

# QATAR TESOL NEWS

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*Teaching Tip: the Use of Personal Journals in the L2 Classroom* **2-3**

*A Dream Come True (continued)* **2**

*EgyptTesol: A Report* **4**

*Olha Madylus to Speak & Membership Drive* **3**

*Submission Guidelines* **5**

*About Qatar TESOL* **6**

## Teaching Tip Contest

- sponsored by Macmillan. See page 3.

## Olha Madylus

- sponsored by British Council on February 22nd at CNA-Q at 5:15. See page 3.

## Membership Drive 2006

- launched on February 22nd. See page 3.

## A DREAM COME TRUE

BY NAIMA AL-HAIL, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Hessa Al-Khubaisi and Naima Al-Hail were nominated by the U.S. Embassy in Qatar to be participants in the International Visitor Leadership Program from September 19 to October 7, 2005. Al-Khubaisi and Naima Al-Hail traveled to the U.S. with a group of 18 representatives from ten different countries in the Middle East.

They were met at the airport by Mr. Glenn Carey and two other English language officers.

In Washington, D.C., the group attended a lecture about both private and public schools in the U.S. educational system and the role of government in the educational system.

In New York, the group toured Columbia Teacher College and learnt about teacher training and student campus life. The visitors also attended Friday prayer in the Muslim



Hessa Al-Khubaisi and Naima Al-Hail represent Qatar in the International visitor Leadership Program.

Students' Association (MSA). This association dedicates its efforts to creating a strong Muslim community, helping Muslims strengthen their faith, gain more knowledge about religion, guild Islamic character, and interact with other Muslims. Moreover, the MSA events strive to provide community service and pro-

note an understanding of the oft-misunderstood religion of Islam among all members of the Columbia University community.

The group also traveled to St. Louis, Denver and San Diego. They toured numerous  
*Continued on page 2.*

## THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL QATAR TESOL CONFERENCE, APRIL 14-15

The First International Qatar TESOL Conference will be held on April 14-15, 2006 at the College of the North Atlantic new campus next to Qatar University. The theme is *Best Practices in EFL*.

Registration begins on April 14th (Friday) at 3:00 P.M. The Plenary and several Featured Presentations will follow Registration. A reception is also planned for Friday evening.

A full day of sessions is

schedule for April 15th (Saturday) and more than 30 local and international speaker will present.

Check the Qatar TESOL website at <<http://www.qatartesol.com>>.

## TEACHING TIP: THE USE OF PERSONAL JOURNALS IN THE L2 CLASSROOM

BY DEBRA HAWLEY, AL-ISRAA INDEPENDENT PRIMARY GIRLS SCHOOL

### Quick Guide

**Key Words:** Writing; journal, error correction; elementary through secondary education

**Learner English Level:** Intermediate through native speaker

**Learner Maturity Level:** Middle grades through adult

**Preparation Time:** Varied from five minutes writing the topic on the board to a couple of hours responding to each student's entry

**Activity Time:** 10-15 minutes writing

Personal journals are commonplace in first language (L1) classrooms, but few consider using them in a foreign language or second language (L2) classroom. When presented with the idea of using personal journals in the L2 classroom, there is a mixed reaction. Some instructors feel that it is irresponsible to allow L2 students too much free rein because they will make errors and these errors

might become fossilized, thus of the course).

ruining any chance at attaining educated bilingualism. However, I feel that allowing students from the intermediate level on, a chance to use their L2 in low-stress, authentic situations has the potential to enhance their ownership of that L2 and lead to greater facility in the L2.

I have used journaling while teaching French in the U.S. and English in the U.S. and Qatar. In both instances, the L2 was being taught in the target language. Remarkable results followed after consistent usage (approximately three to five days a week for 10 to 15 minutes for each writing effort for the entirety



Journaling enhances student ownership of the L2

Errors disappeared gradually without any red grading marks from the teacher; spelling errors, verb tense mistakes and misuse of prepositions seemed to self-correct; and L2 specific expression began to appear in proper context (instead of L1 expressions translated into L2).

Students need to be encouraged at the beginning of the journaling experience and a low-stress environment must be maintained. Many students have had their writing efforts returned to them over the years full of red marks.

(Continued on page 3.)

*"The host families in the U.S. were very curious to learn about life in Qatar."*

## A DREAM COME TRUE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

educational facilities such as public schools, private schools, community colleges, universities, TESL organizations, and language institutes primarily geared to meet the needs of immigrants and refugees. These programs for immigrants and refugees must provide proof that the students have sufficient proficiency in English to cope with academic studies.

The programs also train these students in work skills devel-

opment, literacy, citizenship competency and prepare them to take the GED (Graduate Equivalency Diploma) or high school equivalency diploma. In most of these language institutes many teachers instructing the immigrants were volunteers. One was above 65 years old.

In addition to the professional activities, the international visitors learned about the American way of life and culture. They were hosted by

several families coming from different educational and cultural backgrounds in different cities. The host families were very curious to learn about life in Qatar, especially in the fields of education and economy.

Al-Hail reports that the trip was an unforgettable, fruitful experience. She hopes that more Qatari people can have the opportunity to join this program in the future.

## TEACHING TIP: THE USE OF PERSONAL JOURNALS IN THE L2 CLASSROOM (CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWO)

This has discouraged them from writing. It is best not to overtly correct each mistake, but select a few (More about errors below.)

Journaling offers an opportunity to dissolve the negativity that surrounds the writing process for many students and it provides a chance for students to establish ownership of the new language they are learning.

The following is a brief list of some basic ways to utilize successfully journaling in the L2 classroom.

### 1. Which topics?

Begin with simple autobiographical topics. Students write easily about what they know the best: themselves. Begin with concrete topics students have learned how to discuss, and move gradually into topics related to their readings or "what-if" topics that generate creativity, make-believe and fantasy.

### 2. Class discussion and critical thinking

Teacher or student starts the discussion, depending on the class atmosphere and topic. Be open to the "teachable moment". If the topic sparks student discussion, facilitate that discussion by asking, "Why?" Do not fear losing control when the students are excited by a topic and want to discuss it.

### 3. What to do about errors?

A journal entry is not the place to correct errors. It is

the place for students to try to use what s/he knows. Do not write or mark anything within the area where the student wrote.

### 4. How to respond to journal entries?

Respond with authentic responses as if you were talking to the person directly. Avoid vague comments like "good job" and "interesting writing." These do not motivate the writer. You lost a chance to connect with your student.

Also, use your responses to incorporate correct spelling, grammar or expressions that the student writer used inappropriately. For example, to correct the misspelled word, "parashoot," do not write, "You spelled 'parachute' wrong." Instead write, "I would be scared to rely on a parachute to save my life! When did you become interested in sky-diving." This teacher reaction was a real reaction. Most students will notice the correct spelling because the topic interests them. The correct spelling will be readily incorporated into their personal lexicon. The L2 student now owns that word.

### 5. Errors and the 'missteaks' page

A 'missteaks' page is a page of mistakes. The play on words is a reminder to correct their own mistakes and a way

of incorporating fun through word-play into learning. Once a week my students take out their 'missteaks' page. I address any errors that jumped out at me during the week in their spoken language and written language, including their journals. My students copy these mistakes with corrections onto their 'missteaks' page with the goal never to commit the mistake again.

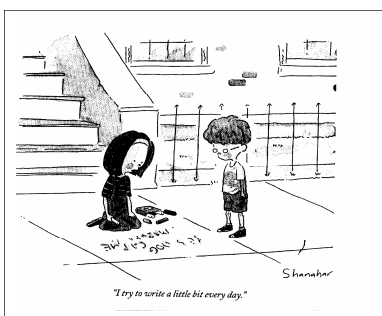
The 'missteaks' technique happened by accident one day when a student said, "Open the

light," for the hundredth time. Transforming my frustration into humor, I asked them to make a note on their 'missteaks' page so they would never make it again. They began to remember the correct usage and even corrected each other if they forgot it. They were even motivated to ask questions about English usage, thus demonstrating a growing meta-cognitive awareness.



Macmillan Publisher Representative, Sheila Hutton, offers the prize of *Learning Teaching*, a teacher resource book by Jim Scrivener, plus the verb wheel pack.

In the next contest, a second prize, *Straightforward* and Teaching Tips will also be awarded. Submit your Teaching Tip to Jane Hoelker. (Email address on last page of newsletter.)



I try to write a little every day.

*“Never force students to read their journal entry aloud in class. Never read their writings aloud without their permission. This violates teacher-student trust.”*

## EGYPT TESOL: A REPORT DECEMBER 2-4TH, 2005

EgyptTesol held its Sixth Annual Convention in December, 2005. The theme of the convention was *Best Practice in TEFL*. The Board of EgyptTesol is made up entirely of Egyptian nationals.

The Sixth Annual Convention consisted of 98 presentations, covering a wide range of topics as well as Special Interest Groups. The SIGs, workshops and paper presentations related to both the theory and practice of English language teaching. An additional feature of the convention was the Electronic Oasis, which was well attended. The ELT Book Exhibition was geared mostly to the elementary and intermediate levels.

The President of EgyptTesol opened the Convention with a welcoming address. She was followed by Eric Dwyer of Florida International University in the USA, one of the plenary speakers. The focus of his message was on ways to keep the students engaged during the learning process. This

could be done by taking into consideration their interests and by encouraging them to attain a feeling of "ownership" in their own learning.

The second plenary speaker, Paul Seligson, who has taught in 20 countries and is currently with Oxford University Press, discussed observing

teachers. The title of his plenary was "Teaching Observed: How to Befriend Classroom Observation." He emphasized that observations should be helpful for teachers and not something that they dread. He also pointed out the benefits of pre-observation and post-observation conferences between the teachers and the supervisors.

The third plenary, "Educational

Concerns: Towards Learner Independence and Autonomy," was presented by Jenny Dooley of Express Publishing. She has been part of the EFL field for over 15 years. She spoke about ways to help the

students develop inde-



EgyptTesol held its Sixth Convention in December, 2005.

pendence and autonomy.

EgyptTesol will hold its 7th Convention in Cairo, Egypt, November 17-19, 2006. The deadline for submission of proposals is July 31st, 2006. Submit proposals online at <<http://www.egyptesol.org/proposal.asp>> and <<http://www.egyptesol.org/coapplication.acp>>.

*"EgyptTesol will hold its 7th Convention in Cairo, November 17-19. Deadline for proposals is July 31st."*

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## OLHA MADYLUS TO SPEAK ON FEBRUARY 22 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE LAUNCHED!

Olha Madylus, sponsored by the British Council, will speak at College of the North Atlantic-Qatar from 5:15 to 7:15 P.M. The event will take place in Building 1 in Lecture Theater 104. The topic is *Practical Ways of Motivating Young Learners*.

Olha will explain how motivation is the key to effective learning and that teachers can only do so much to establish the learning environment of the classroom. It is the

learners who need to be engaged, challenged and stimulated. It is they who need to be active in the process of learning.

Therefore, it is important to look at the broader range of Young Learners from five to 18 years old. Madylus will look at practical approaches and activities that teachers can readily take into their language classrooms. These activities will take into account cognitive development

and recent discoveries of brain development as well as the presenter's particular area of interest—the pleasure principle in learning.



A short membership drive will take place before and after the event. Renewed membership will extend from anytime before the April, 2006 conference until the Spring 2007 Qatar TESOL Conference. Renew now to update your contact information and receive current announcements.

# SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

The editors welcome submissions of materials concerned with all aspects of language education, particularly with relevance to Qatar and the Gulf region. If accepted, the editors reserve the right to edit all copy for length, style and clarity, without prior notification to authors. Materials in English should be sent in Rich Text Format by email to the co-editors, Dr. Sabiha Aydelott (saydelott@qf.org.qa) and Jane Hoelker (jhoelker@qf.org.qa).

## 1. Teaching Tips

Submissions should be original teaching techniques or a lesson plan you have used. Readers should be able to replicate your technique or lesson plan. Submissions should:

- be up to 1,000 words
- have the article title, the author name, affiliation, email address and word count at the top of the first page
- include a Quick Guide to the lesson plan or teaching technique
- have tables, figures, appendices, etc. attached as separate files
- be sent as an email attachment

### Quick Guide Example:

Key Words: Listening, Materials Design  
 Learner English Level: High Beginner through Adult  
 Learner Maturity Level: Junior High through Adult  
 Preparation Time: 10 minutes to white out selected lines & xerox copy  
 Activity Time: 30 to 40 minutes

## Announcement

The Teaching Tips Contest is supported this year by the Macmillan Publishers Representative, Sheila Hutton. She offers the first prize of *Learning Teaching*, a teacher resource book by Jim Scrivener, plus the verb wheel pack as well as a second prize, Straightforward and Teaching Tips.

## 2. Book and Educational Material Reviews

We invite review of books and other educational materials like educational software (especially CALL), or websites. Review articles of up to 1,000 words treating several related titles are particularly welcome. Submissions should:

- show a thorough understanding of the material reviewed
- reflect actual classroom usage in the case of classroom materials
- be thoroughly checked and proofread before submission
- send as an email to the editors

Guidelines on how to write a book review can be found on the following websites:

- [http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/book\\_reviews.shtml](http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/book_reviews.shtml)
- <http://www.leo.stcloudstate.edu/acadwrite/bookrev.html>
- <http://astro.temple.edu/~rimmerma/25revs.html>



Interview a well-known professional.

- [http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/CriNonfiction\\_intro.html](http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/CriNonfiction_intro.html)

## 3. Readers' Forum

Articles of thoughtful essays on topics related to language teaching and learning in Qatar

or the Gulf are welcome. Submissions should:

- be of relevance to language teachers in Qatar or the Gulf
- contain up to 2,500 words
- include an English abstract
- include a short bio and a digital photo
- be accompanied by an English abstract of up to 150 words

## 4. Readers' Views

Responses to articles or other items in the Qatar TESOL Newsletter are invited. Submissions could contain up to 1,000 words and sent to the editors and time allowed for a response to appear in the same issue, if appropriate. Anonymous correspondence will not be published. Send as an email attachment to the editors.

## 5. Conference Reports

If you have attended a conference (Continued on page 6.)

*“The editors welcome submissions . . . concerned with all aspects of language education, particularly with relevance to Qatar and the Gulf region.”*

Doha, Qatar

ABP - Qatar Foundation  
PO Box 24404  
Doha, QATAR

Phone: 971-492-7311  
Fax: 971-481-9928  
E-mail: [jhoelker@qf.org.qa](mailto:jhoelker@qf.org.qa)

## Qatar TESOL First International Conference

*April 14-15th, 2006*

*Best Practices in EFL*

*College of the North  
Atlantic-Qatar*



College of the North Atlantic-Qatar  
will host the conference April 14-15.

## *Qatar TESOL was founded on April 2, 2005 . . .*

*. . . when the Qatar TESOL President, Sara Al-Kuwari, signed the affiliate agreement with TESOL, Inc. The purpose of Qatar TESOL is to establish a network of teachers, supervisors and researchers who are committed to improving teaching in English as a Foreign of Second Language in Qatar and/or the region.*

### *Executive Council*

*President: Sara Al-Kuwari ([algaaadi@hotmail.com](mailto:algaaadi@hotmail.com))*

*Vice President: Aisha Al-Kulaiji ([amk\\_khulaiji@hotmail.com](mailto:amk_khulaiji@hotmail.com))*

*Executive Secretary: Randall Wolansky ([randall.wolansky@cna-qatar.edu.qa](mailto:randall.wolansky@cna-qatar.edu.qa))*

*Executive Treasurer: Sherry Ward ([sward@qf.org.qa](mailto:sward@qf.org.qa))*

*Membership Secretary: Molly McHarg ([mmcharg@qf.org.qa](mailto:mmcharg@qf.org.qa))*

*Public Relations Director: Eleanor Kenny ([eleanor.kenny@cna-qatar.edu.qa](mailto:eleanor.kenny@cna-qatar.edu.qa))*

*Newsletter Editors: Sabiha Aydelott ([saydelott@qf.org.qa](mailto:saydelott@qf.org.qa))*

*Jane Hoelker ([jhoelker@qf.org.qa](mailto:jhoelker@qf.org.qa))*

*Webpage Editor: Susan Curtis ([susan.curtis@cna-qatar.edu.qa](mailto:susan.curtis@cna-qatar.edu.qa))*

### *Steering Committee*

*U.S. Embassy Liaison: Jinnie Lee ([leej3@state.gov](mailto:leej3@state.gov))*

*British Council Liaison: Chris Nelson ([chris.nelson@qa.britishcouncil.org](mailto:chris.nelson@qa.britishcouncil.org))*

*Qatar University Liaison: AbdelHalim Abo Jalalah ([abdelbalima@hotmail.com](mailto:abdelbalima@hotmail.com))*

*Membership Database Advisor: Sean Cunnane ([cunnane@qp.com.qa](mailto:cunnane@qp.com.qa))*

*Publishers' Liaison: Michael Birchall ([mbirchall@qf.org.qa](mailto:mbirchall@qf.org.qa))*

*Community Liaison: Candith Pallandre ([pallandre@georgetown.edu](mailto:pallandre@georgetown.edu))*

## SUBMISSIONS GUIDELINES (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5.)

ference on a topic of interest to language teachers in Qatar or the Gulf, write a 1,000–1,500 word report summarizing the main events. Send as an email attachment to the editors.

### **6. Interviews**

If you are interested in interviewing a well-known professional in the field of language teaching in and around Qatar and the Gulf or while you attend an international conference, please consult the editor first. Lengths range from 1,500-2,000 words.

### **7. Announcements**

Announcements of up to 150 words and of general relevance to language learners and teachers in Qatar, such as Calls for Papers or conference announcements should be sent to the editors.