

## *From the Editor*

Unfortunately there was no December 2005 journal. We hope that all 2005 members will renew their membership in 2006 but will endeavour to distribute this journal to both 2005 and 2006 members.

Most of the articles in this journal have been written by teachers in the ACT. Many of them refer to the spending of grant money. We also have articles about conferences attended while others relate to higher studies being undertaken.

ACT teachers have been fortunate to receive a number of Commonwealth grants and this money has been spent in a variety of ways to enhance teaching and learning. Some of the more innovative projects were *Equipping a Homework Centre* and providing *Exciting Excursions*. I would also recommend that you look at the list of books, related to the students' cultures, purchased by Gold Creek School for co-operative learning. Much of the other grant money was spent improving ICT opportunities for learners by updating software and buying computers, cameras and other hardware, specifically for use by ESL students and staff.

Conferences and workshops are a source of inspiration to the participants and a challenge to those who present. Margie Sainsbury's discussion on her trip overseas showed how much fun and learning can come from combining travel with conferences. Perhaps you would like to do the same. More information about forthcoming conferences all around the world can be found at:

[www.nceltr.mq.edu.au/resources/conference.asp](http://www.nceltr.mq.edu.au/resources/conference.asp)

Annette Evans is upgrading her qualifications while teaching at CIT. Her contributions include an interesting interview with Wendy Henderson and some practical lessons she has given on weather and on the past continuous.

For those who missed out on doing the quiz at the ATESOL dinner in August, we have included the quiz and answers. Thank you Julia and Fiona.

As an experiment we plan to make the journal available on CD. This should make it easier for readers to follow up links to the Internet and appreciate our colour photos. See page 8 for details. Lesley Cioccarelli is working on developing our Website so in the future we may have such links there.

Please read the *Guidelines for writing an article* at the back of the journal and start thinking about articles for the next journal. Please e-mail me if you have any feedback, know of any future conferences or if you would like to help in the production of the next journal. I am also happy to provide books for review.

I'd like to thank all contributors and Margot Clements and Gill Pennington who provided me with the grants reports. I'd also like to thank my AMEP colleagues. The Journal would not have existed without their help; whether writing, proof-reading, encouraging or distributing.

**Jill Schaefer**

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## CONFERENCE REPORTS

QATESOL CONFERENCE

Brisbane 23-25 September 2005

*Celia McGee*

This was a conference with a good variety of workshops, lectures and speakers. However it did confirm that we are also doing things well in ESL education in the ACT and in fact have a lot to offer colleagues Australia-wide. Our Literacy & Numeracy team members, Gill Pennington & Rowan Simpkin demonstrated this in a well presented, practical, hands-on LUAC workshop to a packed roomful of appreciative participants.

There were too many items of interest covered over the weekend to write about all of them in one report so I chose an area that I found particularly useful in my present position: **The Teaching Emphases Project**, [http://www.kelvingrovesc.eq.edu.au/asp/teepl/teepl\\_cover.asp](http://www.kelvingrovesc.eq.edu.au/asp/teepl/teepl_cover.asp) and in particular the area covered by **Kate Bennett** on **Intercultural Differences**.

We can have over 30 new ESL students from a variety of countries arriving in the school each year, as their fathers spend a year studying at the Defence College. An area that often presents problems is that of cultural differences. There are concerns in the classrooms as mainstream teachers deal with students who cannot comprehend the idea of a 'rough copy' and will tear a whole page out of their exercise books if one word is misspelt; or other students who never ask for help when it's needed. Then in the playground misunderstandings arise as students try to make friends. As the following quote indicates

*"Culture is more often a source of conflict than of synergy. Cultural differences are a nuisance at best and often a disaster."* Prof. Geert Hofstede, Emeritus Professor, Maastricht University

The behaviour of some ESL students can be seen as sullen while other behaviour is seen as cheeky when in fact it is not, but is being viewed through the blindfolds of our own culture. As the presenter emphasised by using the following quote – becoming aware of our own culture is the first step in understanding the cultures of others.

*"Culture hides much more than it reveals, and strangely enough what it hides, it hides most effectively from its own participants. Years of study have convinced me that the real job is not to understand foreign culture but to understand our own."* Edward T. Hall (1959)

The work of Geert Hofstede was mentioned – he researched cultural differences to help people in business deal with overseas colleagues. As teachers, his research gives us insights into other cultures which can make us more effective when interacting with our ESL students. He outlined five cultural dimensions (see table below):

**High Power Distance - Low Power Distance (PDI)** focuses on the degree of equality, or inequality, between people in the country's society. Students from High PDI countries see the teacher as 'all knower' and are used to a didactic style of lesson delivery. Students from Low PDI countries are more likely to be critical and to feel free to voice their opinions.

**Individualism - Collectivism (IDV)** focuses on the degree the society reinforces individual or collective achievement and interpersonal relationships. For students from countries scoring a high Collectivism ranking harmony of the group is important while Individualism promotes competition.

**Masculinity - Femininity (MAS)** focuses on the degree gender roles are divided. A High Masculinity ranking indicates the country experiences a high degree of gender differentiation.

**High Uncertainty Avoidance - Low Uncertainty Avoidance** A High Uncertainty Avoidance ranking indicates the country has a low tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. This creates a rule-

oriented society that institutes laws, rules, regulations and controls in order to reduce the amount of uncertainty. For students, emphasis is on attaining a ‘correct’ answer rather than learning by experimentation or trial and error to arrive at a number of possible solutions all of which are equally valid. A Low Uncertainty Avoidance ranking indicates the country has less concern about ambiguity and uncertainty and has more tolerance for a variety of opinions.

**Long-Term Orientation - Short Term Orientation** focuses on the degree the society embraces, or does not embrace long-term devotion to traditional, forward thinking values.

## Hofstede's Five Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede identifies five differences in mental programming

### High Power Distance

Latin America, France, Spain, most Asian and African countries

### Individualism

Australia France, Germany, South Africa

### Masculinity

Australia, Greece, USA, Japan, Mexico, Hong Kong, Italy, Britain

### High Uncertainty Avoidance

Thailand, India, South Korea, Japan, and Latin America

### Long-Term Orientation

China; Hong Kong; Taiwan, Japan and India

### Low Power Distance

Australia, USA, Britain, most of Europe

### Collectivism

Japan, Mexico, Korea, Greece

### Femininity

Sweden, France, Israel, Denmark, Indonesia

### Low Uncertainty Avoidance

Australia, USA, the Netherlands, Singapore, Hong Kong, Britain

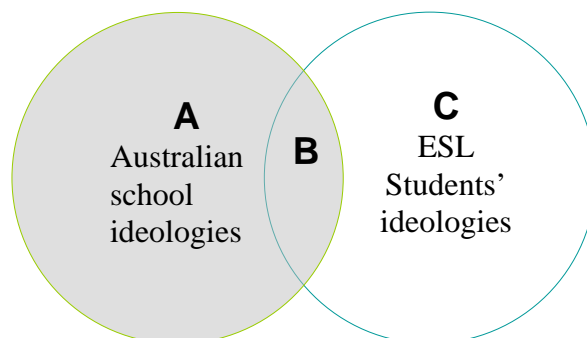
### Short Term Orientation

Australia, Britain, Canada, the Philippines, Germany

It was suggested that ESL students should be familiarised with key Australian school cultural values which may be unfamiliar (area A, Figure 1) and useful strategies were given for this. Also common values and concepts of schooling found to exist in both ESL student and Australian cultures could be built upon (area B, figure 1) thus helping to put the ESL student at ease.

In summary, I feel that becoming more aware of our own cultural beliefs and the intercultural differences of our students and using effective, unobtrusive strategies to overcome the problem areas will go a long way in furthering all aspects of education of ESL students in our schools.

Venn diagram – knowing your own culture (Circle A) and noticing ESL student behaviours and their cultural implications (Circle B) lay the foundation for intercultural communication by honing interlocutor sensitivity on the part of the teacher.



## **LONG SERVICE LEAVE SUGGESTION:**

### **A Tad of Teaching and a Couple of Conferences**

By *Margie Sainsbury*, teacher and home tutor co-ordinator AMEP, CIT

When I looked at my long service leave I was excited to find I could stretch it to almost 3 months. I had always been attracted by the idea of teaching overseas, but could never seem to see my way clear to leaving home for 1 – 2 years. I had 3 months and itchy feet, but neither a budget nor the inclination to just be a tourist floating around on the surface of things. I wanted that sense of ‘belonging’, to get to know the local cafes, markets, butcher, baker etc.

I couldn’t go anywhere expensive and I wanted any volunteer teaching I did to be perhaps helpful in some small way. Yet, not being a hugely intrepid type I needed some creature comforts, and a climate that was not too hot and not too cold.

Eastern Europe fascinated me because of our brush with so many refugees from the Yugoslav war in the nineties, and I was intrigued to know how they were doing 10 years after the Dayton Peace Accords finally ended the horror. I contacted former students I had stayed friendly with who had come from Mostar in Bosnia. It fitted the criteria: not too big, about 90,000 people, scenically beautiful, great history, including a complex and tragic part in the war, temperate climate, and a fascinating blend of East and West. It seemed a place where I could learn a lot!

A key to the success of the experiment was the ex-student, who was delighted that I wanted to go to his hometown, and who had a number of contacts for me re teaching. He had a cousin and family to look after me and he arranged an apartment for me. So I’d settled on a destination. I then began to read some of the history. Another Bosnian friend loaned me “A Short History of Bosnia”, which was in fact rather long – but so informative, and I drew many times on the things I learned from it. Then an attempt to learn some words and phrases in Bosnian/Croatian...an embarrassingly pathetic outcome I have to confess. In addition I looked up on the net to see whether there were any interesting conferences in the vicinity. I liked the sound of one called “Neglected Areas of ELT” to be held in Thessaloniki in Northern Greece, and, on my way home, “Best Practice in ELT” in Cairo.



Next was to purchase Lonely Planet Eastern Europe and start to plan excursions out from Mostar – Dubrovnik, Split, Budapest, Madjugoria, Sarajevo, Thessaloniki, Belgrade. I had a great start to my travels in Belgrade, staying with fellow teacher and consummate host Libby Oliver. Here I learned more of the background to political and social issues facing the region in the aftermath of war.

The contacts from my ex-student were invaluable – it would have been more difficult without them. My arrival was expected, and before long 3 evening classes were set up. The concept of volunteering was not fully understood as I discovered when I tried to set something up outside my ex-student’s patronage. I tried a direct approach to a mosque, offering volunteer teaching in the madrasa there. Although two young tour guides I spoke to were very keen, when I met with the mullah I was treated with considerable suspicion, and he declined the offer.

On the Croatian side of this divided town I taught a wonderful group of former professionals who had taken a drop in status since the war, and worked with them on Monday and Wednesday nights – usually followed by ‘English Conversation’ in the Irish Pub! On Tuesday night I worked in various classes at a Cultural Centre in the Muslim sector. This gave me free time in the day to plan lessons, explore the town, meet new friends in lovely cafes overlooking the river, sit in the sun, read books and plan my 4-day weekends in this beautiful part of the world. At other times I was spirited out of town to take a class with some engineers at a hydroelectric plant, and was treated to a magnificent lunch of spit-roasted lamb by way of payment. I took another class in a school in a village out of Sarajevo where I spent some days with a Bosnian friend from Australia who happened to be visiting her family when I was over there. That class became a little noisy - they weren’t used to having fun with English, and the principal came to see what was causing the disturbance! Teaching with fewer materials and aids – back to chalk and blackboard in the Cultural Centre – forced me to re-think some teaching strategies and prompted me to be more resourceful and creative.

The conferences were stimulating and informative. This particularly applied to the Thessaloniki conference. I gave a paper there entitled “Introducing Voice Techniques for Actors to the Pronunciation



Classroom”. Although somewhat nerve-wracking, giving a paper provided a broader entrée into the conference as a whole and this made it well worth the effort and nervousness. It was so interesting to see a European perspective on English teaching. There was much talk of International English with enthusiastic support from UK guest speakers who seemed keen to offer up English to other nations to



do with what they will – I wondered if it was a sort of expiation of past Imperial arrogance. It was left to the ‘non-native’ teachers to mount some defence of standardized English! In another session the presenter from Cambridge exams outlined a convincing case for increased emphasis on Speaking skills to appear in their new exam format. At all sessions spirited discussion flowed through question time and on into the breaks – the Greeks and Turks, being particularly lively. Also dinner at a Greek Taverna with everyone up dancing proved a highlight of the not-so-highbrow variety.

In conclusion, I can’t convey adequately how rich and rewarding this whole experience was for me. I gained a great deal - both personally and professionally - from this blend of work and travel. For those who may consider this option, my Professional Development money from CIT helped with my fare and I will claim tax deductions for local travel to conferences and conference costs. This experience has provided a store of unique memories, wonderful travel, a great learning curve and a cast of remarkable characters.

Highly recommended!

*We thank Margie for sharing her experiences and enthusiasm with members at our AGM this year.*

AMEP CONFERENCE, Macquarie University, Sydney September 2005

### 1. Photostory

By *Rosemary Walters*, teacher AMEP, CIT

At the AMEP conference, I learned about using Photostory 3 during a lecture by Dorothy Waterhouse, who is always good value. Photostory 3 is a computer application which works best with digital photos but can be persuaded to accept scanned-in photos and some photos from Google and Clip art if they have enough pixels – and if you can negotiate the rather complex way of uploading them.

The advantage of Photostory 3 is that you can attach both words and sound to a series of images which can then be played on the “big screen” (in the Smartboard room) or on individual computers. You can even attach pleasant background music.

Ben Waller and I have created several Photostory 3 presentations, available on the CD version of this journal. My two photostories are: “Around the CIT” and “An Autumn Picnic”. The others were created by Ben. One is called “Parliament House”. Ben recorded the talk that the guide gave at Parliament house and then coordinated that with the photos that he took while there. ( It is helpful if you are an octopus so you can juggle camera and sound equipment but humans can try this, too, as Ben has proved.) There is also “A Visit to the Legislative Assembly”.

While none of these Photostories will ever be in the thriller section of your video store, they are useful summaries of the students’ excursions and provide a way for students to revise those experiences and discuss them in class.

*Ben and Rosemary’s Photostories are on the CD version of the journal.*

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### 2. Information and Communication Technology

By *Jill Schaefer*

Like Rosemary, I attended many of the ICT sessions and again enjoyed Dorothy Waterhouse’s sessions. She is happy to share her journeys through ICT land with all interested teachers I have included her list of useful sites. However if you really want to go exploring the many interesting sites and activities on the list I would recommend the CD version of the journal mentioned above. The sites will then be *only a click away*. The CD will also contain the photostory of the teachers in Dorothy’s workshop learning how to produce photostories! Set aside a few hours and explore the many links provided.

## Professional Development

Australian Flexible Learning Framework	<a href="http://flexiblelearning.net.au/">http://flexiblelearning.net.au/</a>
Learnscope	<a href="http://flexiblelearning.net.au/LearnScope/">http://flexiblelearning.net.au/LearnScope/</a>
Great information at <b>EDNA</b>	<a href="http://www.edna.edu.au">www.edna.edu.au</a>
If you would like to ask questions and discuss ideas or get involved in some exciting forums and online activities go to <b>Edna Groups</b> . There are a number of groups that may interest you. You will need to register before accessing some of the groups including ours	<a href="http://www.groups.edna.edu.au">www.groups.edna.edu.au</a>
Learning Times Australia Next mini event Sept 12 <sup>th</sup> – 14 <sup>th</sup> 2005	<a href="http://home.learningtimes.net/lta">http://home.learningtimes.net/lta</a>
Education Department Info TaLE - Teaching and Learning Exchange	<a href="http://www.tale.nsw.edu.au">www.tale.nsw.edu.au</a>
National Centre for English Language Teaching & Research	<a href="http://www.nceltr.mq.edu.au">http://www.nceltr.mq.edu.au</a>

## Web sites you can use

Includes: hotpotatoes, powerpoint, sound, amp, survey	<a href="http://www.geocities.com/mstrial04">www.geocities.com/mstrial04</a>
UVic English Language Centre	<a href="http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/200/index.htm">http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/elc/studyzone/200/index.htm</a>
Activities for ESL Students	<a href="http://a4esl.org">http://a4esl.org</a>
Links of Interest to Students & Teachers of ESL	<a href="http://iteslj.org/links/">http://iteslj.org/links/</a>
Shopping	<a href="http://www.woolworths.com.au">www.woolworths.com.au</a> (link to greengrocer on home page)
Health	<a href="http://www.mydr.com.au">www.mydr.com.au</a>
Encyclopedia	<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org">http://en.wikipedia.org</a>
Maps with directions	<a href="http://www.travelmate.com.au">www.travelmate.com.au</a>
Maps	<a href="http://www.whereis.com">www.whereis.com</a>
Maps, Flags, info of world Countries	<a href="http://www.countryreports.org">http://www.countryreports.org</a>
Dave's ESL Cafe	<a href="http://www.eslcafe.com">http://www.eslcafe.com</a>
Boggles world ESL site has many different free resources for teachers and students	<a href="http://bogglesworld.com/adultesl1.htm">http://bogglesworld.com/adultesl1.htm</a>
One Stop English is a free site developed by MacMillan. It has teaching ideas, materials, free downloads	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/b5l4r">http://tinyurl.com/b5l4r</a>
Images of the World	<a href="http://www.imagesoftheworld.org">http://www.imagesoftheworld.org</a>
Word Solitaire	<a href="http://www.haversack.com/wordsol">http://www.haversack.com/wordsol</a>

## Tools for busy teachers

<b>ePrompter</b> – checking all your web based email accounts at once without logging in	<a href="http://www.eprompter.com">www.eprompter.com</a>
<b>Hotpotatoes</b> can be downloaded from here	<a href="http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked">http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked</a>
<b>Blog this</b> – quickly add info to your blog from any web site	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/2854k">http://tinyurl.com/2854k</a>
<b>Hello</b> - putting pictures on blogs	<a href="http://www.hello.com">www.hello.com</a>
<b>Plaxo 2.0</b> connects you to your contacts, calendar, tasks, and notes. Synchronize and backup your home and work computers.	<a href="http://www.plaxo.com/">http://www.plaxo.com/</a>
<b>MeetOMatic</b> plan events easily online	<a href="http://www.meetomatic.com/calendar.asp">http://www.meetomatic.com/calendar.asp</a>

<b>Primo</b> Convert your word documents to PDF files	<a href="http://www.primopdf.com">http://www.primopdf.com</a>
<b>Eclipse Crossword</b> Download a free crossword making program	<a href="http://www.greenclipssoftware.com/eclipsecrossword">www.greenclipssoftware.com/eclipsecrossword</a>
<b>Cmap</b> Construct, navigate, share and criticize knowledge models represented as concept maps	<a href="http://cmap.ihmc.us/download/">http://cmap.ihmc.us/download/</a>
<b>Screen Hunter</b> Capture images of rectangle, window and full screen with mouse pointer	<a href="http://www.wisdom-soft.com/products/screenhunter.htm">http://www.wisdom-soft.com/products/screenhunter.htm</a>
<b>Audacity</b> – a free digital audio editor	<a href="http://audacity.sourceforge.net">http://audacity.sourceforge.net</a>
<b>Tiny Url</b> Making long URLs useable	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/">http://tinyurl.com/</a>

### Easy online surveys and worksheets

<b>Survey Monkey</b>	<a href="http://www.surveymonkey.com">www.surveymonkey.com</a>
A worksheet example - Listening to information - CSWE 2	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/afkcb">http://tinyurl.com/afkcb</a>

### Digital story telling

<b>Photo Story 3</b> If you have <b>Windows XP</b> then download Photo Story 3 and <b>Windows Media player 10</b> to create talking books for your students – send them by email.	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/4f869">http://tinyurl.com/4f869</a>
<b>Windows Moviemaker 2</b> If you have <b>Windows XP</b> then you should have Moviemaker. A very easy program to use to stitch together pictures and movies	<a href="http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/updates/moviemaker2.msp">http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/updates/moviemaker2.msp</a>
<b>Flickr</b> for storing and sharing photos	<a href="http://www.flickr.com/">http://www.flickr.com/</a>
<b>Ourmedia</b> storage for audio and video files	<a href="http://www.ourmedia.org/">http://www.ourmedia.org/</a>

### BLOGS

Dorothy's blog about blogs	<a href="http://wheresdot.blogspot.com">http://wheresdot.blogspot.com</a>
The educated blogger: Using weblogs to promote literacy in the classroom	<a href="http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue9_6/huffaker/index.html">http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue9_6/huffaker/index.html</a>
<b>BLOGGER</b> Create your own blog in 5 mins!	<a href="http://www.blogger.com">www.blogger.com</a>
AMES students at Mary St Blog	<a href="http://www.surryhills.blogspot.com">www.surryhills.blogspot.com</a>
<b>Bloglines</b> to bring all your favourite blogs, newspapers, cartoons etc to you	<a href="http://www.bloglines.com">www.bloglines.com</a>

### Fun with your students

Create your own virtual 'host'	<a href="http://www.oddcast.com/newhost">www.oddcast.com/newhost</a>
<b>Dfilm</b> Create your own movies	<a href="http://www.dfilm.com/index_moviemaker.html">http://www.dfilm.com/index_moviemaker.html</a>
Educational and games programs	<a href="http://www.greyolltwit.com">www.greyolltwit.com</a>
An Intro to Online Training Games	<a href="http://www.learningcircuits.org/2004/apr2004/kirk.htm">http://www.learningcircuits.org/2004/apr2004/kirk.htm</a>

### Talking to your students

<b>Skype</b> - Free telephone over the internet – up to 4 people at once	<a href="http://www.skype.com">www.skype.com</a>
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## It Worked



### ESL Integrated Lesson: The Weather

By *Annette Evans*, Teacher CIT (AMEP), and Masters Student University of Canberra

### ESL Integrated Lesson: The Weather

**Time:** 5.45 – 8.15pm, 2 ½ hours with 20 minute break at 7pm.  
Elementary adult ESL students

**Group:** 10 x

**Learning outcomes:** To equip students with basic language to take part in different types of weather conversations, write a basic weather forecast and read about the weather. By the end of the lesson, the students will be able to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ understand and use basic weather vocabulary;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ take part in simple discussions about the weather using the correct tense</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ correctly use “will” to predict the weather;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ write a simple weather forecast</li> </ul>

**Reason:** The weather is a much-discussed topic in Australia: It is widely used as an icebreaker, often considered when planning weekend and holiday activities, always included in news reports, and often ‘understood’ in health reports (melanoma/skin cancer) and advertisements for sunscreen or spray-on tanning. As well, there are many idioms using weather words. Therefore I think it is important that students become accustomed to the types of weather discourse they will hear, read and need to be able to participate in.

**Content:** Readings, dialogue and handout compiled from:

<http://www.abc.gov.au/news/australia/weather/>, <http://weather.news.com.au/index.jsp>, and *New Generation 2*, “The Weather”. This chapter was not used as the coursebook as it was British with pictures and forecasts for Britain and use of “shall” that we don’t tend to use in Australia.

### Current knowledge:

Students have already learnt some future structures:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ “will” for instantly made decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ “going to” and present continuous for plans already made</li> </ul>
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### Follow-up classes:

- ▲ This lesson would be the first in a unit of work on the weather. Other lessons would revise this content and introduce more complex weather vocabulary, related themes and grammatical structures. They would also teach students which websites to use to find weather forecasts around Australia and the world.

**Procedures:**

1. **(5.45 – 6.00) Starter:**
  - 1.1 Roll call (latecomers write name on paper at front)
  - 1.2 Students to work out anagrams under “the weather” on the board (use words under point 2.)
  
2. **(6.00 – 6.15) Review vocabulary**  
 (weather, forecast, sun, sunny, sunshine, cloud, cloudy, rain, rainy, wind, windy, snow, hail, hot, cold, dry, wet, degrees, temperature, maximum, minimum, spring, summer, autumn, winter)
  - 2.1 Students to call out correct word to match laminated pictures.
  - 2.2 Review use of noun, verb, and adjective. eg. rain, rainy, raining.
  - 2.3 Students round-robin questions about today’s/weekend’s weather – favourite weather/seasons.
  
3. **(6.15-6.45) Readings**
  - 3.1 In pairs: allocate 1 (2 if short) paragraph per pair. Use dictionary to read and understand paragraph and think of examples to explain to class.
  - 3.2 In order, each pair to read out and then explain paragraph / provide examples.
  - 3.3 Discuss readings – when do we talk about the weather?  
 Similarities/differences - their country/Australia.  
  
 Use of Adjectives in icebreaker good, bad, terrible, etc.  
  
 Initiate: *Break the ice/ icebreaker/social chitchat; weather forecast (v/n), predict.*

**Rationale:**

Some students arrive late from work, so the “real” lesson starts at 6pm.

I like Woodward’s idea of using a starter for each lesson. 1.2 is a starter that will interest the students as well as being related to the theme of the lesson, but late students won’t be disadvantaged by not doing it.

Students will have already come across most of this vocabulary in this context and will also be familiar with using some of the words in other contexts (hot and cold, for example). Therefore I don’t expect this part of the lesson to take very long. I’ll need to be prepared for “Celsius”, “centigrade”, and “Fahrenheit” coming up.

Can start to use snow, snowy, etc in this section when I’m asking the questions.

2.2 Likely to take some time. Would need to be able to teach them that you can say, “it’s raining”, but not “it’s winding” for example.

Use adjective and verb forms when asking and answering these questions. “Is it raining today?”. “Yes, there is rain today”. “Look at the clouds. It’s a cloudy day”, etc.

Because this is a long lesson with the same theme, I want it to be varied for interest and to include all the macroskills. 3.1 provides students with the opportunity of contributing to their and other students’ learning.

3.2 expands their talking skills to giving informal presentations and explanations.

3.3 will check their understanding of the readings and use of the vocabulary. Here we can expand the weather vocabulary to using it with adjectives, and to consider how and when we talk about the weather. New vocabulary can be included to explain types of weather conversations. It’s also important that students know that in Australia social chitchat nearly always starts off with the weather, and that they don’t really need to be interested in it, but do need to know how to respond or initiate such conversation!

**4. (6.45 – 7.00) Listen to recording**

4.1 First play: Students to identify type of conversation.

**5. (7.00 – 7.20) Break**

**6. (7.20 – 8.00) Listen to recordings and verb review**

6.1 Second and third play: Students to identify verb tenses used in the 3 conversations.

6.2 Review tenses: “will”:  
prediction/forecast;  
simple present/present perfect :  
icebreaker;  
simple present : “when”.

6.3 Handouts with cloze dialogues and get students to fill in correct verbs.

6.4 Choice of extra activities if needed:

- ▲ Pair or group: new weather dialogues.
- ▲ Students to test each other on their own anagrams.
- ▲ Students to test each other on correct verbs.
- ▲ Students start weather crossword puzzle.
- ▲ Students to write their own cloze exercise.

**7. (8.05 – 8.15) Wrap up**

7.1 Introduce weather word idioms. Similar in their languages?

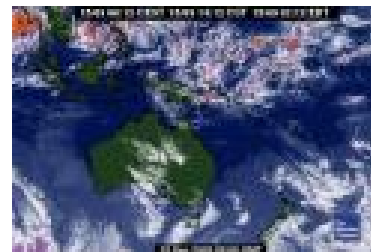
7.2 Homework: Write a weather forecast based on today’s vocabulary. Try and use some more difficult vocabulary and be able to explain it in next lesson. Listen out for weather word idioms and other weather words and write them down with the context.

There are 3 dialogues on the tape: social chit chat using simple present and present perfect, weather forecast using “will” and a talk about what people do “when” the weather is x, using the simple present. Students interact with the tape by choosing the type each dialogue is.

Students will enjoy competing to see who can get the correct verb forms first. This also provides some self-instruction as they have the opportunity to discover when you use which verb form; less teacher-directed.

6.3 allows students to practise their grammar and become more familiar with choosing correct verbs.

Depending on how much time these exercises take, there may be some students who need some more to do. The exercises in section 7 provide for variety depending on how many students there are who need more work.



I think it’s good to provide students with other usages of the words they’ve learnt. Here, we’d introduce students to idioms such as “I’m snowed under”, “storm in a teacup”, etc. This theme could be carried on in subsequent lessons.

This homework provides the opportunity for students to use what they learnt in class and expand on it to find new idioms and words. It makes the topic meaningful to their lives.

## *Teaching the Past Continuous*

By *Annette Evans*, Teacher CIT (AMEP), and Masters Student University of Canberra

### **Lesson plan for past continuous**

This lesson plan is for a 90 minute lesson during which students will be introduced to the grammatical structure of the past continuous and its usage. The lesson plan consists of demonstration and presentation of the structure and usage in its positive and negative forms, the difference between the past continuous and the simple past, and practice thereof. Practice exercises incorporate speaking, reading, writing and listening.

My microteaching demonstration starts at the beginning of the lesson plan and concludes at the end of point 4. It is planned to last for 20 - 25 minutes.

### **Student Group**

**Age:** adults of various ages, similar to participants in the tutorial  
**Number:** From 6 - 20



**Proficiency level:** Intermediate

**Purpose:** General English.

- The class consists of adult migrants to Australia of different ages, from various cultures and with different educational levels and backgrounds.
- The students' purposes for learning English range from needing or wanting some mastery of English to survive in Australia to requiring a higher proficiency in English to secure a job or continue on with studying at a tertiary institution.

## **Lesson**

### **Skill:**

Grammar subskill - the past continuous, sometimes known as the progressive past.

### **Position in overall syllabus:**

This lesson would be the first of 2 lessons which focus specifically on the past continuous. This lesson introduces the past continuous and teaches the students to form it correctly and provides them, through explanation and demonstration with a basic understanding of why you might choose to use it. This lesson provides them with a basic understanding of the meaning of this structure and introduces them to the concept of choosing between the past continuous and the simple past.

The second lesson on this structure would incorporate more choices for the students to make between the past continuous and the simple past and would solidify their understanding of the meaning of the structure. It would teach them to use the structure in their own verbal and written compositions and to understand its use when reading and listening to other texts.

Subsequent lessons in any of the macroskills or subskills would include this structure so that it is revisited from time to time and consolidated.

### **Aims:**

To introduce a new structure, the past continuous, by demonstration.

To explain the new structure, how it's formed and why.

To allow students to practice the new structure verbally and in writing.

To introduce students to the meaning of the new structure, by presentation and aural and written demonstration.

To introduce students to the concept of choosing between using the simple past and past continuous.

### **Objectives/Learning outcomes:**

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

correctly form the past continuous;

recognize the past continuous in text;

understand the meaning of the past continuous;

use the past continuous in their writing and speaking;

understand that the past continuous and the simple past have different functions which can complement each other; and

make basic decisions about when to use the past continuous and when to use the simple past.

### **Texts**

For this lesson I have chosen handouts from a variety of commercial texts. These are listed below, in order that they appear in the lesson plan:

- Hartley, Bernard & Viney, Peter. 1987. "An Accident", in *Streamline English: Departures*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Unit 55
- Murphy, Raymond. 1994. *Essential Grammar in Use*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Unit 12, 24-25
- Soars, Liz & John. 1996, *New Headway English Course: Intermediate Workbook*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, Unit 3, 18.

### **Audio tape**

- Hartley, Bernard & Viney, Peter. 1987. *Streamline English: Departures*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, *An Accident*, Unit 55

### **Handouts**

Handouts are used for exercises and come from the commercial texts listed above, as well as others whose source I don't know and which I found already photocopied.

## **Lesson Plan**

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- Have action cards (prepared by me) ready to hand out
- Have other handouts ready and in order
- Have cassette recorder and cassette ready for play.

### **The Lesson**

#### **1. Hello and general welcome (2 minutes)**

**(introduction)**

- Inform the students that today we're going to look at a new structure in the past tense called the continuous past, sometimes also called the progressive past. (introduction)

#### **2. Demonstration of past continuous by revision of present continuous (10 minutes)**

**(demonstration; presentation; practice; meaning)**

- Ask students if they remember the present continuous and prompt them by asking, "What am I doing now?" Write it on the board.
- Explain that you are going to give a card to the students. These cards have instructions on them. Ask the students to do what the card asks them to do. Put some of them in groups and/or pairs to do the actions.
- Get students to work out what they and the other students are doing by looking and asking questions if necessary. Elicit correct answers in present continuous. Write them on the board.
- Now ask, "What **was** X doing?". Ask X, "Is that correct X? **Were** you xxxing? Okay, so what **was** X doing? Yes, X **was** xxxing." Use statements, questions and negatives. Elicit the correct responses and write them on the board.
- Ask the students to do their actions together, starting now, and not to stop until I ask them to. Ask another student to leave the room for 1 minute and then to suddenly run through the door and yell out "fire".
- Ask students, "what were you doing when X ran through the door?"
- Also use "while X was watching tv and Y was ironing his clothes, Z ran through the door and shouted 'fire'."

#### **3. Explanation (5 minutes)**

**(explanation)**

- Explain to students that this is the past continuous, the same as the present continuous, but in the past tense. It always uses the verb "to be", but in the past tense, and the main verb always has the gerund (an "ing") on the end of it, just like in the present continuous.
- Ask students to look on the board at our examples and see whether they can decide why they're using the past continuous – **clue**: how long do these actions take? Elicit that they would take some time. Discuss that this is one of the reasons we have the past continuous, to show actions that take a while and are not instantaneous.
- Therefore, we can use the past continuous to set a scene or to show what is happening over an extended period of time or what is happening on when something else is about to happen or when something else does happen. Remind them about "When x came in the door..."

#### **4. "An Accident" (8 minutes)**

**(demonstration)**

- Inform the students that we're now going to listen to a tape of a story.
- Hand out copies of *An accident* Ask students to read the story while the tape plays, taking note of the past continuous and the simple past.
- Play the tape.
- Discuss the use of the past continuous in this passage.
- Play the tape a second time if required.

**5. Hand out Attachment C**

**Essential Grammar in Use, Unit 12 (10 minutes)**

**(explanation)**

- Read through with the students and ensure they understand

**6. Group work (15 minutes)**

**(practice and follow-up)**

- Inform students that you'd like them to work through the exercises on the handout. Ask them to form groups and work through them together. Ask them to discuss and have reasons for their answers.
- Go around and help groups as required and follow-up with their answers and reasons for them. Help and correct as required.

**TEN MINUTE BREAK**

**7. "It was raining when she saw him" (8 mins)**

**(practice; drill)**

- Read hand out.
- Discuss if this is a good way of remembering when we can use past continuous and simple past together.
- Ask them to read it out and discuss the differences between the two forms of the past tense.
- Get them to chant it as a group.

**8. More practice (20 mins)**

**(practice and follow-up)**

- Hand out worksheet on Past Continuous with 'when', and ask students to complete exercises 3 and 4. Can be done as whole class exercise.
- Hand out worksheet comparing past simple and past progressive – ask them to do this in pairs.
- Go around and check their progress. Help and correct as required.

**9. Homework**

**(Follow-up)**

- Ask students to complete exercise 5 using 'when' for homework. Next class, check homework and follow up on any outstanding issues. Make notes if any particular student has more trouble with the structure than most, and handle.

## ***Projects and Grants***

### **REPORTS ON ESL GRANT OUTCOMES**

#### **Using Commonwealth Funded Grant for costs relating to study of Graduate Certificate in TESOL and Foreign Language Teaching.**

By *Fern Hyde* (nee Lawley), teacher NPIEC

I started at the Northside Primary Introductory English Centre (NPIEC) at North Ainslie Primary School in February 2004, where I was lucky enough to be team-teaching with the very experienced Dora Chapman until July this year when she retired. Although this mentorship has been invaluable to me in terms of experience, knowledge and skill development, I still felt I needed further academic study to compliment this.

Through studies in the Graduate Certificate in TESOL and Foreign Language Teaching at the University of Canberra, I feel that the exploration of theories and methodologies studied within the course has given me a deeper understanding of the process of English language teaching, which is reflected in my teaching. My general practices are quite similar, although not only am I more aware of what I am doing, why it is necessary and how it will develop my students' English, but I am also trying new techniques, adding to activities to target areas that I either did not know I was lacking in, or did not have the confidence to try.

I find that I am reminding myself more of aspects of language to accentuate in a lesson; I am able to continue teaching to my previous programs and format, although emphases in lessons may be changed, or an element of the lesson may be extended or looked at from a different angle to accentuate an area of difficulty or future teaching.

I have become more reflective of my teaching; by learning about how English is taught in different situations and through different methods, I am able to take what I am hearing, reading and discussing and relate that to my teaching. Through this I can decide whether something is appropriate of my current group of students, whether or not I will try a different technique and if I do try something different, whether it suits my teaching and learning style and the needs and learning styles of my students. I feel inspired by the professional discussion that I am having both within the course and with my colleagues, with this inspiration following through into my classroom practices.

I was unsure how I would cope with a full-time teaching load and part-time load studying. Through planning my studying time into my weekly plan, and committing myself to university study during those times I have kept the load under control and this has enabled me to enjoy returning to academic study as well as the educational benefits within my classroom.

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#### **A Laptop for Loan**

By *Elsie Veronica (Ronnie) Flor*, teacher Telopea Park School (Secondary – Senior Site)

At the end of 2004, Telopea Park School received a DEST ESL Grant for \$4635.00. The grant money was used to purchase a laptop computer with a dock. It was also used to purchase a colour printer and a digital video camcorder (with tripod, bag and tapes).

It was envisioned that the ESL students would be able to access the computer using the wide variety of CD programs that the school already possessed. However, as some of the ESL students do not have personal computers at home, they have been able to borrow the laptop in order to complete assignments and homework for other subjects aside from ESL. This still fulfils the aim of better catering for the individual needs of the students. The fact that some students do not have computers at home does not disadvantage them at all as there is a laptop that they can access any time. The students value the laptop and have treated it with care at all times.

The video camcorder has been very beneficial as it has been used by the students to record their speeches and performances in the classroom and at the school's assembly. The Year 10 ESL class has used the camcorder for their News presentations and they have viewed their performances immediately. The students were also able to assess themselves and each other in this presentation. The Year 9 ESL class also videotaped their speeches which they used for their Exhibitions. The whole ESL population performed a song and dance number during assembly and this was recorded. Their performance was part of their assessment for Term 3. The camcorder was also loaned to some ESL students for a Science project. The resulting video was sent in for a competition and it was one of the finalists.

On the whole, both major items have helped the ESL students with their confidence: confidence that even without a computer at home, they could still complete any of the tasks set for completion on computers and confidence gained by performing in front of the class and a big audience (and being able to watch their performances after being recorded). These items have also helped the students in the development of their multi-media skills and Information and Communication Technology Competencies.

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### **Inspirations Software, an Apple Computer and ESL related books**

By *Mary Elliott*, teacher Gold Creek School

The DEST ESL Grants at Gold Creek School funded several projects that gave benefits to ESL students as well as mainstream students. ESL students are supported and integrated into the mainstream at Gold Creek School and many of our students come from non-English speaking backgrounds. The school includes the Primary Site for years K to 5 and the Senior Site catering for years 6 to 10. The Middle School is for years 6-8.

We chose to enhance the literacy and ICT skills of the students with this grant. We purchased ESL related books, licenses for the Inspirations Software Program for K-10 and an Apple Computer with multi media programs.

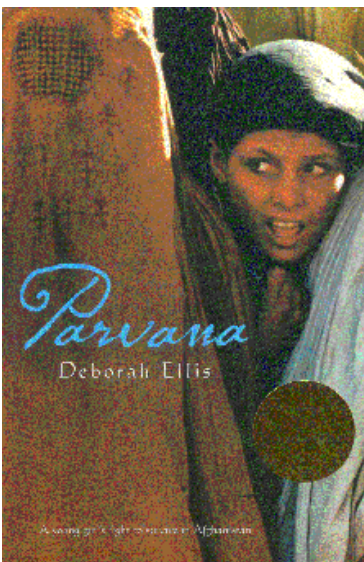
The multi media computer contribution was \$3000 and it is set up near the library front desk for security and student support. The programs allow students to create photos, video recordings and sound recordings. Students use their verbal language skills, writing skills and visual literacy skills in this area and they are able to personalise their work. The programs are proving to be an excellent way to motivate our ESL students and they are inclusive of all students. The English language on the various i-Mac programs is simple to follow with a step-by-step approach. One student, a recent arrival from Africa spends a great deal of time, even after school, on these activities particularly making the digital movies. It is extremely popular at the school and students usually need to make a booking to use it.

We are working this semester on professional development for staff in this aspect of ICT, so that they can be better trained to work with students in future. We find that students can work more independently to take, download and burn digital photos. We are planning to better utilise the Satellite dish, already at Gold Creek, and record more programs on CD, relevant to other cultures, as Foxtel digital will soon be available at our school.

Approximately \$1000 was used to purchase from Edsoft the “Inspirations programs” for the Senior Site network and to upgrade the existing computer program “Inspirations” for the Primary Site. Many students, including those from ESL backgrounds, are regularly accessing this program and it has proved to be an excellent way to support their writing skills. Students can better understand how they create a piece of writing for a topic. They brainstorm ideas onto a visual display and then click directly into an outline of the visual display and it has hyperlinks to the Internet. The program is used widely in our middle school classrooms and the students enjoy using it. It is successful with the year 9 and 10 students who are gaining increased confidence in their essay writing skills.

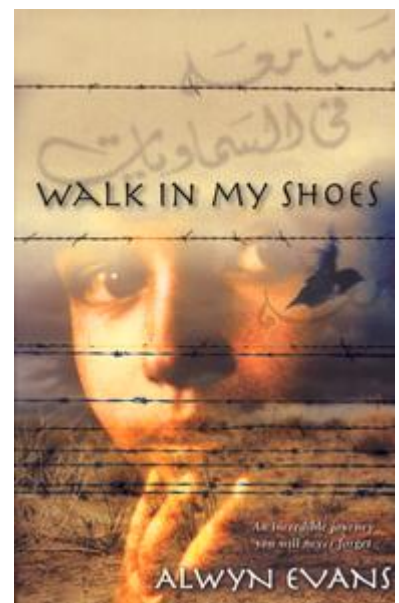
A number of the staff have completed professional development courses with “Inspirations” and they are demonstrating improved skills in using the program with their classes. The teachers usually give very positive feedback when they use the program, discovering that it helps to motivate the students in their writing.

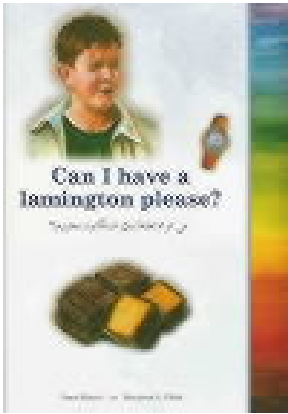
Books worth approximately \$1000 were purchased to support the programs at our school and to also link with the cultures, backgrounds and experiences of our ESL students. They are improving the literacy skills, interest, motivation and self-esteem of the ESL students. Many of these books are now linked to our integrated units and cooperative reading programs and are being used with positive results. We purchased a number of books written on recent issues, which have proved to be popular and encourage young people to be more sensitive about the conditions of other people in other parts of the world.



The following books were purchased for the cooperative reading programs: “Parvana’s Journey”, “Shauzia”, “The Garbage King”, “Heaven Shop”, “Saving Francesca”, “Little Brother”, “The Diary of Anne Frank”, “Across the Nightingale Floor”, “Cross For His Pillow”, “Brilliance of the Moon”, “Chinese Cinderella” and “Chinese Cinderella and Secret Dragon”. The “Parvana” series has proved most successful and was read in a class with an Afghan student. Class activities were centred around the book. “Heaven Shop” is concerned with the AIDS crisis in Africa. Many of the other books are becoming popular with staff and students.

Books were purchased for individual reading such as “Esperanza Rising”, “Riding Freedom”, “First Crossing”, “A hard Road to Glory”, “A Single Shard” and “Walk in My Shoes”. “Can I have a Lamington Please” is a bilingual Korean/English book. The books about different cultures and religions of the world are being used for the year 9 “Exhibitions” and assignment work throughout the school.





The ESL Grant continues to enhance the literacy and ICT programs at Gold Creek School. It enriches and improves understandings of other cultures, supports and is inclusive of those from non English Speaking backgrounds and makes education at the school more relevant for all.

This is the English/Farsi edition. I understand the story is now available in 14 different languages – Ed.

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### **A Digital Video for Oral Presentations (and an eMac too)**

By **Kit Huang**, teacher Forrest Primary School

Forrest School received an ESL grant of \$2919.00 towards the purchase of an eMac computer and JVC digital video camera. These were purchased in Term One and set up in the ESL Room to provide immediate access to the use of IT for ESL students.

We chose the eMac computer because of its versatility and range of functions. We bought the JVC digital video camera for its stills and movie capabilities.

ESL students were noticed to be generally quite shy and did not often participate in their mainstream classroom when IT was being used. As they were less self-conscious among other ESL students when they came to the ESL Room, we felt that these purchases would allow maximum involvement.

The students and I spent the initial weeks pouring over manuals and learning how to use both technologies. This in itself generated a great deal of discussion. New vocabularies, including some difficult technological terms, were encountered as we learned and experimented together the workings of the computer and the camera. We are now at the point where we are beginning to feel confident using the equipment for the purpose we originally purchased them for.

In particular, we targeted the Years 3 to 6 groups in preparation for formal oral presentations. Writing and refining speeches involve the use of the language and structure of formal speeches, with which the students are often unfamiliar.

The JVC digital video camera has been particularly relevant for preparing for the presentation of formal talks. The students only have to operate one piece of equipment and they are increasingly able to do this part of it by themselves. The playbacks provide the ESL students with immediate feedback about themselves as oral presenters and provide a forum for open discussions. All these add to their confidence and ability in using ICT and in making reflective and evaluative comments among themselves.

The eMac proved to be more complex but we have come a fair way since the day it was unpacked. Students use it for all kinds of research of course, including viewing examples of different literary styles during the preparation for their formal oral presentations thus enriching their communicative skills and competence.

This term we shall extend our ICT activities into the editing process. In the new year we shall use the facility more fully to create student booklets, incorporating photographs taken by the students. As well, we shall branch into slide shows and movies, with photographs and integrating music, and power point presentations.

In hindsight, it was a pity that my application for a PD day was unsuccessful. I feel that a lot more could have been achieved this year had I had some professional in-service at the very start. I look forward to accessing some PD next year to bring me up to a level where I am completely at ease with using these technologies with my students.

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### **Exciting Excursions**

By *Robyn Hammond*, teacher Tuggeranong Primary Introductory English Centre

TPIEC received a grant of \$550 to go towards hire of a bus for excursions in our area. We used this money to support three excursions, two as part of our *Healthy Lifestyle* program and one as part of our *Where do you come from?* unit. During the first two excursions we visited the Pialligo Apple Orchard and the Belconnen Markets. The final excursion visited the embassy area and included the Cultural Centre at the Indonesian Embassy.



Students at the IEC come from a diverse range of backgrounds and language experiences. A common activity such as an external excursion gives a common experience and thus a common focus to the language learning activities.



There was much talk prior to the excursions on where we were going and why we were going there. There was also discussion and first hand experience of the organisational side of excursions including the need to have permission notes. On the excursions related to *Healthy Lifestyle* we purchased items at both destinations and used them for cooking and eating on our return. The excursion to the Embassy area focussed on similarities and differences between lifestyles, especially architecture. The digital camera was extensively used and the photos from all forays downloaded onto the smartboard to be a focus for discussion and writing/reading. Selected photos were also printed in both colour and grey scale and became the focus for static displays and personal readers.

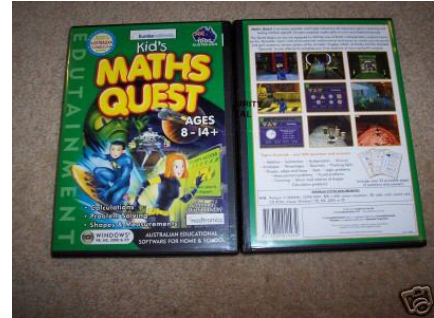
The anticipated outcomes for the students were definitely achieved. These included enhancing their speaking, listening and writing skills, and experiencing aspects of Canberra they would otherwise not have experienced.

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## Developing Independence in ESL Learners with the aid of Notebook Computers, Headphones, Printers and Quest Software

By *Vida Thomson*, teacher Telopea Park School

The Telopea Park School Primary ESL Program was fortunate enough to be awarded \$5000 in the DEST ESL Grants for 2005. The funds received were to be used to purchase two notebook computers and six stereo headphones. Taking advantage of New Year sales (and a good deal of highly polished haggling!), as well as the excellent sales skills of Ben Camilleri at the Dick Smith Power House Woden, a number of additional items were also purchased with the \$5000 grant. Along with the two notebook computers and headphones we also purchased a printer, laptop carry cases, two 64MB jumpdrives, some consumables (disks and printer cartridges) and a fabulous software package – “The Ultimate Quest” containing “Literacy Quest”, “Maths Quest”, “Space Quest” and “Multiplication Quest” – an Australian resource from Eureka Multimedia.



The overall focus of the Telopea grant was to enhance and extend the variety of individualized teaching/learning opportunities for the ‘unique’ ESL student population at the school. Due to Telopea’s bilingual curriculum structure (we are a French/Australian school) there are two formal intakes of ESL students per year – in January and July. There are also on-going enrolments of ESL students at other times throughout the year. Many students arrive with low competency in English. These students require intensive ESL support from the ESL teachers. Clearly they also need individualised learning plans and teaching focus in order to facilitate their smooth transition into their mainstream English strand class environment.

The addition of the two notebook computers has been invaluable in assisting with this process. The notebook computers are portable and have been used by three ESL teachers in three teaching locations. They are also invaluable as resources within the English strand classes as the newly arrived ESL students can work on specific tasks, learn and practise English vocabulary whilst still remaining a member of their class and becoming more comfortable and familiar with class routines. The beginning English ESL learners have demonstrated sustained attention and are able to work independently, using simple software programs and this has led to improved student confidence and reinforcement of vocabulary learnt during ESL lessons. The headphones allow for personal progress and students do not feel intimidated or pressured and can work at their own pace and level of ability.

Given the extreme lack of teaching space, especially in one ESL classroom which is a teacher’s office, the two notebook computers have been used as vital teaching / learning tools when multi-ability groups are being taken in this confined space. The students find them attractive to use – they are compact, portable and non-threatening. Previously there were no computers available for ESL students to use in the middle primary area during ESL sessions with one of the ESL teachers. Individual students can now be actively engaged on a task using the notebook computer and headphones whilst other students receive one to one teaching. Students enjoy the interactive opportunities for learning and also find rewarding the opportunity to prepare and print their written work efforts.

The software package purchased has been an additional bonus particularly for the senior ESL students. The four “Ultimate Quest” disks are Australian, so the voices are Australian. The ‘game-like’ format ensures that the learning of word meanings, grammatical structures and vocabulary, comprehension skills and mathematics language is entertaining yet effective, as the students thoroughly enjoy working their way through the ‘quests’. There are workbooks supporting each level within the ‘quests’ and these provide valuable written reinforcement of understandings gained.

Another significant contribution has been improved record keeping which I have achieved through the development of a student progress data base (still a work in progress) to enhance and streamline the formal reporting process. Other benefits we have realised include information sharing, maintenance of student work files, enhanced professional liaison and streamlined programming for the Primary ESL teachers at Telopea Park School.

The contribution made by the addition of the two notebook computers to the Primary ESL program has been considerable. They are a vital and indispensable resource.

Any drawbacks? With 4 ESL teachers (full and part-time) working with a large and diverse ESL student population, the two notebook computers are in high demand so the only drawback is we need more notebook computers! Stay tuned for our next grant submission...!!

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### **Equipping a Homework Centre for ESL Students**

By *Lin Yap*, teacher, Kambah High School

In December 2004 Kambah High School was fortunate in receiving a DEST ESL Grant for ESL students attending our school. The total amount of \$4,200 was approved by the ESL Budget Committee and offered to Kambah High School to fund the introduction of an ESL Homework Centre.

The ESL Homework Centre was proposed to be established for ESL students who would then have access to numerous resources in one room. Introducing the classroom of the ESL teacher as a Homework Centre has benefited many ESL students some of whom are refugees and need a safe and relaxed environment to access. They have used the Centre as a place of learning and socialisation where they can feel safe and be comfortable away from the larger school population. The Homework Centre has a range of resources purchased from the Grant allocated by the ESL Budget Committee. It is readily available to all ESL students and includes:

- A laptop computer
- Colour Printer
- Printing stationary such as print cartridge, colour paper etc.
- Wide range of stationary such as pencils, rulers, paper, pens etc
- Dictionaries
- ESL Specific Texts
- English Texts (mainly short stories)
- Puzzles and Games

The outcomes of establishing the Homework Centre for ESL students at Kambah High and attaining the excess resources from the Grant have been very positive and continue to provide strong support for student learning. Students have maintained a constant usage of the laptop for word processing, research and emailing as well as a tool for class presentations. The convenience of having the laptop available for use in their mainstream classes has strengthened their learning opportunities.

The purchase of various ESL specific texts has broadened the supporting materials of teacher directed assistance to ESL students. Students have also used the texts to polish their grammar skills and apply them to their written work. The availability of short stories has also improved the opportunities for students to extend their reading.

The availability of puzzles and games has allowed students to practice their communication in a fun and non confrontational manner. The educational outcomes derived from playing games such as Scrabble have allowed students to practice the pronunciation of various words and further extend their vocabulary. Furthermore, students learn to work in teams and maintain a strong competitive edge to achieve. The games and puzzles purchased from the Grant are available to ESL students at the Homework Centre to use at lunch times and have certainly allowed them to feel a sense of pride and ownership of their designated area.

Overall the Grant has been an excellent resource for ESL students at Kambah High School. It has made the newly designated Homework Centre a well resourced area where our ESL students can work and socialise in a safe and supportive facility. All resources purchased from the Grant are valued by our ESL students and have so far supported them greatly during their learning at Kambah.

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### **Ultrakey – a keyboard typing program**

By *Robert Cuttell*, teacher Secondary Introductory English Centre

The ESL Grant was used to purchase a site licence for Ultrakey – a keyboard tutor program. The SIEC had used an earlier version of Ultrakey many years ago on Macintosh computers and found it to be easy to understand and simple to operate. The upgraded Windows version now utilises 3D animation, computer graphics and video, but it is still the ease of operation, not the glitzy gimmicks, that makes it useful for ESL learners at the SIEC.



Some students at the SIEC have never seen a keyboard while others are quite competent at keyboarding. Ultrakey can be used to improve the ability of students at both ends of this keyboarding scale. SIEC teachers introduce Ultrakey with a series of lessons and then encourage students to practise their keyboarding for a short time at the beginning or end of computing lessons.

Ultrakey is best loaded on to each computer, with student records being saved to the server. This allows for quick access to the Ultrakey application, while students can download their records from any computer on the network.

A trial version can be downloaded from: [www.bytesoflearning.com/products/view/4](http://www.bytesoflearning.com/products/view/4) . However, if purchasing, it is easier to buy from:

Spectronics  
P.O. Box 88  
Rochedale  
Queensland  
AUSTRALIA 4123

## ***For Fun***

### **ATESOL DINNER QUIZ**

Thanks to Julia Carter and Fiona Cotton

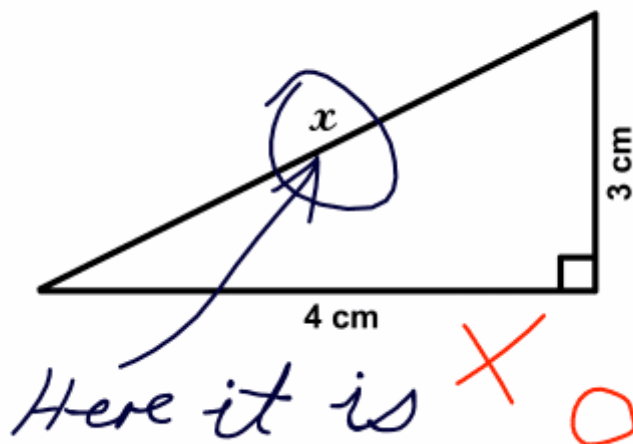
1. What is the native language of Vanuatu?
2. Noel Coward's surname is of which type?
  - a. a) Patronymic
  - b) Occupational
  - c) Locational?
  - d) Descriptive?
3. What is the Peter Principle?
4. Finnish is not an Indo-European Language. True/False
5. In which country are the languages Susu and Limba spoken?
6. What does Vernalagnia mean?
  - a. Hard black rock named after a Colonel von Samarski
  - b. Bitterly cold
  - c. Increased sexual desire during spring
  - d. Curved wooden planks in the frame of a ship
7. The musical term pizzicato means...
8. What do the words 'facetious' and 'abstemious' have in common?
9. What is an epigram?
10. Romany, the language of the Gypsies, is most closely related to which of these languages?
  - a. a) Russian
  - b) Yiddish
  - c) Punjabi
  - d) Romanian
11. What are three musical instruments that end with -o?
12. What sound in English is a voiceless labiodental fricative?
13. What is the world's most common surname?
14. What is the meaning of the word 'Googul' ?
  - a) A shrimp which looks like a praying mantis
  - b) A colourless fluid made from wood smoke
  - c) Dark green copper compound found in Atacama, Chile
  - d) Very fragrant gum from Myrrh trees
15. What is vexillology?
16. Which word is spelt incorrectly?
  - a) supercede
  - b) liquefy
  - c) disperate
17. What do the surnames Ivanovich, DiGiovanni, Evans and Janss have in common?

18. From which Shakespeare play is the following quotation?
- The quality of mercy is not strained, It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven*
  - Upon the place beneath....*
19. What thing do the words 'skewbald' and 'chestnut' refer to?
20. What is unusual about the sentence "Jackdaws love my big sphinx of quartz"?
21. What is the meaning of the word 'Incunabula'?
- Books printed before 1500 AD
  - A Greek soldier who held a shield to defend another Greek soldier
  - A saucer-shaped depression where water collects
  - Poor Italian beggars
22. Which is the closest linguistic relative to modern English?
- German
  - Dutch
  - Danish
  - Frisian
23. How many different ways can you pronounce "ough" ?

### A Maths Problem

Thanks Lesley

#### 3. Find x.



## *Meet our Teachers*

### Introducing Wendy Henderson

By **Annette Evans**, teacher AMEP, CIT



Wendy Henderson has been an ESL teacher in CIT's Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) since 1993. She has taught every class: community; orientation; stages 1-3; extension; and distance learning.

Wendy's ESL career started in 1980 when, as a teacher of the hearing impaired, she was also asked to teach ESL. Enjoying that, Wendy subsequently travelled to Malaysia with Australian Volunteers Abroad to teach English to a group of academic high achievers who, at the end of their schooling, would go on to study at Australian, British and American universities.

Perhaps due to their academic aspirations and/or the Malaysian schooling system, Wendy's students, 20 to a class, "were a delight to teach" being respectful of the teacher and willing to fully participate in the lessons. The school was exceptional too, being equipped with a language laboratory, computers and an abundant supply of modern texts, somewhat different to some of the "horror" stories one hears about teaching English in Asia!

Not surprisingly, Wendy returned full of enthusiasm and undertook a series of courses to gain formal TESOL qualifications. She first completed a Graduate Diploma for Multicultural English and later a Graduate Diploma in Teaching English to Adults, both by correspondence. But that wasn't all! Wendy also completed a month-long intensive RSA certificate course. She says that the course was exhausting, requiring her to work from 6am to midnight almost daily, and imagines that students doing the 3-month RSA diploma would be "dead by the end of it"!! But she found the course to be extremely useful, focussing on the practical, which Wendy prefers to theory.

While studying, Wendy found working as an ESL teacher to be extremely beneficial and commiserates with students who are now required to become qualified before working. She said that being able to use and experiment with what she was learning, as she was learning it, was invaluable. I agree, often thinking, "I'll give that a go in my next class"!

Wendy mixes and matches different teaching techniques depending on her group and situation. One of her and her students' favourites is the *dictagloss technique*. She classes herself primarily as a grammarian, however, and believes that students should understand why, what and how before using a new structure. So she prefers to teach each grammatical point first and then use a communicative approach to practise.

This approach is opposite to the RSA's, which focuses on usage first. But Wendy agrees that the RSA technique is beneficial for lower-level students and with them uses a theme approach, incorporating grammatical structures within the theme and explaining usage without metalanguage.

For multilevel classes which include students who are illiterate in their own language, Wendy endorses Home Tutors sitting with each illiterate student and practising things with them repeatedly. She has found Home Tutors to be a Godsend, as without such individual assistance those students

could easily be left behind! (Similar to Natalie Hess's <sup>1</sup>idea of using classmates to help slower students).

The textbooks Wendy enjoys using include *New Headway*, *Cutting Edge*, *Foundation*, and *Words will Travel*. While some are old, she finds they're still useful and enjoyed by students. New arrivals particularly enjoy *Words will Travel*, which also has a video, is Australian in content and is set in a coastal NSW town. For her computer resources Wendy uses *Issues in English*, *Click into English*, *Focus on Grammar*, and *Virtual ILC* and for the language lab, *Australians Talking*, *Listen to Australian*, and *Behind the News*.

Wendy has observed nationality-specific similarities amongst her students, such as pronunciation difficulties common to certain language-speakers and nationalities which tend to be quiet and shy in class, but she emphasises that for every generality, there are always exceptions. Interestingly, she hasn't found differences specific to gender.

Wendy assigns homework, which she marks and then hands back to each student individually while the class completes an exercise. This allows each student to receive individual feedback and assistance. Wendy will sometimes put common mistakes on the whiteboard and ask the students to correct them in groups. She says the students enjoy doing this and become quite competitive with regard to getting the correct answer first!

Talking with Wendy about her career and seeing how much she enjoys her work was interesting and uplifting. She knows her material thoroughly, has numerous favourite exercises tucked safely away for every grammatical structure that might be tackled and has an interesting tale to tell about all sorts of different learning situations. A big thank you to Wendy for giving her time to share her experiences with me.

*This is a summary of a discussion Wendy and Annette had at the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) Reid in August 2005.*



Wendy at work

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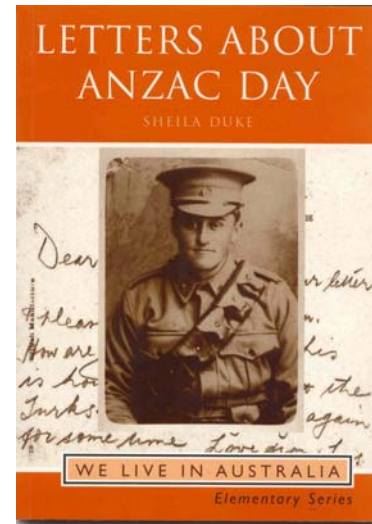
<sup>1</sup> Hess, Natalie. 2001. *Teaching large multilevel classes*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press

## **Book Review:**

***Letters about Anzac Day***: Book by Sheila Duke, with accompanying CD. Photocopiable Worksheets by Pornsawan Brawn & Clare McDowell (Sydney: NCLTR, Macquarie University, 2005)

Reviewed by **Jill Schaefer**, AMEP, CIT

This reader is one in a series developed by NCLTR for low level learners of English. According to the publicity handout that accompanied my copy it is suitable for CSWE I, II and III. However the book of worksheets suggest that they are only for CSWE I and II. The books are available for \$12.95, the worksheets (with answers) for \$24.95 and a CD or cassette for \$19.95.



The writer presents two letters, one written by an Anzac in 1916 describing what he has gone through and the other an imaginary letter by his great-grandson talking about the way Anzac day is celebrated now. I later found out that the letters written by the Soldier were based on letters written by her relatives. In addition the photo is of a relative. It seems a pity that this is not acknowledged. I know that adult readers would be interested in this information. The two letters have been presented at three different levels to cater for “low, high and post elementary” levels. Similarly the worksheets cover the three levels.

The books are illustrated with authentic black and white photos many of them taken from negatives held by the Australian War Memorial. Unfortunately their quality is not good. Perhaps adults would be more forgiving but children, for whom the text and worksheets would be very suitable, might not be very impressed. It also appeared that some photos had been made to fit the page with a loss of scale.

I believe it is important for our migrant students to understand about the special days in Australia and I commend the publication for this. One of my colleagues was most impressed with the stimulus pictures accompanying the workbook and the simplified explanations in the glossary accompanying the letters.

I used the letters and some worksheets with a CSWE III class. Realizing that the students would not find the text difficult to read I decided to use it primarily as a listening exercise in the language laboratory, starting off with a cloze exercise I'd made (using the text from the photocopiable worksheets) and then doing some of the other worksheets such as the true/false exercises. Many of the language exercises on the work sheets, including information about writing a recount, were definitely geared more to lower classes. We started our class with some brain storming and established some of the background to Anzac Day. The letters on the CD, especially the great grandson's one were read at a slow pace and because the sentence structures were simple the students coped well and could guess at most of the words they weren't sure of. They provided a useful introduction to Anzac Day which we have followed up with discussions and the reading of an authentic Anzac letter published recently in the Canberra Times. Many students expressed an interest in visiting the war memorial and one actually attended the Dawn Service and found it very moving.

Sheila Duke is to be commended for work that has gone into the preparation of this reader. It is a clever way to involve the readers in the story of Anzac Day. However it is not easy to use in classes with 20 or so students. Does the school buy 20 copies or even 10 for use in class once a year? In fact we only used the book at the end to pass around the class so they could see the photos. I wondered whether it would have been better to have had three special days covered in one book and available at three separate levels? Perhaps a CD or DVD with text, sound, pictures and exercises would have been more successful.

**ATESOL DINNER QUIZ -answers**

1. What is the native language of Vanuatu? ***Bislama***
2. Noel Coward's surname is of which type?
  - a. a) Patronymic
  - b) Occupational
  - c) Locational?
  - d) Descriptive?

***b. Occupational after 'cowherd'***
3. What is the Peter Principle?  
***Workers will rise to the level beyond their competence***
4. Finnish is not an Indo-European Language. ***True***  
 Finnish and [Sami](#) — the language of [Lapland](#)'s small [indigenous](#) minority — are both [Finno-Ugric languages](#) and are in the [Uralic](#) rather than the [Indo-European](#) family. The closest related language to the Finnish still widely in use is [Estonian](#). Both Finnish and Estonian are [Baltic Finnish](#) or [Finnic](#) languages, while other Finno-Ugric languages are more distant.
5. In which country are the languages Susu and Limba spoken? ***Sierra Leone***
6. What does Vernalagnia mean?
  - a. Hard black rock named after a Colonel von Samarski
  - b. Bitterly cold
  - c. Increased sexual desire during spring ✓
  - d. Curved wooden planks in the frame of a ship
7. The musical term pizzicato means... ***'plucked' of a stringed instrument***
8. What do the words 'facetious' and 'abstemious' have in common? ***Aeiou in order***
9. What is an epigram? ***A short witty expression usually summing up someone's character***
10. Romany, the language of the Gypsies, is most closely related to which of these languages?
  - a. a) Russian
  - b) Yiddish
  - c) Punjabi ✓
  - d) Romanian

**Romany (or Romani)** is the [language](#) of the [Roma](#) and [Sinti](#), travelling peoples often referred to in English as "[gypsies](#)". They came originally from what is now, northern [India](#) and parts of [Pakistan](#), and their language belongs to the [Indo-Aryan](#) branch of the [Indo-European](#) language group. It must not be confused with the [Romanian language](#), a [Romance language](#), spoken by the [Romanians](#).

Analysis of the Romany language has shown that it is closely related to those spoken in northern India, in particular [Punjabi](#). This language relationship is believed to indicate the Roma's and Sinti's true geographical origin. Loanwords in Romany make it possible to trace the pattern of their migration west.
11. What are three musical instruments that end with -o?
  - a. ***Banjo, piccolo, cello, piano***
12. What sound in English is a voiceless labiodental fricative? ***/f/***
13. What is the world's most common surname?
  - a. ***Li***
    - i. ***7.9% of the Chinese population***
    - i. ***103 million in China, 108 million worldwide (2002 statistic)***

14. What is the meaning of the word 'Googul' ?  
 a. A shrimp which looks like a praying mantis  
 b. A colourless fluid made from wood smoke  
 c. Dark green copper compound found in Atacama, Chile  
 d. Very fragrant gum from Myrrh trees ✓
15. What is vexillology? *Study of flags*
16. Which word is spelt incorrectly?  
 i. a) Supercede b) liquefy c) disperate **all**
17. What do the surnames Ivanovich, DiGiovanni, Evans and Janss have in common?  
 i. **Equivalent to Johnson in English**
18. From which Shakespeare play is the following quotation?  
 a. *The quality of mercy is not strained, It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven*  
 b. *Upon the place beneath....* **Merchant of Venice**
19. What thing do the words 'skewbald' and 'chestnut' refer to? **The colour of horses**
20. What is unusual about the sentence "Jackdaws love my big sphinx of quartz"?  
 a. **Shortest sentence with all the letters in the alphabet**
21. What is the meaning of the word 'Incunabula'?  
 a. Books printed before 1500 AD ✓  
 b. A Greek soldier who held a shield to defend another Greek soldier  
 c. A saucer-shaped depression where water collects  
 d. Poor Italian beggars
22. Which is the closest linguistic relative to modern English?  
 a. German  
 b. Dutch  
 c. Danish  
 d. Frisian

[Old Frisian](#) was highly similar to [Old English](#) and, historically, Frisian is classified as the closest existing language to [English](#). Both English and Frisian are marked by the suppression of the Germanic nasal in a word like *us*, *soft* or *tooth*: see [Anglo-Frisian nasal spirant law](#). For example, the Frisian for "green cheese" is "griene tsiis", whereas in [Dutch](#) it is "groene kaas". One rhyme demonstrates the similarity of the two languages: "Bread, butter and green cheese is good English and good Friese," which is pronounced more or less the same in both languages (Frisian: "Brea, bûter, en griene tsiis is goed Ingelsk en goed Fries.")

23. 23. How many different ways can you pronounce "ough" ? **6**  
**enough, dough, plough, borough, cough, and hiccough**

## GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AN ATESOL ARTICLE

- Contributions should be typed, in one font only, with no formatting;
- Contributions may be emailed as a Word attachment to the email address below or submitted on disk
- Contributor's name and work location or field of interest should be provided.
- All sources must be cited.
- Copyright regulations must be observed.

Articles, reports, notices, advertisements, reviews or any other item for inclusion in the journal should be directed to the editor:

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Phone: 6207 3300, 6207 3299

Fax: 6205 9599

### **Suggested Topics:**

A day in the life of an ESL teacher

Book/film/theatre review

Learning styles

Assessment

Pedagogy

Customs/cross-cultural issues

Language across the curriculum

Report on a conference or seminar

Using technology in the classroom

How to teach ...

A good lesson on teaching ...

A personal perspective on teaching ...

} pronunciation/reading/writing/spelling/  
} grammar etc

**Deadline for the Next Journal is 10 October 2006**