Making productive use of the five minutes before class begins

Makoto Negishi

Teachers typically come to their classrooms 5-10 minutes before class starts, but students often times arrive just before class begins (or, unfortunately, they might arrive late). How can teachers “trick” students into coming to class earlier, and, in addition, facilitate students’ learning of the target language and culture by using the 5 minutes before class begins? During this 5-minute golden opportunity, teachers can signal to students that the language class is unofficially starting, create a positive language-class mood, provide students with extra class content or recycle content already introduced, and acquaint students with cultural aspects of the target culture of potential interest to students. These teaching strategies stem from the author’s experience teaching a Japanese as a foreign language class in the United States. However, there are certainly parallels to be drawn for any type of ESL classroom. In this article, I introduce how I have productively used the five minutes before class with my Japanese as a foreign language students. That is followed by a discussion of similar techniques, with specific examples, that can be adapted for a range of ESL classes.

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Using authentic video as an attractor

The productive use of the five minutes before class, as a deliberate teaching technique, was first incorporated into a second-year Japanese course which I taught at Northern Arizona University in the spring semester of 2013. There were 12 students in my class. The class met four times per week; each class session was 50 minutes long. One effective way to implement the “productive 5-minute strategy” is quite simple: play a short video clip (less than 5 minutes long) from online before class begins. The video clip can showcase a song, an interview, or even a collection of commercials in the target language. Preferably, videos should play a role in exposing students to (a) cultural aspects of the target language (Japanese, in my case), (b) examples of language that are used in context (vocabulary or sentence structures that students previously have learned in class), and (c) topics that are related to what they have read about for class. More importantly, the contents of the video clips can be used to entertain your students!

Below is the list of videos that I showed to my Japanese as a foreign language students in the five minutes before class in the spring semester of 2013. I have grouped them into six categories based on their contents. (Note that all the videos are from YouTube, except for one video of a Sedona trip.) How do I use them? I start playing the video for 3-5 minutes before class begins. Occasionally, I spend a few minutes at the very beginning of the “official” class period soliciting students’ reactions to what they noticed in the video and discussing the contents of the video with my students. This teacher-student interaction can be done either in Japanese or English. I occasionally start the class without mentioning the videos shown. When I take this approach, the videos are simply meant to increase students’ exposure to Japanese. All the videos are posted on the class BBLearn site, so that students have access to them later, if they are interested in viewing the materials again.

**Topic 1: Role models**

- Interview of an environmentalist/writer from Wales engaged in efforts to increase the food self-sufficiency rate in Japan.
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8L1MjWxsnF0&feature=channel_page

- Interviews of an American guitarist who collaborates with Japanese musicians.

**Topic 2: Cultural differences**

- Canned coffee commercial collections.
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZpfYldH_HM

- The shape of Japanese air-conditioners.

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Benefits of playing short video clips before class

The effectiveness of playing short videos and the value of occasional teacher-student interactions about video contents are worth noting. First, students’ responses to the use of video clips before class, in response to informal class evaluations, showed that they favored the videos. They noticed that the video clips corresponded to what they were learning and felt that it was “a fun way to start class.” In addition, one student noted that she prefers to learn vocabulary in contextualized examples, such as in songs. Another student responded that he found teacher-student interactions fulfilling, while another student liked “how the class incorporates cultural aspects of Japan into the language class.” These reflections, though specifically from my Japanese class, are reflective of language learners’, including ESL students’, expectations of language classrooms. Although the last two responses do not explicitly refer to video-clip use, the productive use of the five minutes before class suggested here can help teachers satisfy students’ learning appetites with a context-rich environment for language learning along with teacher-student interactions.

Secondly, this classroom technique has caught numerous ESL teachers’ attention during their classroom observations of my Japanese class. They found it beneficial and applicable to ESL classrooms. One of them has reported that he started playing English songs before class to create a good mood for his ESL class. The positive comments from language students and ESL teachers demonstrate the usefulness of this technique and its applicability to ESL classrooms.

Parallels for ESL classrooms

Now is the time for ESL teachers to explore the effectiveness of this before-class technique. The six

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<tr>
<th>5 minutes before class</th>
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<tr>
<td>The shape of a snowman in Japan</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ynDOLZZPZI">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ynDOLZZPZI</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Japanese pudding</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhSbPdSxE7w">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhSbPdSxE7w</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Japanese outdoor music concerts.</td>
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Topic 3: Traditional culture / Seasonal topics

- Virtual tour of a cherry blossom season picnic. 
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ0IWhooCnU
- Bean-throwing festival. 
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7Wk-XXQqW0
- Sumo wrestling. 
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kx793-ARJg
- A Japanese song performed by local Japanese musicians from Northern Japan, dedicated to relief from damage caused by Great Tohoku Earthquake. 
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3woUe-b-Zc

Topic 4: Japanese songs

- Japanese songs including vocabulary and sentence structures taught in class. 
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0S2kcVdu6yg
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Gjc11ZQs
- A very popular Japanese pop song, which does not exhibit particular target linguistic items, but which does capture the interest of my students. 
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nly4cvRx7Vc

Topic 5: Class topic-related concerns

- Car commercial collections in which the Japanese cartoon that students read about is incorporated. 
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROBeNUUlCnM
  (You can turn the English captions off by clicking “hide annotations” on the tool bar of the video.)
- An interview with John Lennon’s son after reading about biographies of John Lennon and Yoko Ono in a previous class meeting. 
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6EVv3JOsIo
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnKyyvlp4Yg

Topic 6: Places familiar to students

- A video of a Japanese TV figure traveling to Sedona. 
  http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMjg3ODQ0NDI4.html

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ynDOLZZPZI
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DhSbPdSxE7w
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQ0IWhooCnU
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7Wk-XXQqW0
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kx793-ARJg
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3woUe-b-Zc
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http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6EVv3JOsIo
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QnKyyvlp4Yg
http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XMjg3ODQ0NDI4.html
categories in the video list provided earlier are compatible with ESL students’ interests. However, what makes my teaching situation different from ESL classrooms is that ESL teachers tend to teach students from different language and cultural backgrounds. This being said, ESL teachers can utilize videos that demonstrate American cultural life skills (e.g., how to use an American can opener, what the differences are among types of cheeses, and what an “ice scraper” is) to help international students during their stay in the States. If teachers understand the different cultural backgrounds of the international students in their classes, they can tailor their selection of video clips to their audience.

Below is the list of possible video topics that I would suggest for ESL classrooms. If a video is longer than five minutes, only play select parts of the video. Students can watch the remaining parts if the link is provided by the teacher. When selecting video clips for the five minutes before your class, make sure that you avoid video segments containing offensive language or sexual contents, especially in “Popular music” (one of the topics introduced in the following list). Either find alternative videos or skip classroom-inappropriate parts as necessary.

### Topic 1: Life skills
- A video of how to use an American can opener because the shape of a can opener is somewhat different culture by culture.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPfG2f5x0)
- A video of someone exploring an American grocery store. (Skip scenes introducing alcohol aisles as necessary.)  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bs5zfeKced8)
- Videos of severe weather in America and how people in America deal with blizzards, tornadoes, and so on.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7J7NlaHlvU)
- A slideshow of famous people’s quotations because some students are into famous American athletes or TV figures.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Br3CxaLOBRc)

### Topic 2: Food reviews
- Series of videos in which various types of American frozen foods are reviewed. Some cultures care about food very much.

### Topic 3: Culture shock
- Videos of international students describing their experiences in America. Preferably, select videos of students from different cultures with stories that are relevant to a heterogeneous group of ESL students.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ckdtV6qE5Dc)
- [Culture shock](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AThq9wGkp-E)  
  [Reverse culture shock](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3pg0Uix4z1)

### Topic 4: Travel-related contents
- A video clip or picture slideshow of a virtual trip to Sedona, the Grand Canyon, or other visit-worthy places in Arizona or elsewhere in America.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrmaezxEnEQ)
- A video of an American traveling to one of your students’ home countries.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VPqy8xRmy-w)

### Topic 5: Local community events or personalities
- A video of the first Friday art walk in Flagstaff downtown.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRvYglgp6o)
- A short documentary video of a marathon race in Sedona.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gyThf2SYMQ)
- A video excerpt featuring an athlete from your school’s sports teams.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdYSu6Uheag)
- A video of local business owners.  
  [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePLQVyGqIcE)

### Topic 6: Popular music
- Popular songs; these classics are catchy and possibly familiar to ESL students because these songs (see the following examples) are oftentimes used for commercials or in movies all over the world.  
  - “Fly Me To The Moon”  
    [Video File](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmYIC0lmlng)
Video topics such as these are beneficial for ESL students for many reasons. They can serve to entertain them, stimulate their interests towards learning English in America, and create a good mood for the language class. ESL classes oftentimes integrate students’ culture shock and travel experiences in students’ projects (e.g., in daily English journal entries, students’ biography booklets, and video-making projects about culture shock). Why don’t teachers use students’ previous experiences to look for connections between students’ interests and video topics? If you cannot find good videos, have your students make one of those videos as part of their projects, keep them, and play them for your future students before class begins (with your students’ consent, of course). If technology is not available in your classroom, teachers can bring photos of beautiful places or posters with quotations. As another alternative, teachers can create posters of music, food, and book reviews from magazines or the Internet and put these materials on the wall or whiteboard where they can catch students’ eyes. Music can be played on your music player as well.

Conclusion

The video-showing tip presented in this article showcases the potential to help learners make associations between what they have learned in class and “how” it is used in real-life settings. Most classrooms are equipped with technology today. Teachers and students can benefit from the under-exploited 5 minutes before class begins by using technology. Outside our classes, learners read less and spend more time watching videos and pictures online. By sneaking their technology habit into the “extra” five minutes before class, which we have neglected for a long time, we can stimulate students’ interests in language learning and cultural learning and get them to class early!

Makoto Negishi is a second year MA-TESL student at Northern Arizona University, where he also teaches first- and second-year Japanese courses as a graduate teaching assistant. He is interested in vocabulary learning, second language reading, and pragmatics.

Deconstructing inferences

Dan Isbell

Inferencing is a deep-processing task that students tend to have more difficulty with, relative to say, identifying or classifying. What makes inferencing so complex is that it requires someone to fill in something that is not presented explicitly in a text (written or spoken), generally using logic and pre-existing knowledge (and in the case encountered often by language teachers, linguistic knowledge). While there are competing taxonomies of inferences, in general there appears to be a loose consensus that two primary categories exist: intratextual and extratextual. Intratextual inferences are fairly well contained within a text, where one fills in the unstated gaps between given information (other, frequently used names for these types of inferences are “text-connecting” or “bridging” inferences). Extratextual inferences involve elaborating upon the information given in a text, often connecting to previously read text or known information, to form a novel conclusion or prediction (Graesser, Singer, & Trabasso, 1994).

During this recent summer session, I taught an advanced reading and vocabulary course to a small group of Middle Eastern men who all had post-secondary education and work experience. They all possessed quite high aural/oral skills, but were some-
what weaker in reading and writing, and were generally unaccustomed to reading to learn and reading critically (in English, at least). The students had little difficulty making intratextual inferences (though sometimes connecting pronouns to complex referents could be a challenge). However, they struggled, to a degree, with the concept of extratextual inferences, often conflating inferencing with identifying facts presented in a text or forming more subjective opinions. Some of their difficulties may have been related to differing cultural models of inferencing, where for example, Westerners tend to infer the qualities of a person based on what the person says, in contrast to people from Eastern cultures placing more weight on what others say about a person (Peng, Ames, & Knowles, 2001). However much cultural factors were at play, I felt that orienting my students to the sorts of inferences that are the norm in American academic settings as well as helping them succeed in understanding extratextual inferencing in general would be beneficial for their very near future as full-time students at an American university.

**Method**

To help my students better understand inferencing, and hopefully acquire and develop strategies for making their own inferences as well as improve performance on inference test items, I took the approach of deconstructing inferences. By “deconstructing”, I mean starting with the inference and breaking down the parts (or steps) which allowed the inference to be made. Working with passages we were reading as a class, I provided students a worksheet with inferences that I (or the coursebook) made in the following format (Figure 1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inference</th>
<th>Evidence (From the text)</th>
<th>My Knowledge and/or Logic</th>
</tr>
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</table>

By providing students with the end product of inferencing, they were invited to focus on the essential earlier steps in the process: identifying relevant information from a text and applying their pre-existing knowledge or logic to reach an implicit conclusion. This helped them differentiate between information presented in a text, their own opinions, and inferences, as the latter requires both information from a text as well as some of the general knowledge and/or logic that is often part of forming opinions; essentially, helping them understand that an inference requires something more. Initially, I modeled the activity by conducting a think-aloud of my own process for identifying the elements that support the inference, and then invited students to contribute textual information and reasoning/background knowledge for another example. For the remainder of the activity, students independently consulted the text to find relevant evidence and then defended the provided inferences using their own reasoning or knowledge. To illustrate, consider the following inference that could be made about a class reading describing the “hub-and-spoke” system for air travel: Large airline companies want to maintain the hub-and-spoke system. Students then identified several key pieces of information, including the hub-and-spoke system’s operational efficiency, increased ability to fill hub-to-hub flights with passengers, and popularity among the major US airlines. They then could reason that the hub-and-spoke system’s features offered several benefits for major carriers and that, conversely, profits would probably be lower without the system in place. In the case of my students, I believe this activity connected especially well with their strong argumentation abilities (and ideally, this sort of searching for supporting facts from a text would help their academic writing progress as well!).

**Figure 1. Deconstructing inferences format.**

Inferences continued from page 5

Inference continued on page 7
Impressions

After using this format a couple times, it appeared that students had a better grasp on making extratextual inferences and generally reacted positively to the activity, expressing greater confidence in making inferences. They also had acquired a new strategy for verifying answers on traditional inference test items. Overall performance on inference objectives in class assessments improved and informal observation in the classroom found less frequent struggles with the concept. If your students seem to be struggling with inferences, especially of the extratextual variety, consider allowing them to “reverse-engineer” inferences to highlight the elements needed to make inferences and provide them with a potentially useful reading strategy.

References


Dan Isbell is an instructor at the Program in Intensive English at Northern Arizona University. He can be reached at: Daniel.R.Isbell@nau.edu

Culture conflicts

Douglas Magrath

From the very first word, the study of a second language is the study of another culture. “Cultural involvement begins as soon as the student, at even the most elementary level, moves from the analysis of language to language use.” (Crawford-Lange and Lange, 140) But what is culture? Brown gives a good definition:

Culture might be defined as the ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools which characterize a given group of people in a given period of time...Culture thus establishes for each person a context of cognitive and affective behavior, a blueprint for personal and social existence. (Brown(1),123)

Language and culture can be viewed as a lens for learning for all students, English language learners in particular. All teachers, regardless of their classroom demographics, should engage in culturally relevant teaching to stimulate getting students to the deepest levels of thinking and the highest levels of personal achievement. It is through culturally-responsive teaching, a proven research-based practice, that teachers can highlight the linguistic and cultural resources of English language learners and use them as a springboard for instruction. (Tips from the top, 2012)

By way of example, put yourself in the place of someone entering a new culture. An American student is in Latin America and relates the following:

I got a little too excited about this good looking young lady, you know? I tried to make conversation with her and I guess she felt like I was coming on too strong. I mean, I just wanted to talk to her. I guess she couldn’t understand me because the next thing I knew, four cops were hauling me off. (Lucas, 89)

Social interchange and visiting patterns will be different. Even the concept of privacy is different. The Arabic word for privacy, wahdah, also means “loneliness.”

A British resident in Beirut once complained that he and his wife had almost no time to be alone. Arab friends and neighbors kept dropping in unexpectedly and often stayed late. He said, “I have one friend who telephoned and said, ‘I haven’t seen you anywhere. Where have you been for the last three days?’” (Nydell, 33)

Students studying ESL in an English speaking country have similar problems of adjustment. A Haitian author writes the following:
When as a new arrival in the United States, my heavy Haitian Creole accent made me too shy to speak, I could always pour my soul out in my note books and journals, and even in class assigned essays...To have someone ask me to express myself in my new language, was as thrilling as watching snow fall for the first time. (Writing Report, 11)

Cultural concerns continue as ESL learners transition to academic classes. Note the following by Magrath (2008):

In regular classes, the predominant activity in mainstream classes is teacher-led discussion, but ESL learners have particular trouble understanding input that is sarcastic, ironic, or which contains puns. Learners are also frustrated with teachers who speak fast or who often depart from the topic at hand. (p. 32)

Culture ties in to language:

Through our use of linguistic symbols with others, we establish goals, negotiate the means to reach them, and reconceptualise those we have set. At the same time, we articulate and manage our individual identities, our interpersonal relationships, and memberships in our social groups and communities. (Hall, J. 2012, 7)

What should we as ESL/ESOL teachers do? Gebhard suggests four concepts that can be taught: adapting behavior, problem solving, getting to know individuals, and studying your own culture in order to understand another. (Gebhard, 119) In order to understand other cultures, “we first need to recognize that our habits, mannerisms, attitudes, preferences, and values are shaped by our own culture. We need to understand what sets American culture apart from others.” (Heusinkveld, 79)
Culture conflicts  continued from page 8

- shops?
- 4. Does one pay a fixed price or bargain? (Magrath, D. 1997).
- 4. An article (a kitchen tool or item of clothing, for example) is brought to class and discussed.
- 1. Describe the object.
- 2. How was it made? By hand or machine?
- 3. What is its purpose? Who uses it?
- 4. What role does it play in the culture?
- 5. What facts can be determined from the culture by studying this object?
- 6. Compare it with something similar in your culture.
- 7. Would the culture be any different if this did not exist?

Mainly, ESL instructors need to be aware of the cultural differences of the different groups they encounter and help these students make the transition to the culture of the host nation. Linguistic knowledge alone is not enough for someone living in a foreign language environment. Cross-cultural communication is a vital part of any language program. The activities presented in this article can provide a route to cultural communication and help relieve some of the discomfort experienced by those suddenly thrust into a new culture.

References


Douglas Magrath is an Instructor in the American English and Culture Program at Arizona State University in Tempe.
What’s our big hairy audacious goal?

Recently, I was invited to speak at my daughter’s National Honor Society Induction Ceremony. As I prepared that speech, I noticed that the ideals of that society (scholarship, leadership, service and character) happened to align closely with the goals and aspirations that the AZ-TESOL Board set in place at our June 8th meeting.

Our ultimate goal is to be the premiere, reliable community where English language professionals at all levels can network and develop professionally in the southwest region. How will we accomplish this?

First, we are going to increase our online presence by enhancing our website and by having a larger social media presence. Thanks to our web manager Dennis Oliver, our newsletter editor Paul Meloccaro, and our hospitality chair and Facebook page manager Carol Kubota, we’re off to a good start. I encourage you to like our Facebook page at:

https://www.facebook.com/aztesol

Our next focus will be to strengthen the organization’s partnerships and relationships. To accomplish this, we will reach out to the Arizona Department of Education’s Office of English Language Acquisition Services and literacy groups such as Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning (AALL).

Additionally, we will expand our advocacy efforts. In order to do so, we will partner with other organizations such as Arizona affiliates of the International Reading Association to issue opinion statements on issues that have an impact on English language instructors and instruction. On a personal note, I was thrilled to be able to represent our affiliate at the 2013 TESOL Advocacy Summit along with our Socio-Political Chair, Paula Schlusberg. We learned about ways that one can advocate and the importance of making our voices heard. To do so, Paula and I met with four of our Arizona Congressional delegates to make a plea to restore the funding to educational programs to pre-sequestration levels.

Lastly, we want to be a source for excellent professional development. To do this, we will continue to seek excellent and relevant presenters at our state conferences. In partnership with our new friends at the Arizona Department of Education, we will offer webinars to our members.

I look forward to helping accomplish all of these goals. It has been an honor to serve the Board as the President this past year.

Respectfully,
Marjaneh Gilpatrick
The Arizona Association for Lifelong Learning (AALL) would like to invite you to attend our Annual Awards Conference, “Strengthen Your Common Core”, on Friday, October 25 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Pima College Adult Education’s El Rio Learning Center, 1390 W. Speedway Blvd., Tucson, AZ. Topics that will be covered at the conference will include the GED 2014, College and Career Readiness for ESL and GED students, Hybrid Teaching and Learning, and aligning with the Common Core Standards.

AALL is a professional organization for Adult Educators. AALL’s mission is to strive to improve opportunities for educational growth by promoting and inspiring lifelong learning and adult literacy in Arizona.

For more information about AALL or about our Awards Conference, or to register for the conference, please visit AALL’s website at

www.az-aall.org

Register now for the 2013 State Conference, co-sponsored by Pima Community College, West Campus, in Tucson on Saturday, October 26th. The Conference will be held at Pima Community College, West Campus from 8:00-4:30. On-site registration will begin at 7:30.

This year’s keynote speaker will be Doris Warriner from Arizona State University. There will be over 50 workshops, demonstrations, and roundtable discussions as well as exhibitors and raffle prizes. Conference registration information can be found at:


You may register online or by mail. Until October 13th, reduced pre-registration rates of $55.00 (students/part-time teachers/retired), $70.00 (AZ-TESOL members), and $90.00 (non-members) are in effect. After October 13th, these rates will increase to the corresponding on-site rates of $65.00, $80.00, and $100.00. Registration includes a one-year membership and lunch.

We look forward to seeing everyone on October 26th in Tucson!
AZ-TE SOL
2013 State Conference
“English: Helping Dreams Come True”
Saturday, October 26, 2013

Arizona Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages
in partnership with
Pima Community College
West Campus
2202 W. Anklam Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85709

Registration: az-tesol.org
Call for Proposals

2014 Central Area Mini-Conference
Articulation and the Common Core

Saturday, February 8th, 2014
Phoenix College
Phoenix, Arizona

Invited panel discussions from Grand Canyon University,
Arizona State University and Phoenix College

AZ-TESOL believes that all teachers are language teachers.

We invite educators in the fields of English Language Teaching and English Language Arts (both ESL and mainstream English) from K-12, community college, immigrant and refugee, and university settings to submit proposals. We are looking specifically for presentations that reflect exemplary curriculum at the classroom level. An ideal presentation from a K-12 teacher would outline a teacher’s curriculum choices and highlight specific projects and activities that exemplify the teaching of the Common Core standards. For those working with adults, an ideal presentation would focus on challenging and rigorous assignments given in class that students tend to struggle with. For either K-12 or adult, the presentations should highlight prerequisite skills that the instructor believes students should have in order to be more successful in their class. These skills may or may not be official requirements for enrollment in the course. The purpose of the mini-conference is to provide participants with new insights into how individual educators approach their curriculum and how to better prepare students for the rigors of higher level learning.

Please see the guidelines on the following page for types of presentations and submissions.

Submit proposals by email to Richard Bailey at aztesolconferenceinfo@yahoo.com

Deadline for proposals is December 2nd, 2013.
Types of Presentations

**Demonstrations**: 45 minutes – These sessions focus on showing how something is done with handouts and visual aids.

**Panel Discussions**: 45 minutes - A panel of three or four presents their findings or experiences relevant to the conference theme of articulation and the Common Core. A panel consists of a moderator who introduces the topic and the panelists who present different aspects of the topic. Questions from the audience are addressed during the presentation or afterwards, whatever the panel prefers.

Submission Guidelines

**Presenters**
- All presenters, including members of panels, must register for and pay for the conference.
- All presenters must confirm the day and time of their presentation within 10 days of acceptance.
- Presenters who for unforeseen reasons cannot attend the conference must contact the program chair, Richard Bailey, before the conference begins (aztesolconferenceinfo@yahoo.com).

**Proposals**
- **Title**: Limit to 9 words or less. Carefully consider the wording for your title as it is the most visible advertisement to attract an audience. It is what will be in the conference program. Make it interesting and relevant.
- **Proposal summary**: Limit to 50 words or less. The summary appears in the program book and supplements your title. Indicate your target audience. Please double check spelling and grammar.
- **Proposal abstract**: Limit to 175 words or less. This will be seen only by those who are deciding whether or not to accept your proposal. Carefully pay attention to the criteria given below as you prepare your proposal.
- **List of equipment needed for your presentation**: Each room is equipped with presentation stations that can accommodate PowerPoint presentations, internet access, and hook ups for personal computers (it is advisable to bring your own flash drive).
- **Biography of each presenter**: Limit to 30 words for each.

*Please be sure your proposal contains a title, summary, abstract, list of equipment needed, and a biography of each presenter.*

Evaluation of Proposals

- Appropriateness and significance of the topic for the topic of articulation
- Well focused topic appropriate to the time limits of the presentation type
- Clear and well-organized description of how the presentation will proceed
- Clearly stated purpose and basis for the presentation (i.e. what is the question being answered? Why is it interesting? What is the source of information? How was the information gathered/analyzed? How will the information be shared with participants? What are the applications/implications?)
Reaching out: How an ELD teacher can bridge the communication gap
Ronni Noyce

One of the most important things we can do as teachers, whether of ELL, mainstream, or dual language students, is to communicate with our students’ families. I found this out several years ago, when I first began working with ELLs, particularly those of refugee communities living and working near my then school site.

I began by going to any possible professional development opportunity or seminar on multi-cultural understanding, and investigating my district’s policies on communicating with students’ families, especially in regards to official communications, such as forms. I found out about Meaningful Access through the Language Acquisition Department, which included making sure to provide a trained, certified interpreter for meetings and conferences. This could sometimes prove challenging, however.

Often the interpreters were difficult to schedule, especially if there was only one available in the district that spoke a specific dialect. Then there was the logistics of getting several parents and the interpreter together in the same room, to proceed with school orientation or individual conferences. But the effort was usually rewarded with better understanding of the school community, as well as increased trust between school, teacher, and families.

Another way I found to connect with students and their families was to go out into the neighborhood, buy things from the markets there, eat lunch in the restaurants, or take them up on invitations to visit their homes. This isn’t always possible for busy teachers, but an occasional weekend visit or afterschool excursion can be very productive, enlightening, and enjoyable. I found that connecting this way went a long way toward building student interest in school. My favorite reactions from my refugee students, after seeing them outside of school: “I saw you at the store!” or “It was fun when you came to visit! When are you coming again?”

This year, I began teaching ELD as a resource teacher. I took the position because I enjoy working with a diverse group of students, getting to know various cultures, and teaching English Language skills in smaller groups, so I can more effectively differentiate instruction. I was not quite prepared for the amount of paperwork and assessing involved, but I have taken it to the best of my ability. The upshot, I hope, will be engaging students in better understanding of English Language arts, and learning more about their cultures, home languages, and traditions in the process.

So far, I have met students and families from four different cultural backgrounds, and have required the services of two interpreters. We had a wonderful Curriculum Night. I had the opportunity to present the ELD classroom environment, our curriculum, and got to know some parents better. The students seemed more interested in what the classroom and their new ELD teacher had to offer. I also made it a point to emphasize the importance of honoring their home language as they learn a new one. Some of the students’ first exposure is to their home language, but they speak more English, because their peers and teachers do. It is proven by research that students who continue to engage in learning and speaking their home language while learning English, learn more quickly. Staying connected to their traditions and language, being "bilingually literate", is more likely to help students to be more successful as they enter adulthood in our 21st Century world.

Ronni Noyce is an ELD resource teacher at Ford Elementary School in Tucson. She focuses on English language support for students in Kindergarten through 5th grade.
AZ-TESOL at the 2013 TESOL Advocacy & Policy Summit
Paula Schlusberg

On June 16-18, 2013, AZ-TESOL President Marjaneh Gilpatrick and I joined over 50 other members of the TESOL International Association in Washington, DC for the 2013 TESOL Advocacy & Policy Summit, formerly TESOL Advocacy Day. Now in its eighth year, the program featured a full day of issue briefings and activities around education legislation and advocacy, followed by a half-day of visits to Congressional offices on Capitol Hill. With representatives from over 20 US affiliates in attendance, the goals of Advocacy Day were not only to lobby on key issues for TESOL, but also to provide an interactive learning experience for participants on elements of advocacy. By the end of the event, TESOL members had visited the offices of approximately 100 Representatives and Senators.

As contrasted with TESOL Advocacy Day in the past, which typically focused on a single piece of legislation, the TESOL Advocacy & Policy Summit had a broader policy agenda. The goal was to not only learn more about federal policy issues impacting ESL and ELLs, but to provide a hands-on learning experience on elements of advocacy.

To prepare for the Summit, we had to set up our own individual meetings with our Congressional representatives. TESOL International Association provided guidance in how to set up these meetings, and to maximize the impact of our time on the Hill, we were asked to meet with key members of Congress serving on the education and appropriations committees, as well as our own representatives.

Because of time constraints, Marjaneh and I set up meetings with the education staff persons of only four representatives from the Arizona delegation: Congressmen Ron Barber (Paula’s representative), Matt Salmon (Marjaneh’s representative, serving on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce), Ed Pastor (serving on the House Committee on Appropriations), and Raul Grijalva (serving on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce).

The first part of the Summit focused on policy issues, starting with briefings from experts on key issues and legislation, namely, immigration reform, issues around reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) impacting ELLs, and some aspects of reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA), plus an update on new, federal initiatives for adult ESL and adult education. In addition, we each received an extensive briefing book on these issues, with background papers, letters from TESOL stating the organization’s position on key pieces of legislation, and talking points on the three main issues.

Following these briefings, the focus shifted to advocacy, with a series of activities to help participants learn more about the advocacy process and prepare for meetings with members of Congress. We all had a chance to meet in small groups to discuss various issues we faced locally, and to share tips and ideas in meeting with legislators.

On June 18, Summit participants went to Capitol Hill to have our meetings with members of Congress or, as was the case for Marjaneh and me, with a staff member. As we had learned in the previous day’s training, a meeting with the appropriate education aide can be extremely effective in conveying an advocacy message.

Because we knew meeting time was likely to be short, given the busy work schedule in Congressional offices, Marjaneh and I focused on the two reauthorization issues, ESEA and WIA. To help make our meet-
In the advocacy and policy summit, we had identified key Arizona education statistics and program examples to illustrate a few basic talking points: the large (and growing) number of English learners in our state and the key role ESL classes play in their ability to succeed as students, as workers, as parents, and as active community members; the impact of sequestration and indeed any cuts to funding for ESL, including disruptive growth in class size, teacher stress, difficulties in providing appropriate individualized attention to struggling students, and the like; and the importance of maintaining dedicated program funding for ESL (in ESEA and WIA) and adult education, rather than consolidated funding to be allocated at the discretion of state officials.

The staff members for the most part were welcoming, receptive to our information and positions on the reauthorization issues, and particularly interested in whatever details we could share about numbers of students and program conditions in the counties served by their representatives. We also had the unexpected pleasure of meeting and talking briefly with Congressman Pastor and Grijalva as our meetings in those offices were finishing up. Both are strong supporters of our field and the ESL learners (and families) that we work with, though frustrated by the policy logjams they face in the House.

After the meetings on the Hill, there was a briefing session among Summit participants. It was informative to hear how other members of Congress (or staff) had responded to the issues, but the feedback highlighted how deeply divided Congress is. I remain uncertain about whether there will be any final resolution on any of these three issues in the foreseeable future.

If you are interested in learning more about your Congressional representatives or current legislative issues, the TESOL U.S. Advocacy Action Center at http://capwiz.com/tesol provides useful updates and legislative alerts. Congress returns to Washington September 9, and work will continue on reauthorization of WIA and of ESEA and on immigration reform, even while primary attention will focus on foreign policy and particularly on the federal budget.

If you are interested in learning more about your Congressional representatives or current legislative issues, the TESOL U.S. Advocacy Action Center at http://capwiz.com/tesol provides useful updates and legislative alerts. Congress returns to Washington September 9, and work will continue on reauthorization of WIA and of ESEA and on immigration reform, even while primary attention will focus on foreign policy and particularly on the federal budget.

Mind the gaps
Sarah Jarboe

Two things you should know about me: 1. I am old school. 2. Keith Folse is a rock star to me. So, when I came across a study done by Folse that seemed to tout a more traditional approach to better vocabulary retention, I was elated. In a quite scientific inquiry, Folse discovered that “the task of writing original sentences is not as efficient or pedagogically sound an activity as completing multiple fill-in-the-blank tasks” (p. 288). In his experiment, Folse chose fifteen words which were most likely unknown to the subjects; 154 ESL students of various levels. After a pretest, the students were given a minidictionary to study the words. The participants practiced the words with three different activities. Five of the words were...
practiced with a single fill-in-the-blank activity, five other words were practiced with three fill-in-the-blank exercises, and the remaining five were practiced with original sentence writing. The activities were followed by a posttest. Statistical analysis showed that the students performed significantly higher on the words practiced with three fill-in-the-blank activities. Folse was interested in studying efficiency as well as accuracy, and time spent on three completion activities was on average 50% greater than time spent on sentence writing. However, when Folse compared the results for students who had spent similar amounts of time on these two treatments, the results were even better for the triple gap-fill treatment.

Excited by these findings, I carried out a mini-action research project based on this study in an intermediate-level reading class as reviews for upcoming vocabulary tests. For each review session, I chose fifteen words, five from each of the three articles we had studied, and divided them into three groups, one for each treatment type. In class, we went through the three treatments one at a time, with students keeping track of how long it took them to complete each exercise. In terms of accuracy, the results were mixed. The first test yielded promising results, with students scoring an average of 12.3 out of 15. However, on the second test, the average score was 10.29 out of 15. Also, students did best on the words practiced with a single gap fill, followed by sentence writing, and finally the triple gap-fill. In terms of efficiency, my results were also the opposite of Folse’s. Students took about 66% longer to complete the sentence writing task than the triple gap-fill. Two possible reasons for the differences might be that my conditions were not as controlled as Folse’s, and even though students had had exposure to the words through reading articles and completing homework, I did not provide a minidictionary as Folse did, which might have been a handy study tool.

Nevertheless, I am not discouraged. Folse argues that rather than being “superficial or passive” (p. 286), fill-in the blank tasks are “not only deep (processing) but also highly efficient in terms of student and teacher time required” (p. 287). My next step is to figure out how to tap into this deep processing.


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**Five sites for free reading comprehension worksheets**

**Dianna Lippincott**

As every ESL reading teacher knows, the way to increase a student’s reading ability and vocabulary is through reading. However, your classroom text may not contain enough reading practice, or the topics may not interest your students. These five sites contain readings and comprehension activities that can be printed and given to students as homework or as extra practice.

1. **English for Everyone** focuses not just on reading comprehension, but on critical thinking skills which will be appreciated by teachers working with the Common Core. Be sure to scroll down the page—readings are divided by samples from Read Theory Workbooks and Critical Thinking, which are divided by grade level; Short Story, Informational, Technical, and Role Play, which are divided into Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced; and Dual Version, which has the same story in a basic and advanced version.

http://www.englishforeveryone.org/Topics/Reading-Comprehension.htm

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Sarah Jarboe is a Lecturer in the American English and Culture Program at Arizona State University in Tempe.

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**Web Sitings**

*Column Editor: Carol Kubota*
2. Sean Banville’s Breaking News English is a great place to get up-to-the-minute topics from the news; new readings are published every other day. Readings are divided into two levels, easier and harder, with each general level broken into more sub-levels. For example, you can choose the topic of Prince George’s first photos. The article is an “easier” article, so it is written in four different levels—0 to 3. Students in the same class can read about the same topic, but at their own level. The worksheets include pre-reading, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and extension activities. There are over 1700 readings from 2004 to the present. Unfortunately, you can not search by topic on the site, but you can Google “Breaking News English” and the topic of your choice.

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com

3. Mr. Nussbaum, of Mr. Nussbaum! Learning + Fun, is an elementary school teacher whose website has reading comprehension exercises for students grades two to five and up. But, the readings would be good with any age language learner. A lot of these readings center on early American history—Abe Lincoln, Thomas Paine, Harriet Tubman—and the easier readings are centered around animals—hummingbirds, buffalo and the bald eagle. This is a good way to include American culture with reading.

http://mrnussbaum.com/reading_comprehension_printable/

4. Busy Teacher has over 680 reading worksheets created by members and rated by members. The quality of the worksheets varies, but start by looking at the “most popular.” All worksheets have to be downloaded by clicking the blue button on the right side of the screen; don’t be distracted by aggravating ads in the center of the screen that say you need a membership—these belong to another website.

http://busyteacher.org/classroom_activities-reading-worksheets/

5. K12 Reader offers reading comprehension worksheets that combine science and social studies with reading comprehension. These worksheets don’t ask multiple choice questions; the student has to write an answer to the question. Readings are divided by grade level through 5th grade, but don’t be fooled—these worksheets can be used with learners of all ages. First grade worksheets center on phonics, but second grade and up are co-curricular, dealing with math, science, study skills, and more. Follow this link, but scroll to the bottom of the page to the section entitled “Reading Comprehension Worksheets” where you can choose a grade level.

http://www.k12reader.com/reading-comprehension-guide/

Dianna Lippincott is a Lecturer in the American English and Culture Program at Arizona State University.

TOEFL Small Grants for Doctoral Research in Second or Foreign Language Assessment

This is a reminder that the deadline for applications for the TOEFL Small Grants for Doctoral Research in Second or Foreign Language Assessment is October 15th. The award makes available cash awards up to US $2000 to promising students working in the field of foreign or second language assessment that will help them finish their dissertations in a timely manner. Applications received after October 15th will be considered for the next application deadline of February 15th.

For more information about the award, please visit:
http://www.ets.org/toefl/grants
## AZ-TESOL Grants and Awards

The following awards are officially available for AZ-TESOL members. Applicants must be AZ-TESOL members in good standing in the organization to qualify. In addition, the applicant must provide a Social Security number to apply for any cash awards. **Note new deadlines for some awards!**

### AZ-TESOL Educator of the Year
The purpose of this award is to honor an AZ-TESOL member for notable contributions to AZ-TESOL and to the profession. The award is recognition at the State Conference and a 5-year AZ-TESOL membership. The criteria for the award are excellence within one or more areas within the field of English language teaching, distinguished leadership, and service to the profession. Nominations for this award must include the full name of the nominating person; the name, address, telephone number, and title of the nominee and nominator; a statement of why this person qualifies; and a statement of service to AZ-TESOL and contributions. **(Due May 1)**

### AZ-TESOL Distinguished Service Award
Nominations are accepted for the Distinguished Service award following the same process as for the AZ-TESOL Educator of the Year Award. Recognition is given at the State Conference. **(Due May 1)**

### Cheryl Walsh Professional Growth Award
The purpose of this award is to assist up to three AZ-TESOL professionals in attending the TESOL Convention. There are now three $750 awards available. Application involves writing and submitting an essay of not more than 350 words on why the applicant would like to attend the TESOL convention. An awardee is required to write an article for the *AZ-TESOL News* describing how TESOL participation has contributed to their professional growth. **(Due January 1)**

### AZ-TESOL Special Project Mini-Grants
Available for small special projects (research or instructional), AZ-TESOL Special Project grants can provide seed money or matching funds for AZ-TESOL members. Proposals are considered by the Grants, Scholarships, and Publications Chair and granted by the Board with the Chair’s recommendation. Report of such grants is to be made to the Board.

### AZ-TESOL Distance Assistance Grants
The purpose of these grants is to offset the cost of attending an AZ-TESOL conference. There are eight $100 awards available to any AZ-TESOL member who must travel more than 100 miles to attend the conference. Applicants submit a 100-word statement explaining why they would like to attend, the city of origin, and estimated mileage. After the conference, they are asked to write a summary of a conference session (500 word maximum) for the *AZ-TESOL News*. **(Due September 1)**

### AZ-TESOL Mexican Educator Grant
The purpose of this grant is to assist a teacher from Sonora or Sinaloa to attend an AZ-TESOL conference. The amount of the award varies, according to travel costs, registration, and appropriate per diem. Up to $1000 may be awarded. Criteria for application include an explanation of the reasons why the person wishes to attend the conference, willingness to participate in the program as a presenter, financial need, and involvement in and commitment to teaching the English language. Applicants must write letters explaining reason for wanting to attend the conference, including how the person and colleagues will benefit, interests for conference participation, a statement of financial need, and a current curriculum vita. In addition, supporting documentation is required: a letter of endorsement from a colleague or supervisor which explains the applicant’s EFL work and how the award will benefit the applicant and colleagues. **(Due September 10)**

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Send all applications and grant proposals to: Vicki Ardisana  
P.O. Box 881  
Yuma, AZ 85366  
Vicki.ardisana@nau.edu
Membership Application

Please print this form. Then write or type the requested information (black ink) on the lines below or check the appropriate box. When completed, please enclose a check (payable to AZ-TESOL) for the proper amount and mail it with the completed form to: AZ-TESOL Membership P.O. Box 881 Yuma, AZ 85366

Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Address, Line 1: ____________________________

Address, Line 2: ____________________________

☐ Please check one: ☐ New membership ☐ Membership renewal

☐ Please check one: ☐ One-year regular US $20.00 ☐ Three-year regular US $50.00
☐ One-year joint US $30.00 ☐ Three-year joint US $75.00
☐ One-year student US $10.00 ☐ One-year institutional US $30.00
☐ One-year part-time US $10.00 ☐ Lifetime (after 5 years) US $125.00
☐ One-year retired US $10.00

☐ I would like to contribute US $__________ to the AZ-TESOL Scholarship Fund.

Total Amount Enclosed: US $__________

Please provide the following information so that we may better serve you:

Position or title: ____________________________

Institution: ____________________________

Institution mailing address, line 1: ____________________________

Institution mailing address, line 2: ____________________________

Institution mailing address, line 3: ____________________________

Home phone: (__________ ) Work phone: (__________ )

Home fax: (__________ ) Work fax: (__________ )

* E-mail address: ____________________________

* necessary to receive AZ-TESOL News

In what other professional organizations do you have memberships? ____________________________

Areas of Special Interest (check all that apply):

☐ ELL in Elementary Education ☐ ESL in Adult Education ☐ Counseling
☐ ELL in Secondary Education ☐ ESL in Higher Education ☐ Administration
☐ No Child Left Behind (NCLB) ☐ Computer-Assisted Instruction ☐ Special Education
☐ Literacy Development & Enhancement ☐ Linguistics/Research ☐ Other:
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2200 W. San Angelo St. #3023,  
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480-965-7981 (W), 480-677-9693 (C)  
sarah.jarboe@asu.edu

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Laura Bohland  
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928-380-0914  
laurab4bohland@hotmail.com

**Newsletter Editor**
Paul Melocaro  
P.O. Box 3504, Tempe 85287-3504  
480-965-8560  
Paul.Melocaro@asu.edu

**Business Manager**
Scott Welsh  
P.O Box 3504, Tempe 85287-3504  
480-965-3309  
Scott.Welsh2@asu.edu

**Membership Chair / Database Manager**
Gayle Johnson-Becker  
3708 E. Summerhaven Drive, Phoenix 85044  
480-759-5502 (H), 480-965-9382 (W), 480-444-6197 (C)  
gayle.becker@asu.edu

**Website Manager**
Dennis Oliver  
4550 N. 88th Avenue, Phoenix 85037  
623-872-2705  
dennis.oliver@cox.net

**Northern Area Representative**
Laura Zurlo  
PO Box 6032, Flagstaff, AZ 86011  
Laura.Zurlo@nau.edu

**Central Area Representative**
Richard Bailey  
14002 N. 48th Way, Scottsdale 85284  
206-919-2709  
rbailey@phxhs.k12.az.us

**Southeastern Area Representative**
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**Southwestern Area Representative**
Alma Sandigo  
almasandigo@yahoo.com  
928-317-6417

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8583 Shannon Way, Yuma 85365  
928-317-6415 (W), 928-210-7555 (C)  
vicki.ardisana@nau.edu

**Sociopolitical Concerns Chair**
Paula Schlusberg  
5009 E. Mesa Crest Place, Tucson 85718  
520-615-8218  
pschlusberg@earthlink.net

**Materials Review Editor**
Lori Doemland  
‘182 S. Criss St., Chandler 85226  
480-274-2410 (H), 480-965-7744 (W)  
loretta.doemland@asu.edu

**Hospitality Chair**
Carol Kubota  
P.O. Box 3504, Tempe 85287-3504  
ckubota@asu.edu

**Rules and Resolutions Chair**
Elida Proper  
P.O. Box 4132, Camp Verde 86322  
928-373-4960 (W), 928-634-2065 (W)  
elidaproper1234@yahoo.com

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**AZ-TESOL, P.O. Box 881, Yuma, AZ 85366**

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