Dear Colleagues:

Happy New Year! I wish all of you a very prosperous 2010!

I am very excited to be the President of the WAESOL Board for 2010. It has been my pleasure to serve on the board for the last six years, thanks to your confidence and support. These years have indeed been very productive for our organization. Some of the highlights of these years have been the extremely successful annual WAESOL conferences, numerous professional development opportunities, travel, and SPICY grants, and the popular Seattle 2007 TESOL Conference. There is no question that your support of WAESOL has been instrumental in making our organization what it is today. I am truly honored to serve on the board of such a successful organization.

In addition to the support of the general membership, the support of the WAESOL board is another reason for the success of our organization. I am lucky to be working with such a dedicated group of ESL/ELL professionals representing K-12, higher education, and immigrants and refugees. I would like to thank and acknowledge the services of the board members who have decided to pursue other venues in their lives; it is still sad to see them go. Their contributions will be missed greatly. I would also like to thank Elena Smith, our outgoing president, for her professionalism and dedication to ESL. I would like to welcome our newly elected board members and thank them for deciding to serve the organization. I am looking forward to working with every one of them and to their contributions.

Now looking forward to 2010! The WAESOL Board has a few major decisions to make that will impact our organization and the membership. One of these decisions is switching our annual conference back to two days instead of one, due to increasing numbers of presenters and attendees. Another issue is the location of our annual conference. Up until the WAESOL 2008 conference, Highline Community College charged our non-profit organization minimally for hosting the conference. However, due to the economic crisis, we had to pay full fees for our 2009 conference. A decision will have to be made whether we should explore other locations or stay at Highline. We will be looking for your input regarding these and other issues during 2010.

As you can see, we already have a full agenda for 2010. I am confident that, with your support, the board will make the right decisions about these and other issues, decisions that best represent your needs and desires.

Thank you again for supporting WAESOL. I am looking forward to serving and working with you. Have a great 2010!

Amal Mahmoud, Ph. D.
2010 WAESOL Board President
A Letter from the Editor

Dear WAESOL members,

I want to thank you for reading WAESOL World and submitting articles. We are in the process of changing the format of WAESOL World from an online based previously printed paper newsletter to something sleeker and exciting. Please continue to submit your articles for the newsletter via the website. I especially encourage you K-12 teachers to submit articles. Based on the conference evaluations, many of you want to see more articles and presentations for K-12. And frankly, many of the strategies and techniques that work for your students also work for all ages of language learners. As you know, we publish and present what comes to us, with discretion, so please don’t be shy or think what you’re doing isn’t important because as you heard from Kathy Laise, the Sally Wellman Award recipient, and Oscar Ocana, the Student Success Award recipient, it is important and your students appreciate it. Share it with all of us!

Take care in the New Year,

Nicole Diimmel

Member at Large
WAESOL World Editor
Whatcom Community College
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Nicole Diimmel and Oscar Ocana: 2009 Student Success Award recipient
One of our benchmarks for showing reading progress and for placing students into reading groups in the elementary school is the testing of fluency. However, it is not always the best indicator of an ELL student's ability to read. Many ELL students are like opera singers. Opera singers frequently learn to decode Italian and then sing it beautifully. However, they cannot really understand the meaning of each word they are singing. Students see words as symbols and patterns they need to memorize. Sometimes students have simply mastered the art of decoding English or recognizing symbols. Yet, they do not identify groups of letters that are words that have meaning. On the other hand, for teachers who are native born speakers of English, the more colorful and expressive the reading aloud of a text is, the better the child's comprehension should be.

"ELL students have more difficulty with word meaning so they read more slowly. Often, they can read quickly but have no expression."

Last year I progress monitored my intermediate students (grades 3-5) in reading and learned that most did very well on the vocabulary part of their reading tests but got inconsistent grades on the comprehension part. Vocabulary was very intentionally taught by their classroom teacher and ELL teacher as was the comprehension of the stories. Nevertheless, the test results were inconsistent throughout the entire school year. Carrie Carlson, the resource teacher at James Sales Elementary School, also analyzed the data of the Reading WASL over the past years for the Hispanic ELL students and learned that their grades on the Reading WASL were also very inconsistent. This was different from almost every other population at James Sales.

In elementary school, students are required to read a certain amount daily and also to read aloud. However, there is not usually a comprehension activity to go along with the daily reading homework.

One easy suggestion from Sylvia Linan-Thompson and Sharon Vaughn, two reading experts, is to change the way students partner read in class and at home so that there is a comprehension part. While students are working on fluency skills, they could easily ask each other simple questions about the stories they are reading. Since children love to play at being teacher, this new activity should be engaging, meaningful and fun. Once students are comfortable with this activity, I would recommend teachers encourage the parents of their ELL students to ask their children questions about what they are reading. In fact, part of the daily homework could include one comprehension question as well as a checkoff for how many people did your student read aloud to. These questions could easily be translated into the home language of your students.

Here are some sample questions:

- Who is the story about?
- What is the problem?
- Where does the story take place?
- What is your favorite part? Why?
- What happened first? Last?

(Continued on the Following Page)
Furthermore, Caryn Sobel, reading expert, suggests you check if your students are just decoding or are actually understanding by asking a child to read aloud a passage. If they are reading with genuine expression and voice, they most likely comprehend it. Speed does not mean that students comprehend -especially for the ELL students.

In conclusion, adding in a new comprehension part to partner reading or home fluency practice could easily improve the reading skills of your ELL students. Let's try it!

References
Research-based Methods of Reading Instruction for English Language Learners  By Sylvia Linan-Thompson, Staron Vaughn. A ugust 2007. Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development
The Case for Handwriting Instruction and Some Helpful Tips

Holly Shelton
University of Washington

Individual accents reflect individual identities, and according to some, it is therefore immoral to try eradicating them in pursuit of sounding like the mythical and elusive native speaker. In the same way, good handwriting is for writing what pronunciation is for speaking. However, it is not necessary to have “perfect handwriting” to convey a message, and handwriting can be an extension of one’s personality. On the other hand, if handwriting causes a breakdown in communication, something needs to change. *Time* magazine reports that in America, sloppy handwriting from doctors causes the death of over 7,000 people a year as well as injuries to over 1.5 million people in medication mistakes (Caplan 2007). Surely this carries more weight than simple personality quirks on paper.

As one of two Handwriting and Spelling Workshop instructors at the University of Washington’s Intensive English Program, I know how illegible student work is a problem for teachers. Students are referred to our hour a week workshop on an optional basis by their teachers in skills-focused classes or choose to participate themselves because of personal motivation. Even students at high levels of proficiency can be held back by the indecipherable nature of their writing assignments, and teachers have to spend extra time pouring over said assignments to interpret what was meant by the vexing squiggles. Through no character flaw or fault of their own, many students have never been shown how to properly form letters, and by that I do not mean simply through prescriptive traditionalism, but rather by virtue of systematic efficiency and legibility.

There are two main reasons why we owe this instruction to our students according to Jennifer Altman, the colleague from whom I inherited the workshop. First of all, it makes student writing faster. UW professor of educational psychology, Virginia Berninger has conducted research that suggests that writing by pen can actually be faster than typing, especially where essay composition is concerned (Schwarz 2009). From my own experience with the workshop, I have seen word and sentence writing speed increase through instruction. Since many skills are transferred to a second language from one’s first, many Arabic speakers in the workshop have been initially tempted to write their letters from right to left. This leaves their pencil on the far side of the next letter to be created, and the pencil must be lifted up and over the letter they just created in order to begin the following one as opposed to finishing on the right and being able to simply begin again.

Secondly, instruction in handwriting makes it more legible, which is a benefit for students and teachers alike. Several students in our program who were left to their own devices in developing letter formation formed letter inconsistently. They knew what the letters they wanted to form look like, but they created them differently on different occasions, rather than systematically. I’ve seen that the letter “d” has been especially problematic. I saw one student create a circle with a tail that she then created a stem for on top. She lifted her pencil two times for the three strokes.

The first tip I have for handwriting instruction is to introduce the concept of stroke number and direction. Those who are familiar with the Chinese writing system (for example) will already know this concept, and this time, transfer of skills from first to second language will give such students an advantage. For those whose own writing instruction was long ago and do not remember what they do, but merely do it, strokes start at the top left and end bottom right. In her research on children’s writing instruction, Berninger found that students who were given letters showing numbered arrows of how to create a letter and then told to cover the letter before they
created it themselves a few times was more effective than traditional methods of tracing and practicing several lines of a single letter (Wick 1998). My colleague Norah Fahim and I gave our workshop participants handouts of the entire printed lowercase alphabet with arrows and practice paper after the first night of instruction so that they could practice on their own. In class we had large amounts of white board space where we could have students write letters as we called them out (or spelling words since it was a combined workshop) and could therefore give students individual feedback on their letter formation during our time together. As we covered more material, we gave them similar handouts for the printed uppercase alphabet, the cursive lowercase alphabet, and cursive uppercase alphabet.

The second tip is to use lined paper. There are several sites with free printable resources for teachers with varying sizes of “handwriting practice paper” from very large to college rule. Making sure that students are aware of the dotted center line region can make them more consistent about capitalization (or apparently capitalized letters inappropriately interspersed in their writing), which was one complaint for several of the teachers who referred their students to the Handwriting and Spelling Workshop in the past. Making sure that students have access to a couple of these sheets to take home for individual practice is also important. Depending on the technology available, an overhead projector with lined paper transparencies is great for teacher demos. When simply run under water in a sink, the ink from an overhead pen will dissolve while the practice lines remain, so they can be reused.

The third tip is to teach print first because although cursive has the advantage of time, most handwritten writing students will encounter will probably be print. In addition, cursive letters are mostly based on the printed alphabet, so if students have correct form in the first system, the groundwork will already be laid for the second. Showing students how to angle their paper on the desk so that they could see what they had already written while moving their hand from the elbow instead of the wrist was also not a repeated lesson for some students. There are many handwriting resources and systems out there, but I personally found the Word Masters technique for cursive writing instruction from Peterson Directed Handwriting to be quite useful (Bowers 2008). The focus of the system is to develop rhythmic rocking movements of the hand and functions on the basis of four basic shapes that make up the top portion of cursive letters – sharp, loop, round, and roll. In my opinion, this technique fit well with the need for consistency, systematic letter formation, and efficiency of time and hand movement. I would like to add that I have not exhaustively searched through materials available in this field, but Word Masters is merely an example of one technique that had the traits that would be beneficial for students to pick up in order to improve their writing.

Whatever the materials and methodology used, handwriting is an important asset and supplement to any writing class. Perhaps not all students will go on to be doctors where lives will depend on their scribbled messages, but there are plenty of times in various other career contexts when a computer will not be available or a written message is necessary. Even in their academic careers, students and teachers alike could benefit from less time writing and correcting essays and other writing compositions, which is one good reason alone for teachers to allow even a small amount of time for handwriting instruction into their curriculum. Students do not need to attain “perfect” handwriting, but are rather served best by developing legible and efficient penmanship.
References from article on previous page


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**Highlights from the 2009 WAESOL Convention**

Above: Overlooking on Plenary Speaker - Cheryl Zimmerman

Right: New conference feature – Poster Sessions w/ presenters Kathy Belisle & Susan Thompson *also pictured is session attendee Elana Lindquist*

Above: Talkin’ Grammar with Plenary Speaker Keith Folse
Know Thy Students’ Culture - South Korean

Nicole Diimmel with Whatcom Community College Students: Hye Seok Ryu and Won Shik Kim

How well do you know your Korean students? What surprises them when they come here to study or to live? After you take a quiz, please check your answers in the answer key provided on the last page.

Please share about the cultures of yourself or your students, and submit quizzes and answer keys for the next “Know Thy Students’ Culture” section in WAESOL World Newsletter!

Good luck!

Score ____/100 Directions: Circle the right answer. (10 points each)

1. How many years of mandatory military service do young men have to serve?
   a. one year and 8 months
   b. two years
   c. two years and 8 months
   d. four years

2. The traditional Korean holiday, Chusok is most similar to which two American holidays?
   a. Independence Day
   b. Memorial Day
   c. Easter
   d. Thanksgiving

3. Why do so many Koreans dislike cats?
   a. there are too many strays
   b. they cause car accidents
   c. they get into the garbage
   d. they scratch you
   e. all of the above

4. The favorite national sport of Korea is ______.
   a. Soccer
   b. Baseball
   c. Tae Kwon Do
   d. Golf

5. Korean people eat ________ with every meal.
   a. kimchi
   b. rice
   c. soy sauce
6. Koreans eat rice with __________.
   a. a fork
   b. a spoon
   c. chop sticks
   d. their fingers

7. A Korean student tells you she is 20 years old. How old is she? (in American age)
   a. 21
   b. 19
   c. 20
   d. 22

8. Match the Korean-American with what they do.
   1. ___ Hines Ward
   2. ___ Michelle Wie
   3. ___ Jon Gosselin
   4. ___ Margaret Cho
   5. ___ Kimora Lee Simmons
   6. ___ Daniel Chun
   7. ___ Jeanette Lee
   a. Co-Producer, The Simpsons
   b. Billiards/pool
   c. Golf
   d. Reality TV Star
   e. American football
   f. Baby Phat fashions
   g. Comedian

9. When do Koreans use an umbrella?
   a. when it rains
   b. when it snows
   c. when it is too sunny
   d. all of the above

10. When Koreans come home, they always take their shoes off.
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Only if their shoes are muddy.
The 2009 Sally Wellman Memorial Teaching Award recipient, Kathy Laise’s acceptance speech

Thank you to Dr. Lavona Reeves for nominating me for this award. I am humbled that the selection committee chose me from a pool of very worthy candidates.

My name is Kathy Laise and I teach ESL. I am proud and honored to say that.

I began my career in an intensive language program which was an excellent learning experience but I found my passion, my heart, and my home in an Adult Basic Education program working with immigrants and refugees. When I speak of passion, I mean the love for this work and the drive and desire to continually learn and grow in our wonderful profession.

As ESL instructors, we are called upon to fill many roles. What we are trained to do...teach English ...is but one. We are activists and advocates, social workers and resource coordinators, negotiators, mediators, and role models for problem solving. It would be impossible to be successful without a deep passion for this work. It would be impossible to be successful without community and community partnerships. For example....... for the last 9 years, I’ve had high school seniors in my class 4 days a week as conversation facilitators. They are there to complete a graduation requirement, and they often choose ESL as their placement. At the end of their experience, they write reflective papers which their teacher shares with me. Over the course of the 1 or 2 quarters they spend in class, they receive more than they give. While they are helping ESL students gain conversation skills, they learn that the world is larger and more profound than they ever realized. They’ve come to appreciate what they have. They’ve found commonalities where they thought there were differences. They’ve come to place a high value on the beauty of a new culture, kindness in a smile, and the sincerity of a heartfelt thank you. They’ve been permanently changed by their experiences and have a more compassionate world view.

I’ve also had MATESOL students in my class from area universities. They come to teach and participate in class and it is always a joy to observe and guide them—these future ESL professionals—as they participate in this classroom immersion, but the most gratifying part for me is what they discover about themselves. What most inevitably find is that by end of their placement, they are excited and have found true passion about their professional futures as their past study suddenly sees real life implications!!

These are what the best partnerships accomplish because one side wouldn’t have grown without the other.

As I’ve said before, we have so many hats to wear. It would be impossible to fill all these roles without also having a vision.... vision that informs that we all can work together. We all can promote and potentialize others and that we all can work toward the ideal that all people deserve opportunities to work toward their varied dreams.

Passion and vision together lead to partnerships that create environments for learning, growth, and positive change.

Continued on the next page.......
Passion and vision educate by deconstructing misinformation and reconstructing a new mindset based on understanding, equality and truth.

Being an ESL instructor with passion and vision makes you the best possible advocate. It provides you the ability to stand alone at times, knowing that these strengths will persever and eventually prevail.

I will always be grateful to my teachers, mentors, family, friends, and colleagues, who helped me accomplish my dreams so that I can share my passion and vision with others. I am continually honored that my students share their passion and vision with me.

In between writing drafts of this speech, I received a letter from a former student that exemplifies this honor. He is now almost 50 and a senior at Eastern Washington University. His wife is at Spokane Community College in a medical assistant program. His 2 oldest children attend EWU as well...1 as a transfer student with an AA degree from Spokane Falls Community college and the other as a Running Start Student. They have recently purchased a new home and are successful citizens in their new country.

This is an excerpt from his letter...

I'd like to express my high appreciation of your great job as an ESL teacher. You are my first and favorite teacher on American soil. AS I see now, you set high standards in your class for a reason. America is a blessing for those who want and will work hard, who have ambitions, and who are ready to do their best. From the other side, living here in this wonderful country can be a curse for those with the spirit of laziness, lack of willingness to change.

I've met some discouraged people who immigrated to the US years ago and still didn't find their place in the country so far. They do not speak English. They do not have American friends. They feel homesick. They are purposeless and joyless. I believe it is because they weren’t as lucky as I was. They did not have a chance to be your students from the first days of life in America. They did not hear your passionate voice from 8 am to 12 pm every day. They did not have to pay 10 cents for every non-English word spoken as I did or maybe they did, I don’t remember. What I do remember, I didn’t want (feared) to speak Russian in your class. It was good. I like that because I knew your heart. You weren’t mean, you were meaningful. You wanted us to be ready for life in the new country. I really really thank you for all I’ve got from you, dear Ms. Kathy.

This is an affirmation...and evidence... that sharing your passion and integrating it with your vision is what our students depend on us to do for them. Our daily work can be exhausting...teaching, advocating, problem solving, writing curriculum,...THAT list goes on and on...along with the necessary administrative demands placed on us, but what is paramount to remember is your passion and vision. These will sustain you and your students and enable everyone to grow!!

Thank you
Attend the Spokane Regional Conference

The Spokane Regional ESL Conference is will host its 20th annual conference on February 27, 2010 at Gonzaga University in Spokane. This year's keynote speaker is Elena Smith, the outgoing President of WAESOL. To commemorate this 20th annual conference, two travel scholarships will be awarded to ESL professionals or students for attending an upcoming TESOL or WAESOL conference. You can read more about the keynote speaker and the travel scholarships at the conference home page below. You can also register and/or submit a proposal.

http://spokaneregionaleslconference.com

We hope to see you there.

Ron Belisle
WAESOL Vice President

Conference Schedule

- 8:00 - 8:45  Registration, breakfast refreshments, publisher exhibits in Jepson Hall
- 9:00 - 9:45  Keynote -- Elena Smith, Washington State University
- 10:00 - 11:45  Concurrent sessions in Jepson Hall
- 12:00 - 1:00  Lunch in Cataldo Hall
- 1:15 - 3:00  Concurrent sessions (including poster sessions) in Jepson Hall
- 3:15 - 4:15  Twentieth Anniversary Reception (Announcement of scholarship winners, Publishers' Raffle, food and entertainment)
- ALL DAY: Publishers' Exhibits

Six clock hours are available.
Please bring books & materials to give away at the Book Swap.

Jules's Word Play Corner:
Welcome again for another installment of brain teasing enjoyment from your friendly newsletter layout editor. Look at the four sentences below and see if you can tell what famous proverbs have been paraphrased here:

1. Members of an avian species of identical plumage congregate.
2. Where there are visible vapors having their provenance in ignited carbonaceous materials, there is conflagration.
3. All articles that coruscate with resplendence are not truly auriferous.
4. Scintilla te, scintillate, asteroid minific.

Hope you enjoyed your time. Answers are located on the last page!
WAESOL Newsletter Advertising Rates
Effective 2009

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We accept all kinds of ads, and all formats are welcome -- .pdf, .jpeg -- as long as we can open them. However, only advertisements related to the teaching of English or support for our field will be considered for publication. Non-profits can contact us by web for further information.

**Deadlines:**
- **May 25th**
- **Sept 1st**
- **Dec 1st**
- **Mar 1st**

(Published)
- Summer Issue (June)
- Fall Issue (October)
- Winter Issue (Dec)
- Spring Issue (April)

Visit [http://waesol.org/Publishers/Submit_Ad.html](http://waesol.org/Publishers/Submit_Ad.html) for more details and to download the ad request form.

For questions about ad submissions, please contact our Publisher Liaison, Bevin Taylor- btaylor@highline.edu
Questions about the newsletter in general should be directed to Nicole Diimmel- ndiimmel@hotmail.com  Thank you! 😊

The Lighter Side of the Profession
Dear WAESOL members:

This is my last letter to you as the WAESOL President. First of all, I’d like to thank every member of the Executive Board for being excellent partners in this challenging but rewarding volunteer job—service to our wonderful profession.

The year has past fast, and the Board has accomplished a lot. Our financial situation is stable; we have a revived up-to-date Web site; the 2009 WAESOL conference gathered over 350 attendees with 75 presenters. There has been an incredible feedback by the membership through the on-line conference evaluations. Thank you all who submitted comments and shared ideas on how to make the next conference even more successful.

I also thank all of the WAESOL 2009 conference presenters for putting your hearts, minds and time into preparing and carrying out your workshops that are so valuable to improve every element of our ESL/EFL/ELL instruction. Please start thinking of the new topics you’ll be sharing in 2010. We are looking forward to seeing you again.

I’d specifically like to encourage K-12 ESL/ELL instructors to participate more in our future conferences so that WAESOL could involve more instructors of the state of Washington in our discussion of teaching methods, technology breakthroughs and innovative teaching materials.

When you have a minute, please go on our Web site and try it out. Send your comments to Ron Belisle, the Webmaster, who is also our next First Vice-President.

Please submit your articles to our quarterly publication, *WAESOL World*. You can also participate in the on-line blog discussions.

I welcome newly elected Board members. Thank you for your commitment to WAESOL.

Finally, during this Holiday Season, please pamper yourself, take good care of yourself, enjoy the celebration time with your families and friends, recharge and enjoy life.

I wish you all a very Happy New Year of 2010. May it bring you good health, exciting fun surprises, the joy of new wonderful friends, and the support and comfort of the old ones.

Sincerely,

Elena Smith, Ph.D.
WAESOL President 2009
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**Answers: Know Thy Students: South Korea**

1. a 2. b &d 3. e 4. c 5. b 6. b 7. b

8. 1e,2c,3d,4g,5f,6a,7b

9. a 10.a

**Jules’s Brain Teaser Answers:**

1. *Birds of a feather flock together.*
2. *Where there's smoke, there's fire.*
3. *All that glitters is not gold.*
4. *Twinkle, twinkle little star.*