

QATAR TESOL NEWS



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Teaching Tip Contest

- Sponsored by Macmillan. See page 3.

THE FIRST QATAR TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

The First International Qatar TESOL Conference will be held on April 14-15, 2006. The College of the North Atlantic-Qatar will host the conference on its new campus which was inaugurated the end of November, 2005. The theme of the conference is "Best Practices in EFL."

Nancy Overman from Georgetown University in the U.S.A. opens the conference on Friday afternoon with the plenary address, entitled, "Launching Independent Learners." Overman explains how to prepare students to function on their own in English in the real world and complete communicative tasks.



Nancy Overman kicks off conference with plenary, "Launching Independent Learners."

Overman is Senior CLED Instructor in the Division of English as a Foreign Language. She has extensive experience in materials development for onsite and distance learning programs in the U.S., francophone Africa, Panama, and China. She has



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

also taught in Japan and France.

On Saturday Jana Fox from Carleton University in Canada delivers the plenary, "EFL in Transition: Variations on the Theme of Best Practice." In this paper, Fox examines how seven EFL teachers account for best practice within an exam-driven context.

Dr. Janna Fox is a professor within the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies at Carleton University. Her international experience in second and foreign language settings includes system-wide educational reform involving curriculum development, syllabus design, materi-

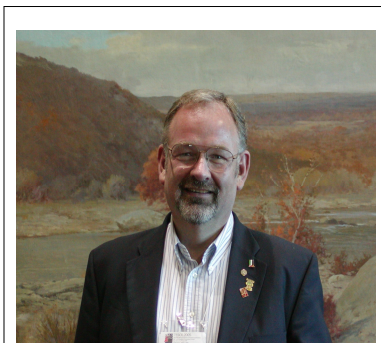
als development, teacher preparation and in-service training;; language policy, language testing and program evaluation.



Jana Fox, winner of the Jacqueline A. Ross Award, delivers plenary.

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL TESOL CONFERENCE CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE.

Dr. Fox was awarded the prestigious 3M Teaching Fellowship in 2002 in recognition of her educational leadership and excellence in teaching.



Mark Algren, Featured Speaker, gives tips on writing proposals.

Featured Speakers on Friday, **Christine Coombe** from Dubai Men's College and Chair of the TESOL International Conference 2006 in Tampa and **Mark Algren** from American University of Sharjah and Chair of the TESOL International Conference 2003 in Baltimore lead two sessions on Friday afternoon: Tips for Effective Presentations and Tips for Writing Presentation Proposals.

Coombe and Algren first dis-

cuss how researchers in the field of public speaking state that the "messenger is just as important as the message." In fact, the research shows that a presenter has just seven seconds before the audience starts forming an opinion about the presenter. The key ingredients of a presentation will be discussed and tips for novices and experienced presenters.

Algren and Coombe also explain how to frame a professional interest and related expertise into an acceptable proposal.



Featured Speaker, **Christine Coombe**, gives tips on presenting.



Armeda Reitzel, Featured Speaker, discusses vocabulary strategies

Armeda Reitzel is the Featured Speaker on Saturday. Reitzel speaks about "Strategies for Vocabulary Development in Authentic contexts." This includes both authentic materials and real-life situations, including community-based experience.

Dr. Reitzel is a Professor of Communication and Program Leader in the Linguistics Department of Humboldt State University in the U.S. She is the recipient of the D. Scott Enright Award of TESOL, Inc. in 2005. She is also the Chair of the Transitional Leadership Committee for Interest Sections of TESOL, Inc. She has presented and

"Up to four awards are granted to cover travel and lodging expenses at TESOL Seattle by TESOL, Inc."

TOEFL BOARD AWARD FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION AT TESOL 2007 IN SEATTLE

TESOL members who are from a country outside the U.S. or Canada, who have had a proposal accepted for the 41st Annual TESOL Convention in 2007, and who will be presenting for the first time are eligible for the TOEFL Board Award for International Participation.

Preference is given to appli-

cants from countries under-represented at the TESOL Conventions. Up to four awards are granted to cover travel and lodging expenses such as food, telephone, and ground transportation. Applicants must indicate their status as first-time presenters on the proposal forms and complete the first-time presenter section of the proposal form.



TESOL 2007 in Seattle seeking proposals from first time international presenters.

TEACHING TIPS WINNER

BY AMIRA MA-AYERGI FROM JAWAAN BIN JASSIM
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

Quick Guide

Key Words: listen, search, report

Learner English Level: Beginner through Adult.

Learner Maturity Level: Junior High through Adult.

Preparation Time: 30-50 minute to select activities.

Activity Time: 40-45 minutes.

An old adage states, "Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand." Inquiry-based learning provides opportuni-



Students develop ways to search for answers and generate explanations.

ties for students to experience and acquire processes through which they can gather information about the world. This requires a high level of interaction among the learner, the teacher, the area of study, available resources, and the learning environment. Students become actively involved in the learning process. The author's favorite definition of inquiry-based learning is seeking information or knowledge by questioning and searching.

Questioning is the heart of the inquiry-based learning. Students ask relevant questions and develop ways to search for answers and generate explanations. Inquiry begins

with a meaningful problem or issue. The process engages students as they come to value the driving questions that motivate their inquiry process.

Infants begin to make sense of the world by inquiring. For example, from birth babies observe faces that come near them. They grasp objects; they put things in their mouths; and they turn towards voices. Therefore, it is clear that the process of inquiring begins with gathering information and data through the human senses of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling.

Unfortunately, traditional educational systems discourage the natural process of inquiry because of the following rules:

- Do not ask too many questions
- Listen
- Repeat
- Memorize
- Teacher-centered approach
- Give information of what is known
- Limited use of resources
- Learning about technology rather than applying it.

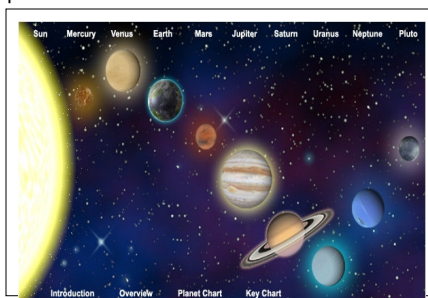
However, the inquiry approach is based on opposite elements:

- Information processing
- Problem-solving skills
- Student-centered approach
- Teacher as facilitator
- How we come to know rather than what we know
- Life-long learning
- Learning things

A model lesson follows. After the class greeting, the students were instructed to read and discuss a fable about the planets. After the 10-minute discussion, they were told to complete the activities at each of the five stations (Internet, dictionary, reading, coloring, and puzzle) in small groups of five. They spent about five minutes at each station for a total of 30 minutes.

At the first station, students research the information needed to list the nine planets in order from the sun and the distance between Neptune and Pluto and the Sun and Earth.

Next, students search in the dictionary for the meaning of 12 terms like solar system and comets. They then research in the dictionary and state if the term is a noun, adjective or verb. At station three, the learners read a six-sentence paragraph and a chart to answer six questions. For instance, what is Jupiter made of? Then the stu-



At station four, students put together a puzzle that is a picture of the solar system.

dents receive a chart of 49 squares (seven horizontal and seven vertical); each of the squares in the chart contain a word. The students color the verbs red, the adjectives blue, the nouns yellow and conjunctions brown. Finally at the fifth station, students put together a

*"Tell me and I forget.
Show me and I
remember. Involve me
and I understand."*

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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 or Second Language in Qatar and/or the region.

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TEACHING TIP

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puzzle that produced a picture of the nine planets.

To facilitate the activity the instructor rings a bell to indicate the end of the five minutes at each station and that the learners should move to the next activity. Students were very curious to discover what

activity awaited them at the next station. Even though the new information to be learned was numbers and names (not always so easily remembered), the students had grasped the information easily. For more information contact the author at amiraeduc@hotmail.com.

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

Submit your Teaching Tip for Jane Hoelker. (Email address on the last page of the newsletter.)

