספר.

דמי חברות שנתית רגילה	175 ש"ח
דמי חברות שנתית ל-2 מורים	140 ש"ח למורה
דמי חברות שנתית ליותר מ-7 מורים	130 ש"ח למורה

מצ"ב טופס הצטרפות בית ספרית. מלאו אותו ושלחו למשרדינו עם התשלום המתאים. לשאלות והבהרות נא לפנות למשרדנו בטלפון (02-5001844), פקס (02-5001851) או דואר אלקטרוני (etaioffice@gmail.com).

אנו ב ETAI מעוניינים לעודד מורים לאנגלית להצטרף לארגון ולהופכם לחלק מקהילת המורים לאנגלית העוסקת בפיתוח מקצועי. אנו מקווים שגם אתה/את כמנהל/ת ב"ס רואה את חשיבות הצטרפות בית ספרך וצוות המורים לאנגלית לפעילות שלנו.

בברכה,

נוה הורוביץ, יושבת ראש ETAI

טופס חברות בית-ספרית ב-ETAI

פרטי בית הספר:

שם בית הספר: _____ יסודי / חט"ב / תיכון
 כתובת: _____ טלפון: _____
 פקס: _____ דוא"ל: _____
 שם המנהל/ת: _____
 שם הרכז/ת להוראת אנגלית: _____

מידע על מחירי הצטרפות:

דמי חברות שנתית רגילה	175 ₪	
דמי חברות שנתית ל-2-7 מורים	140 ₪ למורה	20% הנחה
דמי חברות שנתית ליותר מ-7 מורים	130 ₪ למורה	25% הנחה

פרטי הצטרפות:

	שם המורה	טלפון	דוא"ל		שם המורה	טלפון	דוא"ל
1.				6.			
2.				7.			
3.				8.			
4.				9.			
5.				10.			

סה"כ מצטרפים: _____ סה"כ לתשלום: _____ ₪.

הערות:

A LITTLE HOOPLA AND OTHER IDEAS FOR MOTIVATING CHILDREN

Dr. Richard Curwin (www.rickcurwin.net)

Once students have developed positive attitudes about the school or classroom, we need to design lessons that involve, stimulate, excite, illuminate and create a desire to learn. Imagine reading a newspaper with television in the background. All of a sudden you hear a news item or story that compels you to pay attention. Great lessons compel students to pay attention in the same way.

When students are actively engaged, challenged and have their natural sense of curiosity tweaked, motivation is greatly enhanced. The following twenty strategies are designed to make lessons come alive. Some of these activities will be familiar to you, others will be new.

1. Openings

If you live with other people, how long does it take you to discover they are in a bad mood: hours, minutes, or seconds? Students come into classrooms and determine whether they will like the class or not in about the same time. In elementary grades this applies each time you change the lesson. The first five minutes of instruction can determine the attitude of students, especially troubled ones, for the remainder of the class. Your opening works best when it gets students to think, "Today's going to be good."

I recommend you avoid opening classes with any of the following activities within the first five minutes:

1. Take attendance
2. Hand out anything
3. Collect anything
4. Get yourself organized
5. Say, "OK class; open your books to page ---." This means go to sleep.

If any of these activities must be done, have a student do them while you start the lesson. My goal is for two to three classes/lessons a week to start with unusual, creative or fun activities designed for developing positive attitudes. Here are a few favorites:

Songs:

Divide the class into small groups and assign each group to make a list of the members' favorite songs. Ask them to connect in some way the song title with the topic to be learned. Kids are amazing at what they come up with, and connecting something they love with something to be learned is a very positive way to begin.

Here's an example: A science lesson (astronomy)

Students' songs

- Stairway to Heaven
- I Can See For Miles
- The Night Has a Thousand Eyes
- Blinded By The Light
- So Far Away
- I'll follow the Sun

A way to do this activity in an English language lesson is to tell the students in advance what the topic is and have them think of songs to match.

Here are examples:

- Every Breath you Take – Biology
- Purple Haze – Art
- Born in the U.S.A. – Social Studies
- Running on Empty – Driver Education
- Wish You Were Here – Geography
- What's Going On? – Current Events, Environmental Studies
- Three times A Lady – Math
- The Way We Were – History

Puzzles (creating difficult choices):

Puzzles allow students to hear a compelling story and answer a difficult question at the end. Then students are asked to compare their real life behavior with their answer and see if they match. This process leads to great discussion.

For example, I use this puzzle in seminars with great success. It has many possible discussion points and relates directly to the content of this book. "If you struggled greatly to climb a mountain and felt great pride in achieving the goal (reaching the top) and then discovered an escalator on the other side of the mountain, would you tell a friend who wanted to climb the same mountain about the escalator? Why or why not?"¹ Then I ask "Which student is more valued, the one who tries hard and climbs halfway up the mountain or the one who gets to the top by using the escalator? The final question is who gets an "A", a student who tries hard and gets 50% or one who doesn't try at all but gets a 95%?"

Similar puzzles make great openings for students when they relate to your upcoming content.

2. Legitimize answers

When students give wrong answers, Madeline Hunter used to advise giving credit to the part that was right before correcting it.

Teacher: Who was the first president of the United States?

Student: Abraham Lincoln.

Teacher: You're right that he was a president, but he wasn't the first.

Students are more encouraged to get involved when their answers are appreciated. I do feel there are limits to legitimizing answers, however. If a student in the above example answered, "Mick Jagger," I wouldn't say "He was male as all presidents were." I might instead make a joke and insert a factoid like, "he'd probably get the most votes if he could run but a British citizen cannot be President. Does anyone have an opinion about that law?" The more we value and appreciate students' answers, the more likely every student will take the chance to try to answer in class.

3. Compelling questions

Great questions drive great lessons. A great question gets under the students' skin so that they are internally compelled by curiosity to find the answer. Have you ever forgotten the name of a song and made yourself crazy trying to remember it? Great questions create the same feeling in students. Here is a sample from various content areas that teachers have shared with me.

Middle school math: What does Martin Luther King have in common with Algebra?

Answer: They both are concerned with equality

High School Grammar: Do nouns have sex?

Answer: Yes, that's where plurals come from.

Upper level study of the pilgrims: Is there anything your parents could ever do to you that would make you run away from home?

Elementary art: If humans had to be a color other than any color they already are, what color would you choose? Why? Draw some people of this color.

Math, all levels: How can a video game designed for two players be played by four?

High School English: If Hamlet was a television sitcom, what would be a better name for it?

Elementary English: What is the best name for a book about your life?

4. Students create questions

Students are great at thinking of their own compelling questions about the subject. After giving them examples of questions of your own, ask them to brainstorm as many questions they can in

a controlled time span. Ten minutes usually works well. Let students answer questions other than their own in discussion or in groups.

5. Questions before answers

In life outside school, we do not seek answers until we have questions. When we buy a new car we don't read the instruction book that comes in the glove compartment before we drive out of the lot. However, if we have a question about setting the clock, we go to the manual for assistance. Much of our need for information is driven by unanswered questions.

School typically uses the opposite model. We give students information (answers) and then ask them questions in the form of discussion, quizzes and tests. Motivation is greatly enhanced when lessons begin with compelling questions that students need to answer themselves.

6. Offering choices

Choice offers students control and a feeling of increased possibility of success. Tests, classroom assignments, group tasks and discussion points can all include opportunities for choices. Tests, for example can ask students to pick five out of ten questions. Be sure that the number of choices offers real options. Answering 14 out of 15 is too small a margin. A third to a half of the questions is appropriate.

To ensure that students choose a variety of questions, set up a "two from section A, two from section B" format. One great side effect of guessing is that students usually answer all questions to help them figure out which are the best and easiest choices for them.

7. Guessing

Everyone likes to guess. It's fun. Most school subjects have their own name for guessing. Math uses "estimate", science uses "hypothesize" and literature uses "foreshadowing". Once a student has made a guess, they naturally want to know if they are correct. Have you ever taken a magazine quiz and not looked at the upside down answers to compare them with your own? Learning happens when students check their answers with the correct ones.

When students answer a class question with a shrug, "I don't know", ask for a guess.

Here is an example of what guessing might sound like in a class. "On this list of questions about presidents, don't do any work, don't use your book. Just guess. Then we'll see how many you guessed right."

8. Planning

Planning is a key component for developing responsibility and is closely linked to motivation. At the beginning of a new concept, when figuring out how to complete assignments or doing long term projects, planning is a very useful tool. When students develop their own plans, they are more likely to form commitment. Plans work best when they are detailed and specific. Note the following examples:

- I will finish on time. Or
- Check the internet for a list of resources; Take careful notes; Make an interim list of useful sources.

Another fun use of planning is for students to develop imaginary plans for people they are studying. "What do you think the best plan would be for:"

- Holden Caulfield
- Benjamin Franklin
- Madame Curie
- Pablo Picasso

9. Concreteness²

Students are more motivated when they know how long an assignment will last, especially if it is a routine task. Tell them that we will work on spelling from 9:15 to 9:45 and stick to the schedule. If you have ever gone to a dinner followed by a talk and the speaker went over the scheduled talk time, you understand how unmotivating it becomes. Airport delays when dragged out are much worse than knowing the real time the delay will be regardless of how long it is. Children feel the same way about lessons.

10. Challenge²

Challenge is a universal motivator. Everyone loves a good challenge. The right challenge has the potential to reach any student, even those who feel the most hopeless. There two factors in finding the right challenge.

• Context

The student must care about the challenge for it to be influential. Students who don't care about winning will not respond to a game challenge. Finding the right context requires a minimum of investigation.

• Level

If the challenge is too easy, it will fail for three reasons. One, it will be boring. Two, there is no feeling of success if the challenge is met. Three, failure is humiliating. Never tell a student to try

because it is easy. That type of encouragement will fail for many students.

If the challenge is too difficult, it will also fail. We cannot ask students to do what is not possible for them. I have heard many teachers tell students to try harder at something beyond them. Not only is this defeating but inherently unfair.

Students need to know the task is difficult but attainable with effort. Thus, there is little shame for failure but great pride for success.

Challenge is a powerful motivator. Imagine you are about to play a game or compete in a contest. You can choose between two opponents; one always has beaten you in the past, the other you have beaten every time. Which would you pick? Most people choose the former because the easy one is boring and risks shame with a loss. But imagine your pride if you beat the former. Have you ever finally beaten an older sibling or parent for the first time? It evokes true joy.

Most challenges must be individualized to each student's ability. There are many commercial individual instructional programs available to aid the teacher. Here is an example of how to create your own. Let's use basic math as a context although every subject can use this format.

Design a worksheet where the exercises increase in difficulty from top to bottom. The first exercises are very simple while the last might be quite complex. Assign the students to choose what exercise they can reach with a chosen number of errors in a specified length of time. Each pupil decides how much to do and how many errors to allow in order for himself to succeed.

Do not grade or record the results. A little hoopla can make the activity more fun.

At first many students choose easy goals, but over time the boredom of easy and the fact that there is no penalty for not reaching their goal creates a need for a more stimulating challenge.

11. Self evaluation²

When it comes to drills, homework and other routine tasks, motivation and learning increases when students correct and evaluate their own work. Typically these types of assignments are best not graded or recorded. Self evaluation is especially is especially effective when students choose their own level of challenge.

12. Human bodies and machines

My friend Larry Quinsland, used to teach biology to hearing impaired students. They could not grasp the way blood flowed through the body and brought oxygen to various organs. He solved the problem by using students to form the cardiovascular system, using four for each section of the heart, two others for the lungs and other students for various other organs. Students then walked through the system exchanging red cards for blue to simulate the way oxygen is exchanged in the body.

The same technique can be used for any body function or machine that might be taught in your class.

13. Rankings

Sidney B. Simon³ taught me the power of ranking. He suggested offering three alternatives and asking the students to rank them from best to worst. Some of my favorites that he suggested are:

If you could choose only one profession, rank the following and tell why.

1. Collector at a toll booth
2. Mountain climber
3. Librarian

What would be your favorite way to spend Thanksgiving?

1. The whole family eats a pizza together.
2. A great turkey dinner with all the trimmings without mom.
3. The family eats together, having the best meal imaginable. After dinner the family watches football while mom cleans up by herself.

If none of these choices appeal to you, what would be your ideal Thanksgiving?

If you had bad breath and one of your friends noticed it, which would you prefer him to do?

1. Ignore it.
2. Hint. Leave a bottle of Scope (mouthwash) in your locker or cubby.
3. Tell you directly to do something about it.

Have you ever done to a friend with bad breath the selection you chose? Are there other choices?

Rankings work well when integrated into your content. The possibilities are endless. Note the following content related examples;

1. Lower level English: What would be more fun to be:
 - A. A noun
 - B. A verb
 - C. An adjective

2. Upper level Math: Which number of dollars would you prefer?
 - A. the square root of 1500
 - B. 232
 - C. 34×82
3. Middle school social studies: Who is the biggest hero?
 - A. Thomas Edison
 - B. Benjamin Franklin
 - C. George Washington Carver

Students are very adept at inventing their own rankings for the rest of the class.

14. Advertisements

Creating an advertisement is fun. I especially like asking students in small groups to develop an ad for what they are about to study or for review. It makes a great introductory activity, but can be effective as a concluding one as well. When students develop a positive ad for the content, they begin with a positive attitude about it. Imagine the ads for all the ways fractions are used, Dickens, the periodic chart of elements or World War II. A good project can take between an hour to a week. An ad may be between three to seven minutes. The following are elements that can go into an ad:

- A. A poster
- B. A jingle
- C. A skit
- D. Video
- E. Computer graphics (i.e. PowerPoint)

They can be based on the following types of ads. You might need to teach students how these ads work:

- Persuasion: Convince the audience that your product is best.
- Celebrity endorsements: have a celebrity sell the product.
- Bandwagon: everybody uses it.
- Scientific slant: four out of five doctors say they use it themselves.
- Everyday people: Harry and Sarah from Nebraska love it and you will, too.
- Fast and easy: No product is faster or easier.
- Long lasting: It lasts all day and all night.
- Used anywhere: It can be used in the desert or on a mountain.
- Better than competitor: Take the challenge. Try both and compare.

All students can participate in the development and presentation of the ads. Tasks can be determined by

interest or ability. Some are better at singing and others at creating artwork. Advertisements make for great fun and energy within the class. It will become of your students' favorite activities.

15. Quiz shows

Students love to play quiz shows, complete with teams, scores and hoopla. Quiz shows based on television formats make for excellent review and reinforcement. Family Feud and Jeopardy make great formats. I have two pet peeves about quiz shows that should be modified when used for purposes of learning at school.

- A. Elimination for wrong answers
Spelling bees eliminate the worst spellers who need the most practice and give the best spellers more opportunity to improve. Take care not to exclude those that need the most practice.
- B. Boys against the girls. My seventh grade teacher had spelling bees, boys against the girls, and I am among the world's worst spellers. It hurts self concept for a seventh grader to continually hear he should get a sex change after he cost the boys a chance to win time after time.

Remember to stress the fun of playing rather than who wins although friendly competition can enhance interest. I strongly advise no actual prize for the winning group. Mock points for winning that don't really mean anything except for momentary "bragging rights" is the way to go. If it's not fun, it's not motivating.

16. Debate the opposite

Offer students an opinion question, either individually or in groups. Ask the students to write three or four reasons why they think their opinion is right. Then ask them to argue the opposite point of view. Try to choose issues that are both related to your content and related to something of high interest to the student.

17. Rotate answers

Class discussion usually turns into a series of one on one's with the teacher and a student. Once a student is called on, the others tend to stop thinking. To minimize this phenomenon, call on others to comment on the previous student's answer or comment. "Do you agree?" "Can you add more?" "What did he mean by that?" "What other possibilities are there?" "Ask him a question about what he just said." Be sure to be relentless in calling on the unmotivated students without embarrassing or harassing them. Let them know that they are part of the class and to

expect to participate.

18. Connect to hobbies

The more that content is connected to activities the students love to do, the more likely they will like that content. Begin by collecting a list of favorite home activities and hobbies. Pick five or six from the class that do not include sex or drugs and develop questions about those activities that connect to the lesson. Ask the students to choose which questions to answer either individually or in groups.

19. Write songs

Students love to write songs in the genre of their choice. Songs about curriculum topics are a great way to create energy and excitement about study topics. Even some of the most reluctant learners love this activity. Listening to students sing their songs is great fun.

20. Make sure all students hear

I have observed thousands of classes at all levels and I have found a serious problem common to most of them. When teachers discuss or talk with students they hear each other easily. Other students can hear the teacher but have trouble hearing the student. Those that can't hear tend to stop paying attention. It is like a televised press conference when the viewer can hear the answers but not the questions. To solve this problem, ask the students to speak up or repeat the student response loud enough for all to hear. Some teachers use small microphones to pass between students to solve this problem. In any case, be sure to pay attention to this small detail with major consequences.

Adapted from Motivating Children Left Behind, Richard Curwin 2006.

¹ I learned this puzzle from my friend Dr. Dwight Allen, the former dean of the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts.

² These strategies come from Csikszentimihalyi, M. Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience. New York: Harper and Row, 1990.

³ Sidney B. Simon of the University of Massachusetts was one of the original creators of Values Clarification and the Values Realization movement.

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NEGOTIATING CHANGE INSIDE THE CLASSROOM & OUT

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**WARNING: This article is not a light read; it is a simulation of a workshop.
Active ingredients: 60% need 40% desire / Tools: paper and pencil**

We all have aspects of our professional lives we wish were different. This article advances the skills necessary to create change, rather than accepting things the way they are.

There are negotiation skills used by professionals to initiate change successfully in situations of conflict whether those conflicts take place between family members, in labor disputes, or in the political sphere. I believe those same skills can be effective classroom management strategies. Although originally I practiced sustaining conflicts as a lawyer, far more impressionable has been the shift to using conflict resolution strategies as a teacher and throughout the very humbling experience of parenting.

The WH- questions of Conflict Resolution Skills

What constitutes conflict?

When we enthusiastically advance our agendas in the classroom and are met with passivity, outright refusal and tension, we instinctively identify the situation as conflict. So often, we engage in power struggles that reduce our role from educator to disciplinarian. However, it is not conflict that makes the classroom experience negative. Rather, it is our inability to handle conflict correctly, which creates our negative attitude towards it. Given training in conflict strategies, we could look forward to the opportunities the classroom provides as a training ground for making progress on issues of importance.

First, list the conflicts that you face in a day. Identify the areas over which you feel you have the least control. Mark the conflicts which most affect your emotional health. Now you should focus only on the conflicts which have to do with your professional life. Narrow down the list further, by underlining those conflicts which occur **inside your classroom**. It is important to make a broad list, which you narrow down, step-by-step. By doing so, you can both become aware of how often you feel conflict and be able to assertively identify, face and change situations.

Now, categorize and broaden the conflicts which have to do with your classes. List the battles you engage in with your students that take the joy out of teaching. List your frustrations. Picture each of your classrooms separately. Do you find a common factor which follows you through the day, weakening your ability to feel respected and appreciated at work?

Who are the people with whom we conflict?

Usually, when we are in a struggle with others, we focus on what makes us different from them. We state positions as opponents. Once positions have been stated, there is usually little substantive progress. Our emotions begin to take over as we become more and more committed to arguing our position and digging into it (Fisher and Ury, 1991: 4-8). Since each party to the conflict is following the same pattern, it often feels as if we are digging ourselves into holes which isolate us from one another. Our conflicts grow and feel insurmountable, as we distance ourselves from the very environment in which we had idealistically hoped to build a classroom community.

Generating change begins first and foremost with a dramatic shift in perspective. Rather than focusing on how different we are from our students and how few values we share, we must focus on the fact that what we share for most of our daylight hours is the classroom.

To make real and lasting changes in the classroom, we need to recognize that we have some interests in common with our students and some in which we differ. Students, even when expressing hostility are not our “enemies” but rather our “partners” in the learning process. While both teachers and students implicitly want to feel that the hours spent in the classroom are memorable, neither walks into the classroom aware that this is a valuable goal which is more important than the narrow aims of a specific lesson plan.

Do not accept that the teacher’s role is to transmit a narrow set of facts determined by the curriculum; our role is to be problem solvers, to demonstrate what it means to be committed to a lifetime of learning, curiosity and growth.

By reviewing and reflecting on each encounter to improve our strategies, we are truly exploiting every “failure” as a building block. Our experiences in dealing with these conflicts are the intrinsic components of what ultimately becomes our long-term success in the classroom. In terms of everyday classroom conflicts, these insights can free a teacher to practice and risk failing the first few times they try out negotiation strategies. The Chinese have a saying, “when you lose, do not lose the lesson.” This perspective is an empowering motto; our reflection on poor classroom encounters contains the solutions to

our future classroom successes. Ultimately, it transforms our former “battleground” into a “playing field.” How much more meaningful our role in society is when we recognize our role as life coaches. The challenges our students offer us are daily exercises in honing life skills, which in turn improve the practice of our trade.

Moreover, the risk of having a “bad class” is not as damaging as we convince ourselves it is. Students are a remarkably resilient lot. I am still shocked at how enthusiastically I am often greeted in the hallway after what I consider a disheartening class period. Luckily, students do not believe we owe them brilliantly executed lessons every time. Why not utilize this fact to our advantage by taking risks at becoming adept negotiators? Ultimately, what we gain are classrooms in which real education is taking place.

Why do we have so many conflicts with our students?

We are outraged that so few students are willing to accept our authority. But, the fact is, very few people today are willing to accept another’s orders based upon authority alone. Certainly, as adults, we feel resentful of rules we do not support ideologically or ones that we feel are thrust upon us without consideration for our feelings.

Using the age-old system of establishing one’s authority in the classroom to enforce one’s will is both counter-effective and unnecessary today. Consider the choices you are really making at the beginning of the year. An authoritarian stance may earn you a quiet classroom but it is one which may actually be “running in sleep-mode” with a mere 20% of students willing to be actively engaged.

How do I handle conflicts when they arise?

Most traditional strategies for handling conflict in the classroom are based upon whether a teacher views him / herself as hard or soft. The skilled negotiator applies an alternative strategy, separating the people from the problem. This alternative allows you to be soft on the people and hard on the problem. It involves stepping back from a stated position and finding the principles underlying the problem (for a detailed description of this negotiation strategy, read **Getting to Yes**, Chapters 1-3).

For example, when a classroom or student confronts your prepared lesson with a lack of cooperation, do not immediately respond by restating or defending your position. Defending your position turns the problem into a power struggle. Instead, take a step back. Move from your “point of view” to a viewing point from which you can observe the situation objectively. In the negotiator’s magic sack of strategies are “right listening” skills (as named and described in **The Conflict and Communication Activity Book**, by Withers & Lewis,

AMACOM books, 2003). Unfortunately, this type of listening must be taught; it is different from the “listening” skills we too often apply.

Often, when we think we are listening, what we are actually doing is single-handedly, authoritatively, trying to solve the problem instead. We interrupt, offering opposing points of view. What we should do, is consciously adjust our body language and our mind to seek more information. The statement we have heard may express a strong emotion the student is feeling. We must refrain from responding emotionally. We are seeking progress; we need more information.

The negotiation strategy is actively listening to the different perspective the student may have regarding a concern that you have in common. Paraphrasing what you think you have heard a student express is an active listening tool that shows your respect for the student and may avoid unnecessary stress caused by miscommunication. It will also elicit cooperation from students to find solutions, which is something that helps to build a strong learning community.

When and where should I use negotiation strategies?

One important negotiation strategy is to play the game proactively. Be assertive and choose where and when to handle conflict. Contrary to instinct, you do not have to address and resolve every challenge as it occurs. After listening to the challenge, identifying the interest behind it that you share, and paraphrasing the student’s point of view, you can then choose to set a time in the future to discuss the problem further with the student, the class, or with selected representatives from the class.

Using negotiation skills as a classroom management tool shows both the depth of consideration you have for the student and also demonstrates your own self-confidence. Moreover, by elucidating the principles behind perspectives aloud to the class, your students will take more responsibility for their actions and their education. In turn, the solutions generated by the class function to create meaningful, lasting solutions to everyday problems.

In most classrooms, on a minute-by-minute basis students continuously weigh whether involvement in a lesson is worth their while since the classroom dynamic is so much slower than their media-heavy culture, which grants immediate gratification. This reality makes the negotiation techniques all the more useful in the classroom. These strategies enliven the classroom because they defy students’ predictions about teachers. They also encourage both parties to become responsible for the learning environment. Additionally, the strategies are effective whether you share them openly with your students or whether you just learn to utilize them effectively.

Differing views in the classroom are opportunities for students and teachers to cooperate as joint problem solvers who connect on a personal level and affect change. Negotiation strategies create opportunities for challenges to be successfully met. In a world riddled with conflict, the classroom is a safe place for students and teachers to hone these life lessons. With this in mind, “play ball!”

Stay tuned for an in-depth look at emotions in the classroom, “Negotiating Change inside the Classroom & Out, Part Two: Creating the Classroom You Want,” in the next issue of the ETAI Journal.

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TEACHING STUDENTS RESPONSIBILITY IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Aviva Shapiro (shapiroaviva@gmail.com)

Don't we always listen to our students? Not really. We are so busy trying to complete all the required material that we forget that we are first and foremost teaching children. My teaching experience has taught me that actually listening to my students improves classroom management. To do so, I realized that I needed to teach them how to assess themselves by use of feedback, reflection and setting goals and to teach them how to work jointly in our venture of learning.

Traditionally learning in school is controlled by teachers. Although we claim we want our students to be responsible citizens participating in a democratic society and in control of their lives, but we don't teach them how to do this. By working with our students and teaching them how and why they need to be part of the learning process

by taking some responsibility for their learning we can achieve such a goal. Research shows that students who are pro-active and learn to direct their own learning are more successful in life later on. This is why we teachers need to learn to be less controlling and teach our students to become responsible for their learning.

Providing our students with many opportunities to exercise control of their learning will eventually aid them in becoming adults who can make wise decisions, solve problems and be responsible thinking citizens.

When I look back I shudder at some of the mistakes I made as a young teacher. My mistakes were not so much in not knowing the material, but in the way I worked with, or “against”, the kids. Eventually, as I grew older

and more experienced, I realized that I had to change if I wanted to stay sane and stay a teacher. I discovered that everything starts and ends with our attitude. There is so much I **can't** change. I can change neither my pupils' parents nor their home life, but I can change how I relate to them. I can let them know what I expect and I can build a positive atmosphere in the classroom. Moreover, and most importantly, I can let them know that I believe in them.

I have worked very hard on my attitude. I taught myself how to take deep breaths in class and not respond by yelling. As I began to observe and listen to my students more, I discovered many things. First, I found out that all of them wanted to learn even if their behaviour didn't always say this. Second, I discovered that all my pupils wanted to be praised and really wanted to succeed. Third, I learned to slow down and spend time working with them. Last, I learned to smile the minute I walked in the door!

These are simple things which have made me a teacher who, for the most part, is calm even when things don't go right and who is glad to arrive at my school in the morning.

So the first step all teachers need to take is to stop and think about their attitude. We need to believe in ALL of our students and let them know this. Letting our students know that we expect them to learn and that we believe they can is very important. Never assume they know. Tell them! We need to let them know that we expect them to work but also that they have to let us know what they expect of both us and themselves. Often when I ask my students why they are not happy with their grades, they say they are disappointed in themselves. They explain that they didn't work hard enough, or didn't do their homework. We discuss what can help them but, most importantly, they know that they need to be active and proactive in the learning process.

The beginning of the school year is always a good time to discuss with the class what you expect and what your goals are. Specific goals are very important. "I want you all to improve in English" is too abstract. Give goals like: "I will try to teach you all to be able to speak in English in front of the class, or at least in front of me or a small group, for a few minutes." Or "I plan to teach you to know how to write better by teaching you to write a topic sentence with supporting sentences. "Then teach them how to set their own goals. Work with them on setting performance goals ("I want to improve my vocabulary by learning 20 new words in a month") not outcome goals ("I want a hundred on my report card").

Have them write down their goals step by step including

exactly what they need to do to reach these goals. For example, if their goal is to improve their vocabulary they will have to decide what they will do. This may be practicing certain words every evening or working with a friend twice a week. Teach them to set goals which are important to them, NOT necessarily to you. Ownership of the goals will help them try harder. Teach them to set positive do-able goals. A goal can be as simple as to remember to bring a dictionary to class every time it's needed, or to succeed in reading an entire book in English and doing a book task.

By teaching our pupils how to set goals we give the students skills that they need for life.

"A growing body of research indicates that when students are working on goals they themselves have set, they are more motivated and efficient, and they achieve more than they do when working on goals that have been set by the teacher." (Hom and Murphy, 1983)

By setting a goal we give our students a purpose. We in turn need to be role models. I set my short term goals, which lead to the achievement of long term goals, for each class and tell them what they are. Every lesson I write a short agenda for the lesson on the board.

This could look like:

- Read part one of story, *Summer's Reading*
- Teach literary terms: conflict, foreshadowing, theme etc.
- Group discussion
- Homework: _____

This shows the students what my goal for the lesson is. The students see that the lesson has been planned and that I am serious, prepared and responsible. I tick off what has been done during the lesson and I try to leave the last 5 minutes for a bit of class or individual reflection. Class reflection might be a simple show of hands to the question: "Who enjoyed this story?" or it could be an individual request to write down in their notebooks two things they liked or learned in this lesson. If they write in their reflection notebooks, I read them a few times a month and sometimes comment. I comment not judge and give positive feedback. If a kid didn't like the lesson, I may ask him to explain why. Later I tell the class what I found out from their feedback. This is extremely important as it shows the students you relate to what they say and listen to them. You might make changes in your teaching, or not, depending on what most of the kids said. It is imperative to express your feelings and thoughts about their feedback to them. Always explain your reasons for your feelings. This facilitates

understanding, making it easier to accept ideas. Teachers don't have to agree with everything the kids say but when kids know you have heard them it helps build a relationship of trust and improves the atmosphere.

Many teachers claim that this is fine for the better, more advanced, students, but not for the weaker ones. I disagree. All kids want their teachers to expect them to learn. They may moan and groan, misbehave and yell but in the end, the teacher who assists them in accomplishing their goal is the one they value. Talking about goals and using feedback with weaker students can be done in their mother tongue, Hebrew or Arabic.

Other teachers claim is that this approach takes up precious teaching time. I disagree. Building a positive classroom atmosphere and teaching the kids to take some responsibility for their learning is time well spent. Once the kids realize that you really do listen and you really want them to succeed they will begin to try. This will take time. It is a process and it isn't easy. You may not reach 100% of your students but you will reach many more. Your most difficult, most troubled students can be the students who benefit the most from your positive attention.

Regarding the most troubled and challenging pupils. "CATCH them when they are good" and give them positive feedback! We are constantly dealing with bad behaviour. We accept good behaviour without comment. Even the most troublesome, noisy, problematic kid will have a good moment. SEE it, and say something. By reinforcing good behaviour, we make it happen more often.

By teaching our pupils that their thoughts control their actions and thus they are able to positively affect their own academic performance, we prepare them for life. We point them toward success when they know that they can make a difference. Recently a very challenging pupil of mine who was unable to sit still for more than 15 minutes completed module D. I worked with him on setting goals. He decided his goal was to complete module C and D. I worked with him to help him map out what he needed to do to achieve this goal. One day in class and shouted after getting back his module D with a grade of 87 he stood up and shouted, "If I want to, I can do it!" He was so proud of himself for achieving his goal and so was I. He had learned that in order to accomplish something, he had to do something about it. And this has made all the difference.

When a child is given positive reinforcement, taught to be responsible for his behaviour and learning and is given skills for life, s/he becomes a happy, successful person. One might ask, and what is success? Well in my opinion we need to teach the pupils that success is in the

eye of the beholder and basically success is achieving the goals you set for yourself, whatever they may be.

In conclusion, work with your students. This will not only help you to better manage your class and make your life easier but will also empower your students. In the long run everyone wins. Your students will not only become better, more responsible people but they will also advance and progress in English. All of them, from the weakest to the more advanced, want to know English. In that we are lucky. So don't give up. Take time to reflect on your teaching style and how you work with your students. Use feedback in different ways, work on setting goals with the kids and remember to try to have a positive attitude even when the going gets rough. A smile will take you much farther than a shout!

Examples of feedback pages and methods of using feedback and goals can be found on the REED site under in-service training sessions creative classroom management, Aviva's handouts. <http://www.mchp.gov.il/Site/Supervision/REED/Inservice+training+sessions/Avivas+Handouts.htm>

Keep in mind that these are samples and should always be adapted to suit your needs and your students.

Good luck!

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- Aviva Lana Shapiro is a teacher and coordinator at the Beit Yerach Comprehensive High School in the Jordan Valley. She is also a REED (Rural English Education Department) counsellor in the North. Mainly a high school teacher, she has also taught elementary school through college preparatory courses. A mother of five, she is a former kibbutznic who now lives in a "Yishuv Kehilati." She has a BSc from the University of Maryland, USA and an MBA from Leicester University, England.*

HOW, WHEN, WHY, WHO - SONGS DO IT FOR YOU!

Iris Shenkman (*iris1648@yahoo.com*)

It's 8:07 am and the second bell has already rung, but quite a few of the boys and girls are still noisily entering their lesson. The usual scenario would be the teacher standing in front of the class, arms tightly crossed, maybe with her foot tapping.... and waiting. A less pleasant image is that of the teacher screaming at them to hurry up and sit down. But neither of these ever happens in Ms. S.'s English lessons. The rest of the class is enthusiastically singing, "If you're happy and you know it", "When you're smiling" or any of the repertoire of songs that they have learned. The atmosphere created is pleasant and cheerful. Ms. S has wonderful classroom management. She would never wait for them while they dribble in. The message being sent is that the lesson has already begun and that they are missing something; so subsequently they move themselves quickly and quietly and hopefully tomorrow they will be on time in their quest to be a part of the class.

It is said that "Music soothes the savage breast" and so it is a good binding force in the turbulent Israeli classroom. There are numerous other reasons why you should open with songs, raps or chants even before you start your good morning/afternoon small talk or take attendance or anything. Singing turns on their English brains, making the switch from the Hebrew outside. It's enjoyable and saves an enormous amount of time. While the pupils, even those who do arrive on time, are busy taking out all their paraphernalia and while the teacher is arranging her belongings, they are all singing, or if a CD is being used they are also listening to well-pronounced English. It is a known phenomenon that accents improve in song. Songs are a perfect vehicle for the natural acquisition of language as pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary are all remembered more easily. In addition, songs connect people to each other. Songs help to make the lessons dynamic, interesting and full of life. Mason (2000) sums this up by saying "We sing when we're happy and we sing when we're sad. We use songs to teach values, to change a mood and to convey love." The reasons go on and on, and I am sure that you can add many of your own.

However, now I can hear you saying, "Singing is fine for the 3rd, 4th and maybe 5th grades, but the others are too old and mature for that. Katz (2001) wondered whether her 6th grade pupils' objections might be due to the choice of songs rather than the singing itself, so she suggested that the pupils bring a cassette or CD of any song they would like to learn and sing. She received more than she could teach that year. She realized that every teacher MUST listen to his / her pupils' preferences.

This advice is true straight through junior high school and high school when the pupils have the skills to really learn from songs. The element of choice is of the utmost importance. There is a multitude of literature on how to use songs in the upper grades (Solomonov, 2005), but this is not the focus of this article. The musical world is at your fingertips through the Internet. The objective here is when, why and how you can adopt, adapt, teach and use easier songs.

My most important piece of advice is, "Never ever ask them if they want to sing". Ask them instead, "Which song do you want to sing?" Just like you should never ask them if they want to do anything that you have planned and think is an imperative part of the lesson. Do not leave yourself open for a few negative answers to ruin the atmosphere. Do not ask them anything that you cannot comply with. Let them make the choices that are within the realm of your keeping control of the lesson.

Today's English teachers have a wealth of possibilities at their fingertips. Most of the approved textbooks come with CD's. Another important issue, however, is choosing different songs for different grades. They should be gradually more and more difficult.

Another well-known excuse used by teachers for not singing is that they cannot carry a tune. Well this is also where using a tape recorder or CD solves the problem. Just remember that singing comes from the heart and it is the activity itself, the sharing and caring and the words that matter the most. I love singing and have used it extensively in my teaching of every age from nursery school and young learners, to college students and adults. Yet I must admit that many a pupil has said to me "Iris, you sang it differently yesterday!" So what? Sing it any way you wish. Once a Hasava student/music teacher in my methods course said to me, "Iris, your enthusiasm is great, but boy are you flat!!" I certainly hope that he was referring only to my singing. I share these anecdotes with you to give you confidence and make you feel that if Iris can do it, well so can I! Mason (2000) wrote that, "... you don't have to worry about how you sound ... kids will appreciate the attention and the music and won't care if you don't sound like Whitney Houston."

So now we have successfully and pleasantly opened our lesson and it is time to get into the teaching per se. I wholeheartedly advocate having a song for every topic taught. Vocabulary is more easily remembered in song; but, you don't have a song, so what are you going to do? Using well-known melodies you can make up many,

many songs for every topic, holiday and occasion. I would stick to the classic melodies like “Happy Birthday, Frere Jacques, If You’re Happy... , London Bridge, ABC” and change the words according to my needs. Sometimes it is a lot easier to make up a song than to waste time hunting for one that doesn’t really suit your purposes.

For example, any topic can fit the “London Bridge” melody:

Colors

*Red and yellow,
purple, blue (3x)
Red and yellow, purple, blue
are four colors.*

*Green and orange,
brown and pink (3x)
Green and orange, brown
are some colors.*

Holding up the colors while they are singing makes this an extremely versatile and interactive song. You change the colors, as you need them. **More importantly the pupils can make up verses of their own.** They can do this in groups and then perform (presentation).

Classroom

*Books and notebooks,
pencils, pens (3x)
Books and notebooks, pencils, pens
are in my schoolbag.*

*Chairs and desks,
windows, doors (3x)
Chairs and desks, windows, doors
are in our classroom.*

On and on we could go with transportation, parts of the body, animals etc, etc. The focus here is totally on the new vocabulary and together with pictures, flashcards and realia (objects from real life used in classroom instruction) these songs enable enormous practice and social interaction.

The lesson is progressing nicely, so let’s keep it that way. Where and how else can that song they have just learned help you? Transition time; that is the place in the lesson when you change from one activity to another. It might be handing out a worksheet, changing to another book, getting into groups/pairs, turning your back for only a moment to write something on the blackboard or ... Do you really expect them to sit quietly and patiently? Be real! Nature does not like vacuums. If you do not activate them, they will start to talk. It is also a waste of a minute here and a minute there when they could be using English, using that song!

We should always try to use the music to prevent noise and misbehavior; however, as hard as we try there will always be those instances when the loquacious pupils resume their chatting. You could scream at them, turn off the light, ring a bell, snap your fingers etc. to refocus

them and herd them in. Or you could once again take advantage of a song!

Here are a few simple chants/raps that you could also use to diminish the din and relay a message of politeness, values and comradeship:

- I *Hands to the left
Hands to the right
Please be quiet
and be polite!*
- II *Come on girls
Come on boys
Tell those kids to stop the noise!*
- III *Shhh, shhh the kids are working.
Shhh, shhh the kids are thinking.
Shhh, shhh
Shhh, shhh
Shhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!*
- IV *Hello, hello.
Say yes, say no.
Sit down, stand up and turn around.
Step to the left, step to the right.
Give love, give love, and do not fight!!!*

Try to use these chants and all songs with as much movement and body language as possible. Words are understood and remembered so much better when incorporated into total physical response!

Before you know it your lesson has come to an end. They have learned so very much and you are not tearing your hair out. Let them leave the room the way that they entered with a song in their hearts and on their lips and a smile on their faces:

1. *So long, it’s been a nice lesson.
So long, it’s been a nice lesson
So long, it’s been a nice lesson.
I hope that you have a nice day!*
2. *Friends, friend, friends we will always be.
We’ll be together in our English lesson,
we’re friends, friends, friends.*

Have you counted all the times and places that music has been part of your lesson? Allen (2006) sums it up in his four places for music: “Music before class, music during movement, music behind small group discussions and music after class”. Both he and I highly recommend, however, if this is the first time you are considering the inclusion of this form of auditory stimulus go slowly and give yourself time to learn.

Some of you may now have a puzzled look on your faces. Do any of these songs and chants seem familiar? Well they are. Many are based on classic songs, which I use. I adopt and then I adapt. We do not have to rediscover the wheel. English teachers should be borrowers and lenders ... share, share, share! Take anything you see, hear or read and worry about where and when you are going to use it

at another time. Just be good at filing things away so that they can easily be retrieved. The more you change songs and chants to fulfill your needs, the more adept you will become at doing so. Once you see that you can compose a song of your own, you will feel great and do it again; and there is nothing like the look of admiration on the faces of your pupils when they know that you made the song just for them! I have pages and pages of songs for every topic and holiday, which I will be happy to share with you.

So now that we have basically covered the Who? Why? When? and What? to sing, let's discuss a bit about HOW? The pupils should be given the opportunity of listening to the entire song (either on a CD or by the teacher's singing) and together with an enormous amount of body language, understanding what the song is about. Of course, pictures and realia can also be used at this time. If the teacher has ALREADY taught the vocabulary this part will go quickly. If the song is being taught early on in the lesson as a motivation, this will take much more time. If it is a song for a special topic, which may not be used again, teachers will devote less time to the learning of the song and just get them to sing along. If it is a song, which will be used throughout the year, such as for fun (Hokey pokey, If you're happy, I am a pizza ...) or values and behavior, the pupils will learn it more gradually.

In the very early grades depending on when they first began learning English, this exposure must be oral only. The pupils listen and repeat line-by-line, then two lines and then more. Diamond (2005) recommends props to enhance the visual impact. She also encourages movement, which increases attention span and participation. Most importantly there must be a lot of repetition. The teacher sings along until his/her singing gradually fades out and s/he only mouths the words. This will encourage the pupils to sing more on their own and not depend on the teacher.

Now, a word about translating into Hebrew: When you must, just remember my E-E-H-E-E formula. Say the word or sentence in English, English, Hebrew and then immediately go back to English hopefully more than once. If you only translate, they will wait for that and never listen to the English.

In classes of older pupils where reading has been established, the pupils can sing along with the words, but I still recommend giving the words to them orally first. Then the teacher can show them the words on flashcards, sentence strips, a worksheet, a poster, the blackboard or an overhead projector. There is no one and only way. Variety is the key to holding their attention and keeping your sanity. Some important songs will be the focus of a lesson and all the reading and writing will follow the song. The pictures and words can be presented on the

blackboard, clipboard, flannel board or bulletin board and sentences can be formed. The teacher can present the whole song on a poster and teach it line by line and focusing on word recognition, reading, spelling and competition activities. In addition, posters allow you to teach from any place in the class getting away from the front of the room. You can use them again, and again and again. Are there more ways? Well certainly, there are just as many ways as there are teachers and their creative imagination. Every teacher will find the ways that best suit the class, the grade, the subject, the personality of the teacher etc. It will develop in time, but only if and when the teacher uses songs at all. Singing takes practice so teachers should sing a lot.

I hope that I have motivated and encouraged you to try songs and, if you are already using them, to do it more and in many ways. Day by day, we are faced with getting pupils motivated to learn and keeping them focused on what is being taught. Music is the key to both of these issues. Children are naturally musical, which means that they love to listen to music and enjoy singing.

Don't say that the kids don't want to sing.

Admit it was you, but now you know what to do!

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MAD LIBS

Phyllis Oded (*phylliso@015.net.il*)

Fold the paper along the line, lengthwise. Fill in the missing information next to the numbers. Then copy the words onto the other side, according to the numbers. Read aloud. Enjoy!

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. subject studied in school 2. a teacher's name 3. adjective 4. adverb 5. adjective 6. verb ending in 'ING' 7. verb in past simple, question form using WE 8. a number 9. adjective 10. adjective 11. superlative adjective 12. classmate 13. adjective 13. adjective 14. adjective 15. noun 16. verb ending in 'ING' 	<p>Studying (1) this year with (2) has been (3) We did homework (4) Our (5) teacher spent a lot of time (6) our papers. Not only (7) grammar. (8) times a week, but we wrote (9) compositions, as well. Sitting in our (10) class was an experience. This teacher was the (11) teacher we've ever had. S/he reminds me of (12) with his/her (13) hair and (14) voice. In one word, I would call him/her an excellent (15) I'm sure that you will really enjoy (16) with him/her next year.</p>
<p>Story 2:</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. verb in the past 2. adverb 3. name of a room 4. Verb ending in 'ING' 5. name of a person 6. adjective 7. adjective 8. adjective 9. language 10. adverb 11. verb in base form 	<p>I (1) the door and went (2) into the (3) Some aliens were(4) there. They looked just like(5) They had the same (6) skin, (7) ears and (8) hair, too. They all spoke (9) (10), which I didn't (11)</p>

Go on with the story: [continue on the back, if necessary; use and underline 4 'petrazillias' = connectors.]

One of them told me that

.....

.....

.....

Fold the paper along the line, lengthwise. Fill in the missing information next to the numbers. Then copy the words onto the other side, according to the numbers. Read aloud. Enjoy!

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. time expression in the past 2. kind of pet 3. name of a room 4. article of clothing 5. part of the body 6. another verb in the past 7. adverb 8. another verb in the past 9. preposition 10. adjective <p>** a trick an animal can perform</p>	<p>(1) my pet (1) came into my (3) after my family had sat down. It had a (3) on its (4) It (5) around very (6) and (7) (8) everyone. They were very (9) to see him do this. Everyone clapped when they saw him perform his special trick.</p> <p>The trick was</p> <p>Part two:</p> <p>Based on your completed story above, go on with the story by completing the following sentences:</p> <p>While he was</p> <p>.....</p> <p>After he had ,</p> <p>.....</p> <p>In addition to ,</p> <p>He also</p> <p>Not only did he ,</p> <p>but</p> <p>As a result,</p> <p>.....</p> <p>In my opinion</p>
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Remember

The ETAI Spring Conference
 Monday, April 14th 2008
 in Haifa

See page 47
 for details

**HARRY POTTER UNDER COVERS:
On the Efficient Use of Internet Sites in the EFL class**

Regine Hoffmann-Schwarz (*regine10@walla.com*)

The well-publicized launch night of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, which is the final book in the series, spurred me to see how we could exploit the buzz around its publication in our EFL classes. Since, I had been working for a while with digital books' covers (Hoffmann-Schwarz, 2004) I decided that implementing these ideas now would be ideal. For details on the theoretical framework of this teaching approach and the importance of paratexts in any literary work, see Hoffmann-Schwarz, 2005. Here, for practical purposes, I'll mention several Web links and the way they may be used according to our pupils' level.

We don't really expect our pupils to read Harry Potter in English, but we can try to use their interest in J. K. Rowling's world in order to upgrade their skills in English. The following are tasks that can be done individually, in pairs or in groups. They employ visual information on websites in order to encourage English literacy.

TASK ONE:

Site: <http://desktoppub.about.com/od/designprojects/p/everyman.htm>

Pupils redesign an existing book jacket and post their work on the Web site. They can also discuss and comment upon the redesigns.

Skills:

- Reading comprehension of the instructions
- Writing in the on-line discussion
- Oral presentation of submitted redesigned jackets is also possible.

Level: High school, adults

TASK TWO:

Site: <http://www.amazon.com>

Use the covers of children's picture books to promote literacy. For example, search for "Voices in the Park" by Anthony Browne (1998). Here a simple visit to the park can be viewed in many different ways. Look at the title and different font types for the word VOICES. This is even clearer on the back cover where four different font types are used to suggest that each of the four main characters has a different voice and a different story to tell about the very same visit to the park and a different perspective.

Skills: Pre-reading practice: Using visual aids to predict content

Level: All, including emerging readers

TASK THREE:

Site: <http://www.amazon.com>

Search for "Harry Potter" and click on any volume that offers the "look inside" logo and take advantage of these browsing options. The blurbs on the back covers may be read in class. The reviews on the front and back flaps use many adjectives for expanding vocabulary. Their flowery style is characteristic of this genre and can be discussed. Comparison of the different reviews can be used to promote critical thinking skills.

Skills:

- Reading comprehension
- Vocabulary development
- Critical thinking

Level: Junior High to High School

TASK FOUR:

Sites: <http://www.amazon.com>
<http://www.mugglenet.com/books/bookcovers/index.shtml>

Search Amazon for all available English language editions of “Harry Potter” and compare hard covers and paperbacks, editions for adults and children, and British and American editions. Then search Mugglenet and compare all Harry Potter book covers, in all their foreign editions.

This is wonderful material for oral or written descriptions and comparisons, and for class discussions.

Skills:

- Oral and written expression
- Critical thinking

Level: From non readers to adults

TASK FIVE:

Site: http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/hi/newsid_4320000/newsid_4329400/4329479.stm

After doing task three or four, our pupils should have their own opinions and the vocabulary necessary to answer the questions posed on this BBC children’s site. They can also read and comment upon the children’s opinions shown on this page. The forum linked from the site is now closed, however, teachers can use the forum on school sites or their own blogs or wikis for online discussions.

Skills:

- Reading comprehension
- Written expression
- Expressing an opinion

Level: Junior High to High School

Further suggestions for exploiting the “Harry Potter” series

These suggestions do not refer to book covers per se but to accompanying web sites. These sites belong to the author, the publisher or a fanzine (a fans’ magazine on the Web). By presenting the paratext surrounding a book, they all mediate in the relationship between the text and the reader and, as such, deserve our attention.

The skills employed in implementing these suggestions will vary according to the tasks performed. These sites are appropriate for all levels.

Suggestion One:

Site: <http://www.scholastic.com/harrypotter/books/covers>

This site offers magnifying glass to explore the cover art in detail. However, it also has a plethora of material and activities. There are video clips, a pronunciation guide to names and words in the Harry Potter books and a place to write a review or a book in the series in seven words or less and much more.

Suggestion Two:

Site: <http://www.jkrowling.com/en>

Ms. J. K. Rowling’s own site is a source of infinite material for activities, assignments and tasks about the heroes of her books. Pupils employ all their language abilities exploring this aesthetic web site. They enter the site by clicking on items on Rowling’s desk which is pictured on the home page. They can read Rowling’s diary, listen to audio tracks and visit fan sites.

Suggestion Three:

Site: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/17828868/>

Watch a talk show segment where the last Harry Potter book cover is revealed to the American audience. How sincere does a publisher sound when he declares that he cried his eyes out reading Harry Potter #7?

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READING COMPREHENSION AND WRITING TASKS

Dr. Lea Kirshenberg

The Bagrut requirements focus on **reading and writing skills**. These should be taught and practiced in the light of a content based approach while emphasizing language in context. The challenge is to do this in an interesting way that motivates students to read and write while truly enjoying the process. Impossible mission? Difficult perhaps, but definitely possible.

The first step is to change certain misconceptions. We should not teach mainly reading or mainly writing. **We should TEACH ENGLISH!** Instead of focusing on one domain at the expense of the others, it would be better to combine all domains together into one motivating, interesting lesson in which all skills are carefully integrated.

In order to do that, we have to understand that **Reading Comprehension** does not necessarily mean boring texts having no connection with one another, followed by endless questions. **Reading Comprehension** can be taught using a story or a song. Likewise, **Listening Comprehension** does not necessarily involve using texts specially designed for this purpose. Nor does practicing this skill require tape-recorders / compact discs, etc. Any text / story read out loud by the teacher, while books are closed, can serve as an exercise in **Listening Comprehension**.

And what about **Grammar**? Now we all fully understand that the question is no longer whether we should teach **grammar**, but how to do it in a meaningful, efficient and enjoyable way. Any text can offer the opportunity to study or review a certain structure in context.

And last, but not least, what about **Writing**? Assigning lots of compositions and writing projects may not

improve the students' writing abilities, but may prove boring and frustrating. **Guided writing** following an oral activity or a text read in class may prove to be much more effective.

And since preaching is never enough, let's see how we can implement these principles in practice.

Suggestions for a Lesson Plan:

- **Oral Activity** – a conversation on the subject of a certain text – (a reading passage, a story or a song) – 10 minutes.
- **Listening Comprehension practice** – The teacher reads out the text while student's books are closed and asks a few questions – 10 minutes.
- **Reading Comprehension practice** – The students read the text and answer a few questions – 15 minutes.
- **Homework:** The teacher assigns a writing task based on activities done in class (a note, a letter, a composition). The teacher offers guidelines and helpful vocabulary – 5 minutes.

That is the recipe for a good lesson. Add a little bit of humor, and success is (almost) guaranteed.

GOOD LUCK!

Dr. Lea Kirshenberg teaches Traditional Grammar, Pedagogical Grammar and Reading Comprehension strategies at Levinsky College of Education. She has worked as an English teacher and coordinator in Ramot School in Bat Yam for many years, trained teachers and given many workshops on different methodological issues. She has written 15 textbooks and workbooks for Junior High and High School.

PIC-STORIES

Phyllis Oded (phylliso@015.net.il)

STORY-TIME

First rewrite the story using words only. Then, go on with each story. Do not use any direct quotations. Try to make your story different/interesting. Pay attention to capitalization, punctuation, grammar, spelling and vocabulary.

1.  The  fell  cause he wasn't  ing.
 ed him get up crying.
e p people

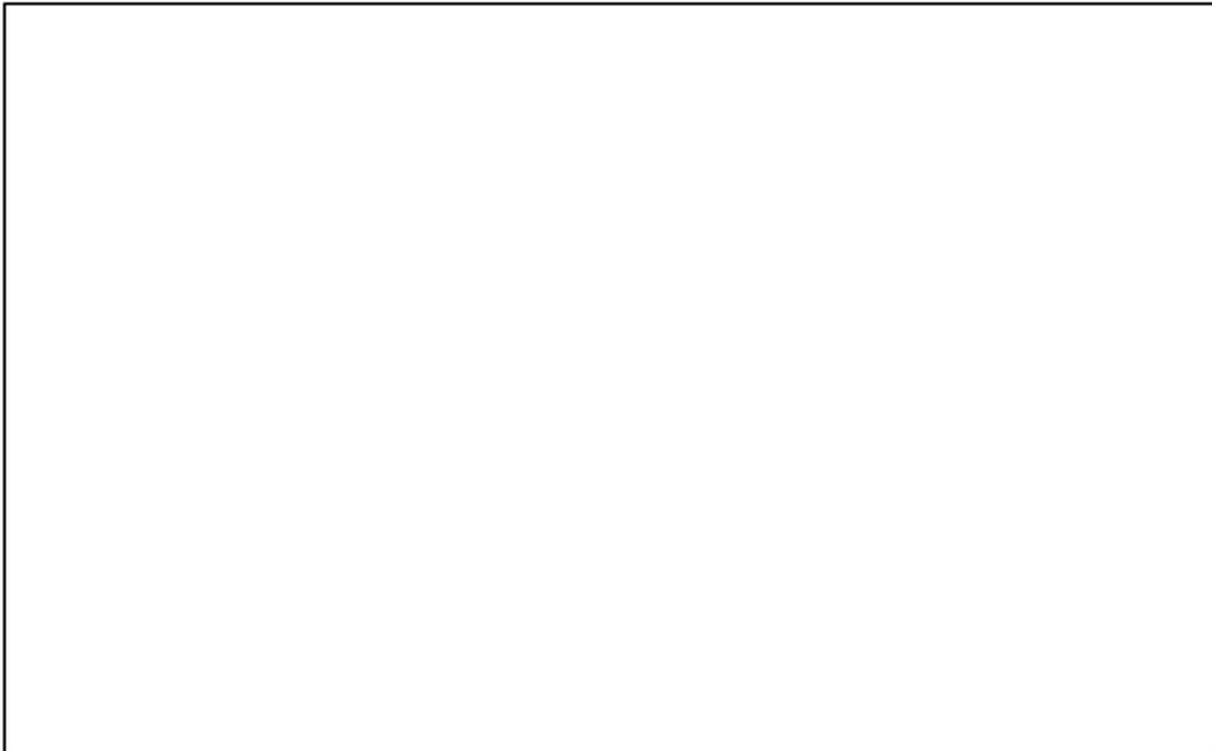
Only 1 lad- D helped him and even gave him some .

2. It was  but  had 4 got 10 my  . It was in
 my bedroom. 1  ce  got home,  took off my wet  and other
clothing,  cause  didn't want 2 get sick; but it was 2 late. In the
 morning  was  and had 2 call the .

EASY STORY-TIME

1.  am going **2** school now. M   is
open  cause it  .

Write the story in words. Then draw the picture.



Phyllis Oded has been teaching English in Israel since 1967. Although she is officially 'on pension,' she still teaches because she loves teaching. She is now teaching at Alliance High School in Ramat Aviv. Here's how she describes her job: "I teach young people about the world IN ENGLISH."

DREAMWORLD – THE SKY IS THE LIMIT!**The EngLine project – an online research extended role-play across 3 continents and 3 time zones**

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How well do you think the internet is used for language teaching and learning? Can it be used to bring learners together better? How can a situation be created where diverse learners feel safe and confident enough to learn and practice English (or other languages) outside the classroom? How much do you use role play in your teaching? Could it be used online? Read on!

For 3 months in 2006, a group of teachers in Israel, the UK, and Canada met online using an Open University (UK) conferencing programme called Lyceum. They role-played a scenario devised to reduce the barriers of time and place, to bring together individuals who otherwise would probably not have met, to practice intercultural skills and language, and to reflect on Self, Other and underlying values.

DreamWorld was the name that the 6 participants invented for their virtual secondary school – and in it they created fictitious, but realistic, characters who interacted to respond to a number of scenarios given to them, similar to those that language teachers might face at school.

They met online 7 times in synchronous (real time) mode in *Lyceum*, and communicated both orally and textually, following preparatory work that they carried out via email and independent internet tasks prior to the online sessions.

The participants were based in Herzliya, Iksal, a kibbutz, Beersheva, London, Toronto, while the facilitator was in St Albans (UK) and the two researchers were in Milton Keynes and Oxford. It demonstrated the reality of being able to form a group that spanned the world – 3 continents and 3 time zones. We didn't use webcams - on purpose so there was no visual bias or prejudice between participants.

In this experimental pilot project the participants were all teachers or trainee teachers of English, and so to a degree there was a willingness, cooperativeness and cultural and linguistic advantage already in place – but there is no real reason why the same enthusiasm and success couldn't accrue amongst a group of regular language learners. One of the highlights of the online sessions was when D, a student teacher in the first year at Oranim and T, a student teacher also at Oranim but in the 4th year, discovered they were training in the same institution. D lives just outside Nazareth while K is on a kibbutz near Carmiel, and it is likely that they would never have 'met' but for the serendipity of the EngLine project. And all this happened in English, in real time, but with plenty of discussion about cultural and linguistic backgrounds – they, and the other participants discussed English, Hebrew, Arabic, Tamil, Hungarian and compared and contrasted cultural and personal values surrounding language teaching and learning issues.

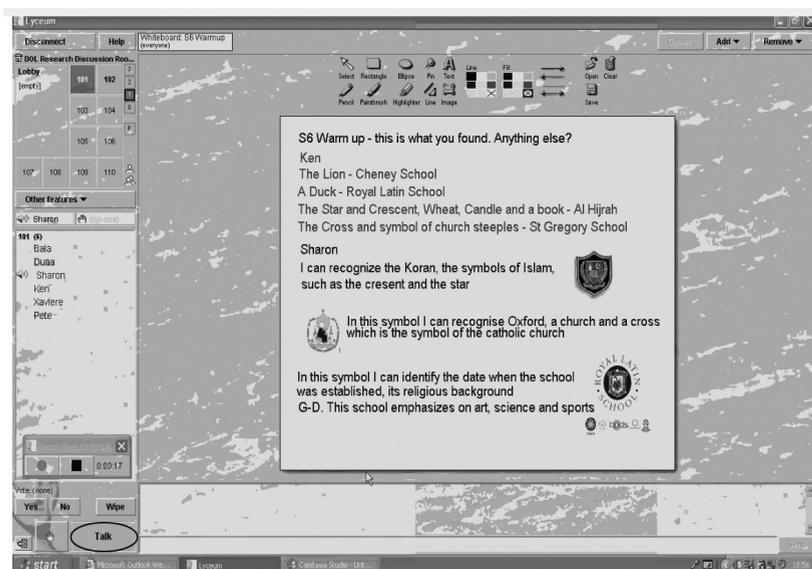
For example, one of their tasks was to look at the logos and characteristics of several different schools in Britain, via their websites, and images prepared by the researchers. B, from a Tamil language background but now living in London, intrigued the group with explanations - rooted in his childhood - of the Swan logo. This led to considerable intercultural exchange, and provided an authentic context for the linguistic and intercultural skills needed – here's an extract from some of the dialogue they held:



speaker	conversation	text chat
S	... symbolizes something very strong, but the duck, talkative?	
D	Mmm the duck was holding a certificate and I was wondering emm if it symbolizes wisdom? But emm as far as I know that's all, a symbol of wisdom.	

B	Yes, I can, I know a little bit about a swan – it's a similar kind of bird like a duck – ehh that a swan in our language, in Tamoul I studied about swans. When a mixture of water and milk is given to the swan, the swan is capable of separating milk from the mixture of water and milk – euh that is that is the great thing about a swan I don't know about a duck. May be maybe maybe the duck symbolize to get the good from the mixture of the good and bad	
S	I dunno I just I can think only one thing that may be that we teachers work so hard that even a duck can get a diploma in our school!	
B	Hello K – you can say something about that please - try hard...	
K	It's a duck, I don't know what what you're saying... (GAP/pause ...)	XH it is in fact a swan
B	Yes, yes I'm a bit...	
S	Sorry if it's a swan then probably emm we can emm can you please repeat B what you said again about a swan in your country ?	
B	What I learned when I was small, my teachers told me that swan can separate milk from the mixture of milk and water so therefore swan can get good things out of the mixture of good and bad – therefore may be that is why I put it	D a goose maybe
S	Well, I can see I enlarged the picture, and it seems to me it has very long very long neck so I think it's a swan	D It's a very interesting point B
B	S do you understand what I mean about a swan ?	J do you know that all swans in the UK belong to the queen PS You can still be hanged for killing a swan D What does it mean? K No, why does the queen want all the swans?
S	Yes I do	
B	Thank you	
S	Yes, I think it's a wonderful idea. I've never heard about that thing, It's just dividing the good from the bad – right?	
B	That's the idea, yes	
S	That's perfect, I love it!	
B	Thank you. Really I learnt when I was very small. My primary school teacher told me	

Lyceum is a synchronous online audiographic conferencing platform (or less jargonistically a web-conferencing programme) developed and used by the Open University in the UK. However, it has possibly not been used to its full potential to bring together individuals normally separated by distance, time and possibly culture and language. It is multimodal – that is, it permits a group to speak and listen to each other (as in a traditional classroom), to write text messages, and to manipulate texts, documents or images on a shared screen together. The screen shot below shows these functions – the speakers on the left with the talk button at the bottom; the shared whiteboard for exploiting materials in the middle with the tools on the bar above; and the space for text chat (instant messages) at the bottom.



The screen shot here shows these functions – the speakers on the left with the talk button at the bottom; the shared whiteboard for exploiting materials in the middle with the tools on the bar above; and the space for text chat (instant messages) at the bottom.

To some, *Lyceum* may now appear ‘old hat’ given that internet based technologies are developing so rapidly, and gaming, social and community networking, and e-learning are less novel than a few years ago (e.g. Facebook, webcams, messaging, Second Life etc). However, what has not happened systematically, is the application of the technologies to language learning in a theoretically defined way – there is no

universally held epistemology that covers it. We hypothesised that the combination of *Lyceum*, simulation globale, and the notion of Third Space were a principled, explicit pedagogic framework in which the potential could be tried out.

The project had 3 main stages. The first was for the participants to create the environment, in this case a virtual school, which they did by referring to images and websites of 4 different schools in the UK. They ended up devising DreamWorld, their own school. Secondly, they invented fictional characters in the school, and produced profiles of them (realistic but with some interesting twists that they added), and thirdly, they had to interact online in DreamWorld, with their characters, to deal with specific situations that were presented to them – for example, a statement of the school’s ‘mission’, a code of conduct, a policy on uniform, the languages curriculum, and a discipline problem. This allowed plenty of scope for language use and practice, but also provided a framework for approaching cultural issues based on their own values and backgrounds.

We were interested in researching this topic following a systematic review that we carried out looking into the effectiveness of online conferencing. The underlying principles of the EngLine project were threefold: firstly that *Lyceum* would be a suitable vehicle and that it could overcome geographical, time and other psychological constraints; secondly that a simulation globale (extended, integrated role play) is a sound pedagogical basis and framework for language learning and teaching; and thirdly that together these elements would facilitate the evolution of a ‘safe haven’, a Third Space, where the participants would feel able to communicate and develop a cooperative and collaborative modus operandum.

So what did we observe? Our preliminary evaluation of the data (which we collected by recording the sessions online and assessing the nature of interactions), revealed the following.

Interaction, language use and practice

The participants engaged fully with the tasks, and were apparently unfazed by the demands on them. The multimodality of *Lyceum* allowed them to speak and listen, send instant messages, and work on shared documents and images all at the same time on the same screen. They interacted between themselves, with the facilitator, and with the materials – and even with the researchers, and it is this interaction, at a complex level where sophisticated question, answer, creativity and higher order thinking were all in evidence. They brought prior knowledge and their own experience,

¹The simulation globale, or extended role play originates from “a model originally developed in France in the late 70s for face-to-face teaching under the name simulation globale (Caré and Debyser, 1995). Initially designed to solve the problem of creating reality in the classroom whilst simulating authentic interaction, simulations presented pupils with the skeleton for a scenario or game where they become members of a community whose parameters were to be invented by themselves. Simulation went on to cater for more vocational learner populations in the 80s, and they have now been successfully adapted to Web-based projects.” (Lamy, Hassan & Goodfellow 2001)

²Sociological theory furnishes a useful epistemology for this, inasmuch as the online simulation permits the creation of a safe ‘Third Space’ (Bhabha 1994, Bretag 2002) where individuals are able to ‘let go’ and create a shared unreality, or classroom reality, for the purpose of language learning. In a kind of educational Tom & Jerry paradigm, the ‘suspension of disbelief’ enables exploration of cultural boundaries and horizons, with accompanying linguistic behaviours, and to feel safe enough to divulge autobiographical aspects – without seeing the person at the other end.

injected personal narrative, and risked inventiveness. It is thought that this type and level of interaction are at the heart of meaningful learning (Anderson & Garrison, 1998).

Time and distance

The study demonstrated the use of an internet conferencing platform and its ability to overcome obstacles of geographical distance, and to an extent, time differences also. Perhaps more strikingly, it provided tangible evidence of the possibility of bringing together 6 strangers, in 3 different parts of the world, with diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, with no extended or formal period of 'getting to know each other', nor photos of each other, and for them to reach a point where there was a palpable sense of trust and a curiosity at an interpersonal level. According to Byram's '*savoirs*', and others, this curiosity and willingness to embrace 'the Other' are fundamental ingredients in intercultural competence (Byram & Zarate 1994).

Reflection and values

Quite quickly, the participants seemed sufficiently at ease with each other to start enquiring on more personal topics, as well as risking originality on the tasks they were carrying out. It's not axiomatic within a group of relative strangers that this should happen – we know as teachers that learners often feel vulnerable in front of their peers, both in terms of taking language learning risks and in exposing their personalities. It's true, in this case, that the participants are mature adults, already competent at English, and with cosmopolitan backgrounds and experience so we cannot read too much into it. For us as researchers however, it was pleasing to see them get on well, become curious about each other, and feel able to share anecdotes or confidences in such a short space of time.

Self and Other

In the creation of their fictional characters, we observed two things happening; for some, the characters showed elements of their own life experiences, while for others, there may have been an inclination to 'distance' themselves from their own reality. Both are known to happen in intercultural situations – some feel the need to reinforce their background identities, while others tend to create a sort of identity in suspension that may represent somewhere along the line their desires.

For all, democracy and egalitarian values seemed important and soon became guiding principles for their discussions and creativity. We expected no less from language teachers!

Technological challenges

Some time was spent on installing, setting up and familiarising with *Lyceum* and individual issues were solved by email and telephone. In general the platform worked well, with occasional crashes, and the participants did not require any specialised computer equipment or connectivity. By the end of the project, any technological issues had all but disappeared, and increasingly, the online world seems to be becoming the norm rather than something akin to space travel. This question of whether or not to incorporate a webcam recurred from time to time, particularly as participants became more curious about their peers, but we had made a decision to maintain a degree of anonymity as regards visual presence, partly to encourage oral-aural focus.

Interculturality

The participants showed a clear ability to use their diplomacy, tact and cultural awareness to pre-empt conflicts, or at least to deal with differences in a constructive way. They did not shy away from discussing sensitive topics such as religion in the schools, choice of language curriculum, discipline and expectations. We felt a positive and cooperative ambiance evolved, and this enabled them to push the boundaries of meaningful communication further.

This was a short project, methodologically pragmatic, and as such could not possibly be used to prove anything. However, notwithstanding the limitations of the study, there were numerous examples of intercultural and linguistic performance, even within a small group, to demonstrate the relevance, feasibility and benefits of an online simulation globale.

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Acknowledgements

We'd be happy to share more details about the project – longer articles for example, and to look at the possibility of further projects. We would like to thank the following: Amanda Caplan and Adele Raemer for their help in finding participants; the participants - who may identify themselves if they wish (some are probably ETAI members) for taking part so enthusiastically and professionally; Rizk Zubi of the Arab Academic College of Education in Haifa, and Dr Orly Sela at Oranim.

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BRINGING UNICEF INTO THE CLASSROOM

Esther Lucas (lucas@bezeqint.net)

“There is an urge inside me to help people in need so I joined the UNICEF Project”

“I learnt a lot from my research. I did not know there was so much discrimination against girls in the third world”

“It made me feel responsible”

“I enjoyed it and got some idea about children’s rights like I wanted”

“Until now I didn’t know how a ‘little’ person like me could make a difference”

“Children in Israel think about playing. Children in developing countries think about how to support their families” (J. High Class Newspaper)

“After this (UNICEF and AIDS Day) we will never sit and do nothing”

These student quotes can provide an answer as to why one would want to bring UNICEF into the Classroom. UNICEF is all about the welfare of children and young people, and as teachers we are also interested in the welfare of our students and what they think and feel.

UNICEF’s aims are not generally well known in EFL classrooms, and yet they can become the source of research and much lively discussion.

What are the aims of UNICEF? Basically UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children’s rights guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children - victims of war, disasters, extreme poverty, all forms of violence and exploitation and those with disabilities. UNICEF is non-partisan and its cooperation is free of discrimination. In everything it does, the most disadvantaged children and the countries in greatest need have priority. Although Israel is not a developing country, during the Second Lebanon War, we became a recipient of help for the children of the North. UNICEF also aims to promote the equal rights of women and girls.

UNICEF has National Committees in developing countries and regional offices in those parts of the world where work is needed. The office of the Israel Committee for UNICEF is situated in Jerusalem. It has a small library and responds to schools seeking information. UNICEF Voices of Youth (on the Internet) provides much general information for students.



Six English teachers are members of the Israel Committee for UNICEF. They are: Valerie Jakar, Carla Nohomovitz, Susanne Sapir, Averil (Aviva) Shulman and myself (chair of the Education for Development Forum).

An important activity of the Forum is the UNICEF Project in EFL Classes. It has been in existence for some ten years covering classes on different levels all over the country. Projects include preparation of portfolios, posters, class newspapers, special UNICEF Days, student participation in UNICEF events, and sales of cards. The portfolios and projects of students in high school have been successfully used for the ‘Bagrut’ examination. Through these activities students have learnt something about conditions of children and young people worldwide, and have compared them to the way they live. Most students were previously unaware of the differences in the standards of living among children around the world.

UNICEF topics dealt with in the portfolios include: rights of the child, human rights, women’s rights, discrimination, education, refugees, slavery, child soldiers, natural catastrophes, the environment, illnesses such as aids and malaria, work of Save the Children and the Red Cross and many more.

Over the years, Jewish, Arab and Bedouin schools have taken part in the project. Handicapped students have also participated. Among the projects implemented was a joint activity where junior high Arab and Jewish students worked together. Some classes have corresponded with schools abroad. Some have been participating in

UNICEF projects for years thus involving many generations of students. Dedicated teachers have ensured that the Project has been kept alive.

In the portfolios, working singly, in pairs, or in groups, students write about an aspect of the work of UNICEF in Israel and abroad, about themselves and, where relevant, their involvement in the community. They are expected to present their findings to the class and also write a poem or short composition about peace. A UNICEF Manual, as a disc, is available to any interested teacher. The manual gives requirements for project and portfolio implementation, background information and exercises. All students participating in the project receive the Israel UNICEF Students Diploma.

A creative aspect of the portfolio is writing something original about peace. Hundreds of poems have been written. The following is from an eleventh grade student.

A POEM ABOUT PEACE

*Imagine.
Close your eyes, take a deep breath and
Imagine
A world free of evil.
A pure world in which the words "freedom" and "justice"
are deeply rooted in people's minds and actions.
A world free of racism and humiliation.
Imagine social and political rights for all men, women and children.
Imagine no wars, no armies, no guns.
Imagine no prejudice, no violence, just love.
Imagine no jealousy, imagine no hate.
A world of respect and tolerance.
Imagine peace ... peace.
Imagine us not just imagining all this.*

The members of the Education for Development Forum of the Israel Committee for UNICEF welcome you to the Project. Further information can be obtained from:

The Israel Committee for UNICEF,
Adam School, 22 Emek Rephaim Road
POB 8409 Jerusalem
Tel. 02 5662619 e-mail: unicefil@015.net.il

or from any member of the E4D Forum including myself.

Esther Lucas
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Esther Lucas is a veteran teacher whose main interests in EFL teaching are global issues and school projects. She has degrees from Oxford, Tel Aviv, and Lueneburg Universities. Among her affiliations, she is Board member of ETAI, Editor of the Global Issues Newsletter of IATEFL, former President of ISRATESOL, Honorary President of the Israel Associated Schools Project of UNESCO, and Board member of the Israel Committee for UNICEF.

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For details see pages 8-9.

INFORMATION INTO KNOWLEDGE:

Computer aided web-learning using The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time by Mark Haddon.

Joan Orkin (joano@012.net.il) and Gilad Shapira (webmaster@hareali-haivri.haifa.k12.il)

Our work as teachers is to impart knowledge, whatever raw data we are attempting to use in order to teach. We often have a very disinterested audience, with a far too readily distractible attention span. But, as educators we need to be sure, moreover, that what we offer our students will not merely engage them but will, more importantly, ensure a process of real intellectual growth. Imparting knowledge doesn't mean work learned by rote the night before a test, but promoting the acquisition of an enduring understanding and skills which evolves through the processes of identification, classification, organization, evaluation, and debate. (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

1. The Web Based Learning Environment

Studying literature while using a web-based learning environment offers students the opportunities to learn the importance of such skills even as they gradually discover the discourses embedded in the literature with which are actively engaged.

Use of a web-based learning environment is attractive to students, who are generally partial to computer learning. It is also rare for students not to have access to computers at home. In such cases the school usually has computers available for students. We have found that constructing a web-based learning environment facilitates our educational goal of encouraging higher order thinking skills. Students become enthusiastically engaged with the medium as well as the material.

Our literature based program requires all the students in the class to read a novel. We are using Mark Haddon's unique novel about an autistic young boy, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*. However, the method we offer here can be used with any novel or indeed any play chosen by the teacher. The students do not have free choice. They must all to study the same text so they have a unified body of data from which to work in the learning environment.

2. The Forum

Because the educator takes away the CHOICE of the basic text we believe that students should have control of their work within the learning environment. They need to be encouraged to make choices within the journey on which they will embark in the learning environment. The first choice we offer the students is the forum in which they would like to participate. The creation of forums

facilitates the study of the novel. The forum students choose acts as a window through which the novel is read.

In each class there are about 8- 10 students in each forum. For *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, we offered the following forums as options:

I Writing:

In this forum the novel is examined through the focus of writing. Christopher, the main character, is writing a diary; Mark Haddon, the author, is writing a novel. The genre of the novel is a mystery, and Christopher's journey is a bildungsroman. a novel exploring the development and maturation of the younger generation in search of the meaning of life and understanding of the world. The reader too has their own journey and prejudices to encounter while reading the novel.

II Relationships vs Aloneness:

Students understand the difference between loneliness and Christopher's need for aloneness. His huge problem of relationships, touching, understanding and reading emotions is the focus of this forum. Christopher's difficulty in loving and expressing emotions makes him categorize himself as a computer. This forum looks at the novel through this window.

III Truth vs lies:

Students who choose this forum examine the difficulties Christopher has in getting on in our world as he insists on telling the truth. The inability to tell a lie disables Christopher in his social relationships again and again. He sees the world simplistically. This forum emphasizes the hypocrisy in our world which makes Christopher's world so complex. Adolescents enjoy the moral ambiguity this problem exposes.

IV Emotions vs logic:

Christopher describes himself as a computer. When he feels emotions he describes his reactions as shutting down or logging off. At his most emotional moments he escapes into scientific drawings and logic with descriptions of stars etc. In this forum the students enjoy uncovering the mass of emotions Christopher actually experiences however much he denies this to himself.

3. The Mission

We set SIX *missions* for each forum which students complete by a due date. We like to use the term ‘mission’ as opposed to the word ‘task’. The word ‘mission’ implies a quest, it also implies a journey. And this will be an intellectual journey for the entire class. The educator also learns from their students’ insights, questions, and debates. In order to give students a sense of empowerment, it is important that deadlines are established are done so mutually and democratically, rather than imposed in a way that is punitive.

A mission typically asks the students to read about 40-50 pages of the novel and then answer questions set in the forum. The aim is to see a dialogue develop not only between educator and students but much also, and more importantly, among the students themselves.

4. Interpretation, Comparison, Assessment

The questions differ from forum to forum for, even though they are reading the same novel, students are developing a discourse that is particular to the forum they have chosen. The questions in the mission move from factual questions to questions which require interpretation, comparison, assessment of implications, decisions, links, connections all leading to conversations and discussions within the web-based learning environment. Such processes will prepare the students for the new literature module which is currently being piloted. The stated aim of the literature program, introduced by Chief Inspector, Dr Judy Steiner, in her talk at the ETAI 2007 Summer Conference, is to raise our students’ awareness and help move them towards HOTS (Higher order thinking skills) and away from LOTS (Lower Order Thinking Skills).

5. MOK: Map of Knowledge

After reading, writing, analyzing, interpreting, comparing and thus completing the six missions, the students are ready in groups to re-enter the forums and create in groups a *Map of Knowledge*(MOK). This MOK will be proof that higher order thinking skills have occurred. The students visit each mission, not only their own. The students set out to understand the heart of each mission and then find terms that represent the goal in each mission. Once they have done this they are asked to find connections between all the missions. It is wonderful to witness the varied thinking skills of different students. Some students are organized and linear whereas some students have a more global understanding of the novel. The MOKS are important diagrammatic representation of the understandings gained while doing the missions. The MOKs they produce illustrate the thinking skills employed while preparing them. (Appendix 1 and 2 show examples of students’ MOKs.)

6. Reflective Composition

Before printing all their online work and presenting it in an attractive file, students have one more important task: a *final reflective* composition of a page and a half. The guidelines for the composition and the rubrics by which their work will be evaluated are contained in the learning environment. The reflective composition serves as a basis the presentation of their project in the oral Bagrut. Literature projects are a fine way to fulfill the Bagrut requirement for a project. Students working in this way in a web-based environment, develop and grow as writers, readers and thinkers.

At the end of this process students have studied a novel but they have not been told WHAT to think and have not been asked to learn facts. Rather, they have learned to enter the writer’s discourse and to make decisions as a part of a dialogue and negotiation with their peers. The students’ English improves as well. They read and read and read. They read the novel, they read the questions, they read their peers’ answers and they also write and write.

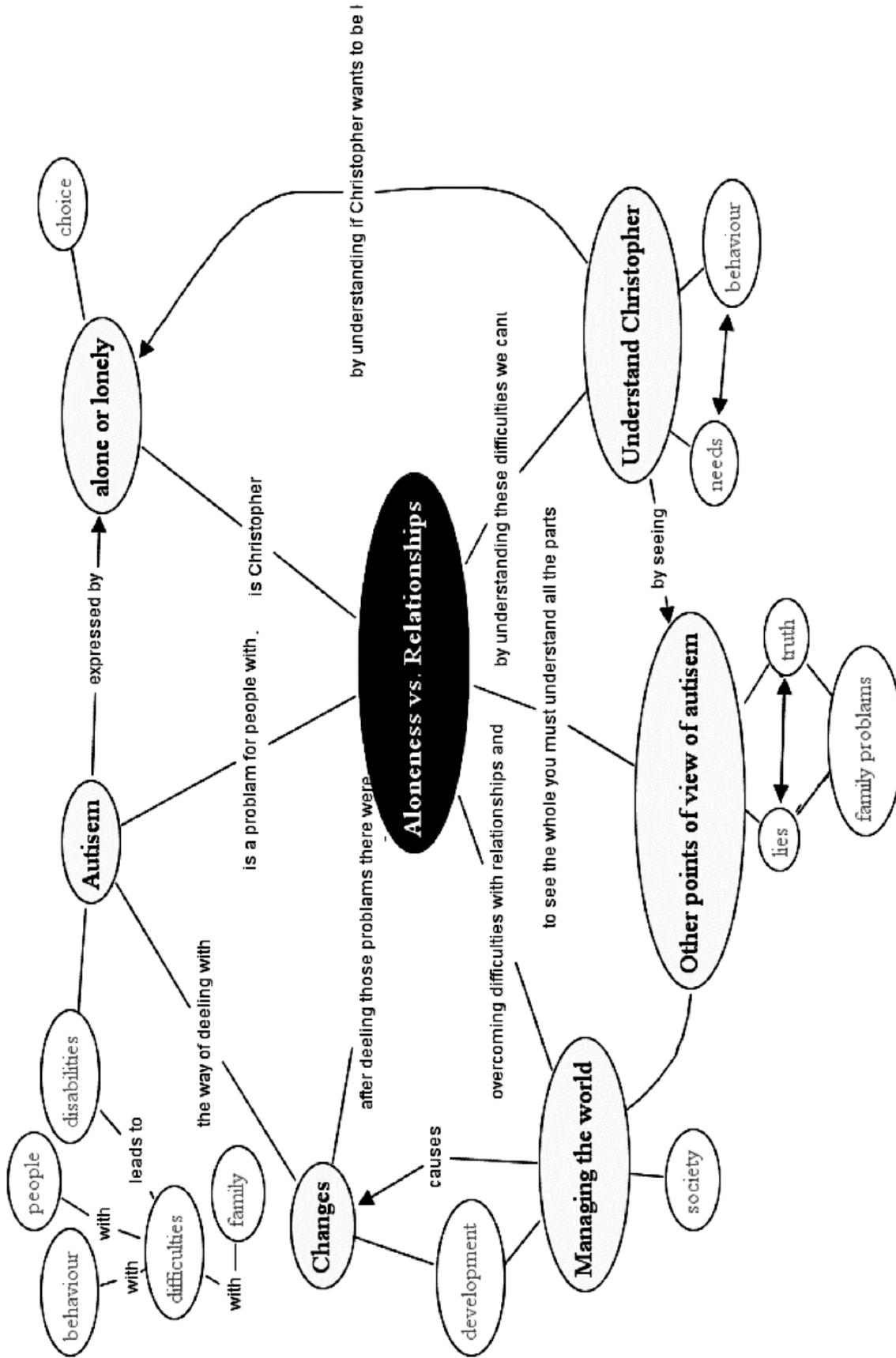
This kind of task need not be restricted to strong 5 point students. Last year we conducted this project with a strong native speaker class and a weak 4/5 point class. The results were spectacular and heart-warming in both cases.

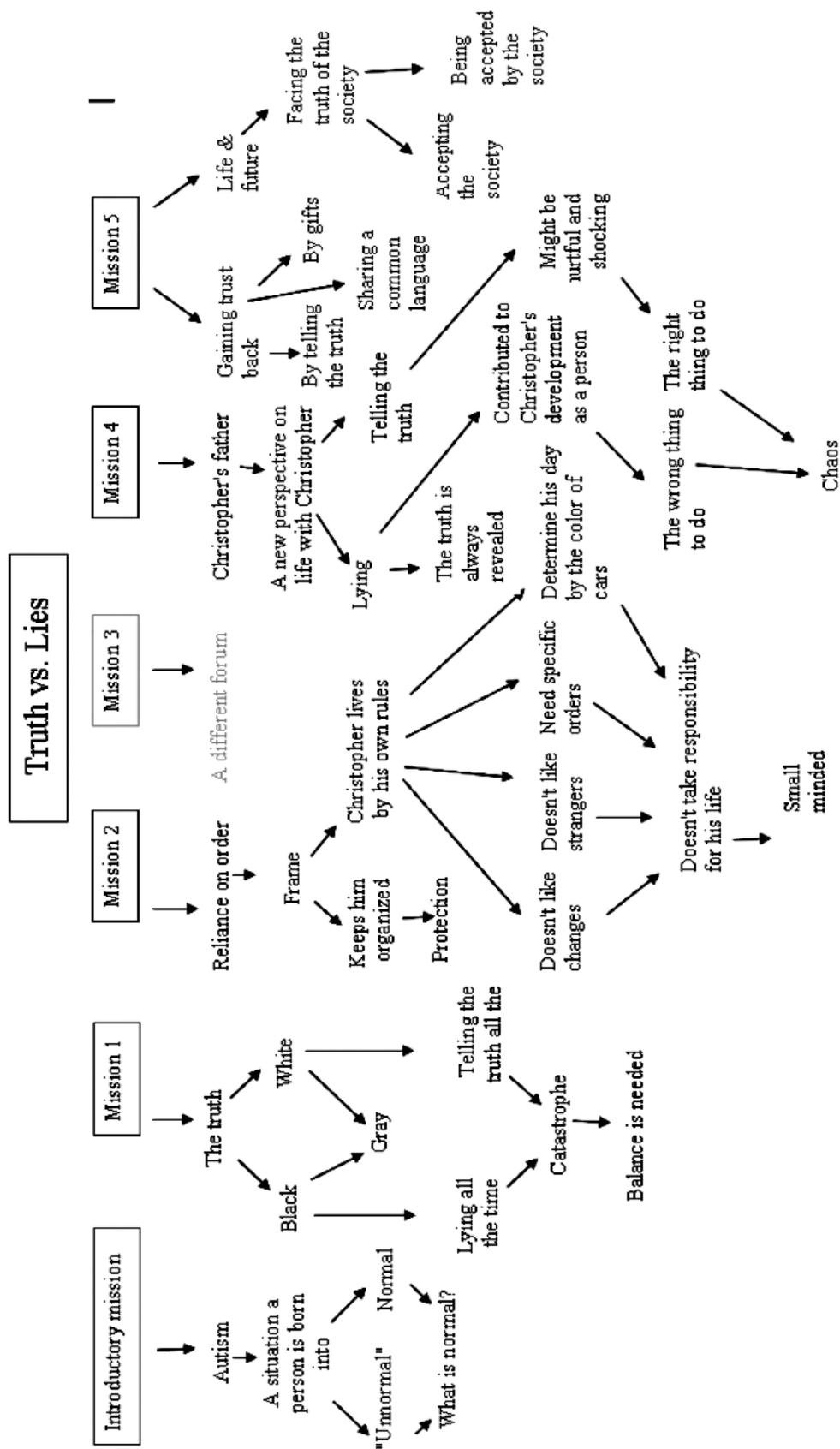
7. Flexibility and Openness NOT Pedantry

It is important NOT to judge the students’ grammar and spelling in their forum work. Response is geared to the thoughts, the insights and the evidence of HIGHER ORDER THINKING that they employ. Students weak in grammar skills are often insightful, sharp and perceptive. Working in the web-based environment offers them the opportunity to enter into discussions with confidence. Shy students who would never speak in class suddenly blossom forth with long and interesting discussions. The more they do this, the better their writing, grammar and spelling become.

Working in a web-based learning environment is a win-win situation. There are no losers. Perhaps the educator spends more time at home reading and responding to his/her students. But, the enthusiasm of the class and the glory of unfolding growth seem to be to be adequate reward for all of us who have dedicated ourselves to the growth of the young people in our charge.

APPENDIX 1 and 2 (The spelling errors are those of the pupils who designed the MOKs.)





Readers are encouraged to submit articles or letters in response to articles published in the ETAI Forum. Thank you to Raphael Gefen, former chief inspector, for his initiative.

ON THE ROLE OF THE MOTHER TONGUE IN FOREIGN-LANGUAGE TEACHING

Raphael Gefen
(rayag@bezeqint.net)

As always, Penny Ur in her article, “The Use of L1 in English Teaching”: ETAI FORUM Winter 2007, hits the nail on the head with her commonsense approach and I would like to support her views and findings on this particular issue.

AN UNFORTUNATE LEGACY OF THE “DIRECT METHOD”

The still too-common rejection of the mother tongue in foreign-language teaching is a relic of the Direct Method of pre-World-War-Two British imperialism (Michael West, etc.), when untrained, linguistically-deficient teachers from the “mother country” taught the “natives”; since in most cases these teachers were ignorant of the mother tongues of their pupils (many of whom spoke different mother tongues), their natural recourse was to use English only. The Audio-Lingual method, with its theoretical basis of structural linguistics and its recognition of “contrastive analysis” between languages, restored the notion that learners of English as a foreign language also had a mother tongue which should be taken into account. I would add that both these methods stressed that English should be taught as a means of global communication; in this respect that differed from the “grammar-translation” that had previously been the mode.

The English Curriculum / Syllabus 1988

In Israel, ever since the early 1970s, the use of the mother tongue as an aid to foreign-language learning has been allowed and encouraged. The curriculum (*American*) / syllabus (*British*) of 1988, for example, specifically posited the value of the L1 in the learning process, although it apparently did not sufficiently penetrate to the classroom level. The chapter on **Communicative Competence** urged learners to adopt “dictionary skills” as part of their **pragmatic competence** (“fluency”) and laid down that teachers should use “comparability with the mother tongue” as part of the teaching of grammar: “a thorough understanding of the meaning and use of a structure, including its translation into the pupil’s mother tongue”.

Regarding the teaching of vocabulary, teachers were instructed to “elicit a mother-tongue equivalent to as a check to ascertain that the pupils have indeed understood the meaning...Pupils should be trained in the use of a bilingual dictionary...”.

Moreover, the chapter on **Communicative Methodology: didactic techniques**, while stressing the use of English in classroom interaction, specifically advocates “contrast with the mother tongue” as one part of teaching vocabulary and grammar in *presenting* new material (and sometimes its testing) – but not in the *practice/drilling* or *creative* stages.

Finally, the 1988 curriculum / syllabus devotes a chapter to a **differential syllabus for less-able learners**, in which a **bilingual approach** is advocated.

The English Curriculum 2001

The approach of the current curriculum to this issue does not differ in essence from the 1988 curriculum (Benchmarks for the Domain of Appreciation of Language), so that this positive assessment of the value of the mother tongue in foreign-language learning should have been widely accepted and used in the classroom. Indeed, I would add a further benefit, not stated in either curriculum: the contrast between the languages enhances the pupils’ knowl-

edge of the mother tongue, sometimes broadening their L1 vocabulary or at least refining that knowledge in terms of grammar and vocabulary. Many native-speakers-of-English teachers might also benefit from this, I dare to say.

The Message Didn't Get Through

So it would appear from Penny Ur's research that there still exists a huge gap between the principles clearly stated in the former and the current curricula and the practice in the field, or at least the proclaimed beliefs in the field. I suspect that teachers' classroom behaviour is different, since any teacher worthy of the name is primarily interested in the pupils' success in language acquisition whatever the method, and so will include using L1. So this reluctance or rejection of the L1 stems from other sources. Are teacher-trainers at fault, which I doubt, since all those I know agree with the views expressed above? Are local Inspectors or counselors to blame? I find this hard to believe! Do textbooks still adhere to the direct method, perhaps hoping for international sales? Most books on methodology avoid the subject of translation – could this be an explanation?

Raphael Gefen was Chief Inspector for English 1967 – 1992 and a teacher of Applied Linguistics and of English Teaching Methodology at Oranim Teachers' College and at the Hebrew University. He is the author of numerous articles on ELT and was editor of the "English Teachers' Journal" (1968-1993) and is the editor of the "Oxford Student's Dictionary for Hebrew Speakers" and the "Passport English-Hebrew Learner's Dictionary". He is currently working as editor-in-chief and lexicographer of ELT advanced dictionaries for Kernerman Publishing.



Call for Articles

We await your contributions to the ETAI Forum. This is where you can make your voice heard!

Please submit all contributions as WORD documents as an attachment to an email. The name of the document should be the title of the article, or part of it. Please try to keep the language non-sexist and use they instead of he / she. We are interested in publishing references, but these should be included within the text. References should be written out in APA style. You can find this in the "OWL Handouts" put out by Purdue University <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts.research>.

If you have a photograph of yourself, or any other attractive visual material, like cartoons, we would be interested in receiving this.

At the end of the text, please include brief biodata about your professional life, including where you teach and any other significant information. Please include your email address.

You can submit your contributions to: etaiforum@gmail.com.

**SPELLBOUND: THE SURPRISING ORIGINS & ASTONISHING SECRETS
OF ENGLISH SPELLING**

By **James Essinger**

Delta Trade Publications, New York, 2007

A BOOK REVIEW David Young (*dlwhy04@yahoo.com*)

“Flamboyantly inconsistent, and in many ways ungovernable” is how Robert Burchfield, the past editor of the Oxford English Dictionary (and no doubt most of our pupils) would describe the state of English spelling today.

And if that description isn’t enough, then James Essinger adds that the English spelling system is “the most outrageous, illogical, idiosyncratic spelling system in the world (Preface p. xi).”

From this introduction and through the next 300 pages Essinger thoughtfully and seriously, but also humorously explains why the language we love and teach looks the way it does. After the first part which includes a chapter on “Method in the Madness,” he goes on to describe the history of our alphabet – a word first used in 1580 and records how our present 26-letter alphabet evolved.

According to Essinger, the Roman alphabet we use today is used by almost two billion people worldwide. Most of the Western European nations use it. Its letters include the Germanic language group (English, German, Dutch, and Icelandic etc.), the Romance group (French, Italian, and Portuguese etc.), the Slavic group (Polish, Czech, Slovak etc.) as well as the Baltic languages of Lithuania and Latvia. Even non-Indo-European languages as Hungarian, Finnish and Estonian use the same letters. Apart from those countries which use the Russian (Cyrillic) system, virtually everyone in Europe together with their present and past colonies, empires and spheres of influence uses the Roman ABC.

Hebrew is of course another exception to this Roman rule, but Essinger, the son of a Holocaust refugee, gives us credit for being the only example where a dead language was revived - through its writing - to become the living language it is today. He also quotes Turkey, where in 1928 Ataturk forced the nation to drop the Arabic script and replace it with the Roman one. By doing so, and also by discarding the fez and other forms of traditional Turkish dress, Ataturk aimed to modernise his backward country and bring it more into line with the West.

From discussing the development of the alphabet, Essinger goes on to describe the history of English spelling. Starting with the Anglo-Saxons who, because of religious reasons adopted the Roman alphabet, Essinger traces our spelling system to 1476 when William Caxton, a rich merchant brought the printing press to England. This was a huge step for orthography. From now on, the standardisation of the haphazard English spelling systems, much of it based on the regional dialects of Kent, Northmbia, Mercia and West Sussex was possible.

Nevertheless, inconsistencies did continue to exist. As an example, Essinger quotes four different ways of spelling “pity” (“pyty,” “pitie,” “pittie” and “pyttye”, (p.235).) in post-Caxton Elizabethan England, while the greatest Elizabethan writer, the Bard of Avon, spelt his name in at least two different ways: Shakspeare and Shakspeare.

While all these changes were under way, Elizabethan lexicographers, such as Richard Mucaster (1582) and Robert Cowdry (1603) attempted to bring some order to this chaotic situation. However, their efforts were often thwarted by printers who would add extra letters, especially in order to achieve a pleasing aesthetic effect when they wished to justify the lines on their pages.

Perhaps the only person who single-handedly introduced any lasting changes and reform in English spelling was the patriotic American and ex-lawyer now schoolmaster and grammarian, Noah Webster (1758-1843). Through his famous Blue-Backed Speller (1783), Webster standardised and simplified American spelling. Essinger says that the American lexicographer’s reforms were motivated by his belief that “grammar is founded on language” and not the other way round. This meant it was usage, and not grammar, that really mattered.

Essinger closes this fascinating book by debating the question of Spelling Reform. He writes, “All attempts to reform English spelling have one thing in common: They are failures (p.278).” He describes the various ideas and systems from George Bernard Shaw’s completely new alphabet to IPA, the International Phonetic Alphabet and ITA, the Initial Teaching Alphabet with its 44 letters which was fashionable for a while in England forty years ago. Essinger also states that whatever principle you adopt to reform English spelling, be it, standardisation of symbols/sounds, adding new letters, or introducing a brand new alphabet or by making Webster-like changes, the conclusion is that, “On the whole,

attempted spelling reforms of the English spelling system have never been anything more than a series of dead ends in the story of spelling (p.281).”

He adds that the only changes that may come about are the accepted and increasingly standardised abbreviations that are the result of the electronic cost-per-word use as in SMS’s, such as m8 (mate), msg (message) and CU (see you). But for those teachers who have been as long in the field (whoops, classroom) as I have, do not fear. Essinger’s final msg is that we will not become old-fashioned as

“Our marvel and wonder at our heritage as users of the English spelling system, however, have not worn off in 1500 years and surely never shall. We are destined to be spellbound by English spelling forever (p. 293).”

David L. Young has been teaching English in Junior & High schools, universities and Adult Education courses since making Aliya from England in 1968. He now teaches English at the Academy for Science & Arts, Jerusalem and has an MA in Eng. Lit & Lang from Tel-Aviv University. He edited and revamped Communicating in English and has published two historical novels: Tolpuddle, and Gunpowder, Treason and Plot. He’s currently working on a novel about Shakespeare’s early life.

Netsurfing Column

NETSURFING

Miri Yochanna (*miri.yochanna@gmail.com*)

Hello there, it’s me again. I hope you’ve had a good year so far.

Here are some wonderful sites for your in-class use. Each could also function as a resource site but since there is so much there that the students can do, let them. Of course you can try them out too before you give them to the students. I hope you enjoy these sites.

Remember, if you have good sites to recommend, let me know at *miri.yochanna@gmail.com*

Miri

Name	National Geographic for Kids
Address: http://kids.nationalgeographic.com	
Category	Class work, online work and also resource
What’s in the site?	There is so much here it’s amazing. There are articles, games, videos, activities and more. The best thing is that it’s all aimed at kids, so the level is appropriate and the kids can enjoy what they read. For example, if you click on Animals, you get a number of pictures and once you’ve chosen the animal you want to read about, you get a picture and text. The text is divided into bits, so each time you read just a little bit. There is plenty here for the teacher to take as resource material as well as material that can be used on line in class. Of course if you give the kids the site URL, they can play the games at home too. Another nice feature is that each time a main section is clicked, a new subsection list opens up, offering even more to choose from.
My personal favorite	Other than the Amazing Animals section, which I think is fabulous, there is the section called ‘Stories’. This section offers a variety of stories on different topics. Each story is divided into small bits and is accompanied by pictures. Then as an added bonus, each topic has links on the right to other features that are topic related.
Possible uses	I can see this site used in class as reading activities, on line games, pair work where the students have to read together and produce something. The site can also be used as a resource site but it’s such a beautiful site, it’s a shame to use it as resource only.

Name	Buddy²
Address: http://www.buddyproject.org/jfy/kids/articles/fieldtrip.asp	
Category	Resource for students for class project
What's in the site?	Buddy ² has a collection of links to a huge variety of other ideas. But this particular page is called "Plan a trip – See the world" and it has step by step detailed instructions for planning a trip, and for the follow up to it. There are links that take the students to various places, gives them guidelines on how to plan things and where to go to find out more information.
My personal favorite	I love the details, the organized planning and especially the after the journey activities. Each of these leads the students to work on a different aspect of the journey / trip / vacation that they virtually planned. It could be in the manner of a journal, a story they write or even a drawing and some writing. It's absolutely lovely.
Possible uses	I see this as an ongoing project in class where the students work, say once a week, at the computers in pairs and design a trip, with all the necessary elements and then write a journal about it.

Name	Interactives
Address: http://www.learner.org/interactives/index.html	
Category	Online work at various levels
What's in the site?	This site is made up of many different site links which lead to so many options for your use in class. This time I am focusing on three different links, each dealing with language arts but for different age groups and completely different issues.
Link 1:	Spelling Bee - http://www.learner.org/interactives/spelling/index.html - just what it says – a spelling bee site. So cool. You listen to a story that has missing words. You have to fill in the words. You can listen over and over and even get a hint. There are various levels from grade one level for native speakers to grade 11-12. These could easily be used in any grade level here in Israel.
Link 2:	Literature and Elements of a story http://www.learner.org/interactives/story/index.html - http://www.learner.org/interactives/literature This is just what it says – literature. The first link presents story of "Cinderella" and the second one presents, "A Jury of Her Peers", which is a much higher level. Each story is divided into parts. Some of the parts lead to learning about various elements of literature such as plot, theme, character, setting, and point of view. Each of these elements has its own link and it teaches what it is and how to deal with it.
Link 3:	http://www.learner.org/interactives/historical/index.html – This link takes the students into reading historical texts of various kinds – newspapers, journals, letters and so on. After each reading passage there are questions that check comprehension and the ability to notice details. It also checks general knowledge to some extent.
My personal favorite	I really liked them all this time around and find it hard to choose. The Spelling Bee is excellent and the historical readings are great (I love history in general). The Literature section really expands the use of stories and literature in class, making it much more sophisticated and real for the students.
Possible uses	Each of these are for in class use, over a period of time, each time working on a different level / topic. The information can be used for resources, but the site easily lends itself to internet work in as a classroom activity.
NOTE	These links are part of the larger link above. There are links to interactives in different subjects. Since they are all in English, you could have the students do some science in English or some math in English.

Save the date!

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MONDAY, APRIL 14th, 2008

12:30 – 6:30 p.m.



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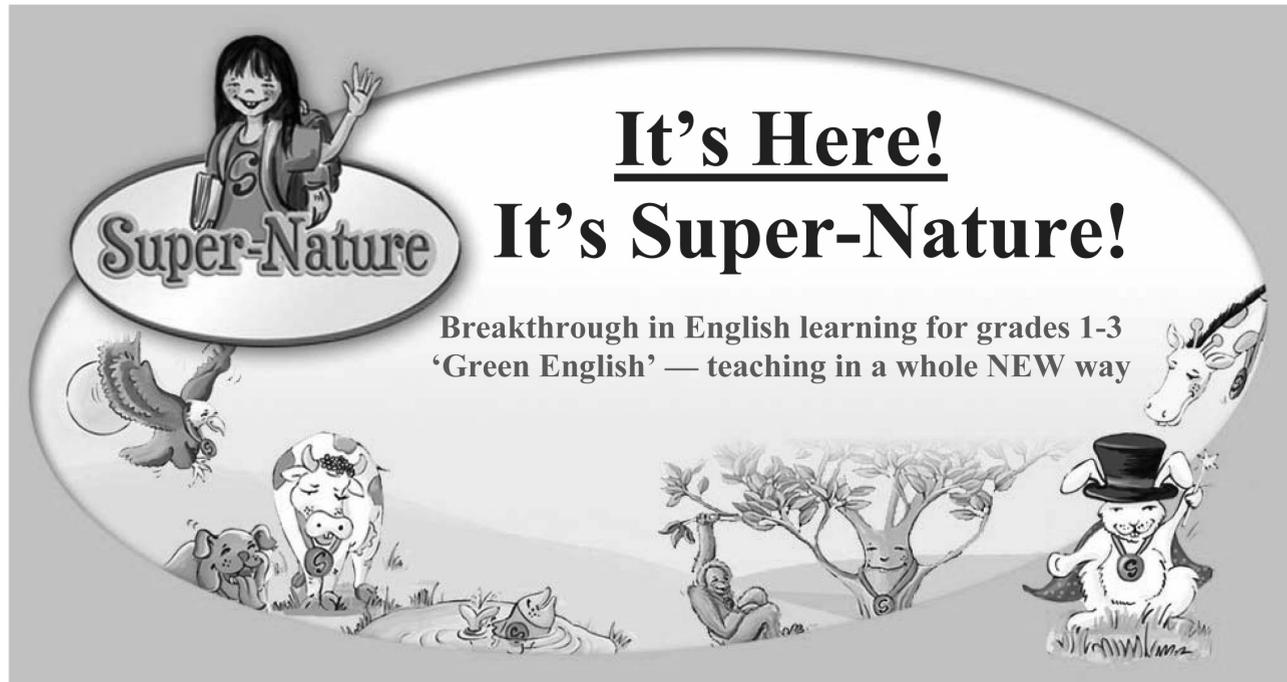
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