MARYLAND TESOL NEWS

MARYLAND TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

www.marylandtesol.org

A Maryland TESOL Challenge...

By Gilda Martinez-Alba, Maryland TESOL President

As an affiliate leader, I was asked if I would share a challenge that Maryland TESOL had this past year at the TESOL International Convention. The idea was to have affiliates learn from each other. Do you have any idea what I had to share? It was the challenge of getting a new website. (I thought you might be interested in this information in case you decide to get a new website.)

The Maryland TESOL Board was very organized in the process of looking for a new website provider. Each person on the board reviewed a different state's TESOL website. We looked for user-friendliness,

ESOL Advocacy

By Tema Encarnacion

When I began working in the ESOL department of Anne Arundel County ten years ago, I was fresh out of the Peace Corps and only 6 years out of the school system as a student. I had only a superficial sense of what the ESOL program did and learned only a little bit more at my employment interview. As a student, I could remember seeing the elusive ESOL teachers pop in and out of the schools I attended to service 3-5 students in small groups in some odd corner of the building. I also remembered befriending a few ESOL students from Vietnam, Italy and El Salvador. At the time that I graduated from Annapolis High School in 1996, there were only a handful of students and their languages were as diverse as a mosaic. When I began working for the school system, the number of students had sky-rocketed to nearly

60 students. Today, ten years later, there are nearly 200 ESOL students at my alma mater and the majority are Spanish-speaking. This trend is not unique to Anne Arundel County. As politics, economics, war and upheaval have led to a huge demographic shift throughout the state, our counties have had to redefine their ESOL programs from their foundations. The days of ESOL teachers acting as only teachers are a distant memory. Today's ESOL teachers are called on to counsel students, determine placement, create schedules, design four year plans, encourage family participation, visit

Contents:

SAVE THE DATE

MARYLAND TESOL

Please save the date for our annual Fall Conference on November 3rd, 2012. The conference this year will be held at The Community College of Baltimore County, Essex Campus:

**7201 Rossville Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21237-3899
www.ccbcmd.edu**

Please stay tuned for more information and call for paper. Check the MDTESOL website for more information.

Thank you so much.
Doaa Rashed
Conference Chair

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2012 TESOL Convention in Philadelphia
By Adreon Hubbard, MDTESOL TEPD Co-Chair

This year I heard Rocky Balboa's guttural cry "Yo, Adreon!" beckoning me to Philadelphia, so I took three days off from my busy classroom teaching routine and joined the 7,000 attendees at the annual TESOL Convention. I was rewarded by attending a variety of interesting sessions and meeting people from all aspects of the TESOL profession.

One of my favorite sessions was about the need for ELs to learn a linguistic feature called discourse markers, which are expressions like "yeah, um, oh, like, right, you know," and "I mean." These expressions contain no meaning themselves but serve a valuable role in building social relationships between speech partners, providing feedback, giving the speaker or listener time to think, and making the speaker sound more friendly and natural. The presenters engaged the audience by showing video clips of Jennifer Lopez, then Barack Obama, and then having us analyze their use of discourse markers. They suggested teachers have their students go to a café and eavesdrop on conversations to analyze native speakers' use of discourse markers. As an elementary school ESOL teacher, I notice that my students usually learn discourse markers naturally from their peers, but perhaps adult learners could benefit from this type of instruction. In any case, it, like, gave me food for thought, you know?

Another memorable session I attended was about using specific songs and the International Phonetic Alphabet to teach pronunciation and spelling. For example, one song containing the words sure, nation, chef, and pressure, was used to teach different spellings of the "sh" sound. Other sessions I attended covered a wide range of topics: using action research and professional learning communities to enhance one's teaching practice, using PhotoStory to create animated slide shows of students' digital pictures and text, how to write a good session proposal, strategies for teaching academic vocabulary, building collaborative teaching teams between ESOL and mainstream teachers, and how reading has changed in the era of iPads and the Internet.

This last session about reading in the digital age was particularly entertaining, as the presenter took us "down the Internet rabbit hole" by pretending to get distracted by all the pop ups and links on the screen while searching for information on Philadelphia. His main point was that students now use the skimming and scanning strategy automatically but need to develop the ability to get absorbed in a text.

I recovered from "session overload" with regular excursions to the profusion of nearby restaurants, lots of walking, and a restorative trip to the Philadelphia Art Museum to see the stunning Van Gogh Up Close exhibit. As I approached the museum with its enormous set of steps, I paused to greet the inspirational Rocky Balboa who had summoned me.

If you have the opportunity, I recommend attending TESOL Conventions in the future to enhance your professional development, network with colleagues, get reenergized, and even try your hand at presenting a session. See you in Dallas in 2013!

I-BEST is MI-BEST in Maryland

By Jacqui Walpole, Prince George's Community College

In 2005, a study of students in the Washington State Community and Technical College (SBCTC) system showed that students were not transitioning to higher levels of education. "Only 13 percent of the students who started in ESL programs went on to earn at least some college credits. Less than one-third (30 percent) of adult basic education (ABE/GED) students made the transition to college-level courses. Only four to six percent of either group ended up getting 45 or more college credits or earning a certificate or degree within five years."

(Building Pathways to Success for Low-Skill Adult Students: Lessons for Community College Policy and Practice from a Longitudinal Student Tracking Study, Prince, Jenkins: April 2005).

This study, also known as the tipping point research, found evidence that attending community college for at least one year and earning a credential provides a substantial boost in earnings for adults with a high school diploma or less.

In 2006, SBCTC challenged the traditional notion that students must first complete all levels of adult basic education before advancing into workforce training. In order to help students achieve that substantial boost in earnings as quickly as possible, SBCTC developed and launched the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) initiative.

I-BEST pairs workforce training with adult basic education (ABE) or ESL so students learn literacy and workplace skills at the same time. The adult education basic skills instructor and the occupational skills instructor work together to develop and deliver instruction.

The Maryland Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (MI-BEST) initiative based on Washington state's I-BEST model has the same aim: to speed up the rate at which ABE and ESL students advance to college-level occupational programs, complete

credentials of high demand in the local labor market, and move into these jobs, which offer a good wage. The student is also launched on a pathway for career advancement, either by attending additional post secondary job training with added certifications or via an academic route.

According to the Maryland Workforce Corporation (below), the objectives of the MI-BEST project are:

1. Identifying educational pathway(s) that link to career pathway(s).

2. Providing traditionally underserved and academically challenged populations with integrated basic and occupational skills to succeed in the workforce.

3. Giving MI-BEST graduates the opportunity to fill job openings and/or preferential status for next program level.

4. Transitioning MI-BEST graduates into more college coursework, leading to further certificates and/or degrees.

5. Giving local employers access to skilled workers (MI-BEST participants and/or graduates) to fill high-demand jobs paying at least $10 per hour.

Through the co-teaching of basic skills and occupational instruction, MI-BEST: (1) provides an integrated curriculum, (2) administers wrap-around support services, (3) establishes career pathways, and (4) delivers high-demand occupational training.

MI-BEST was developed in partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. In 2011, grants were awarded to the Anne Arundel Community College, Baltimore City Community College, Community College of Baltimore County, Prince George's Community College, and

Montgomery College to develop and implement pilot programs. Pilot programs included training in the culinary arts, healthcare, building maintenance, and bilingual office services. MI-BEST community colleges were initially mentored by five community colleges in Washington State with experience delivering I BEST programs.

The second round of MI-BEST courses is currently supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation with the Maryland Workforce Corporation serving as MI-BEST's administrative entity.
In 2011, based on the large number of ESL students in the Adult Education program at Prince George's Community College who said they were interested in a healthcare career, it was decided to pilot ESL basic skills training with a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) credential. Our team visited Highline Community College in Washington state and were graciously hosted and mentored by community college I-BEST faculty and staff.

Co-teaching is an integral part of the I-BEST model and includes joint course planning and at least an instructional overlap of 50 percent of the class time. In order for co-teaching to be successful, the I-BEST resources website (below) identifies the following elements:
 1. Both instructors work as a collaborative team to design and deliver the program.
2. Both instructors collaborate together prior to entering the classroom for the first time to work on joint learning outcomes and assessments for the students.
3. They are both present in the classroom including lecturing, leading group discussions, and managing student projects.
4. The role of the adult basic education instructor is to ensure that the basic skills necessary to understand concepts, pronounce the vocabulary, write reports are delivered to the students within the context of the workforce education content. The adult basic education instructor will gauge how the students are doing in terms of the pacing instruction and the comprehension of the students working with the workforce education instructor on these elements.
5. The workforce education instructor focuses on the delivery of the workforce content. In some programs, the instruction is so fluid that it is hard to distinguish which instructor comes from which discipline.
Fortunately for our program, our CNA and ESL teachers liked and respected each other, and their collaboration was effective for the length of the pilot. However, the learning curve was steep for all of us. ESL people on our team, myself included, did not know much about CNA, the Maryland Board of Nursing (MBoN) regulations, or the vaccinations and chest x-rays that might be required before our students were allowed to complete their clinicals at a local nursing home. Our CNA team members did not know much about second language acquisition theory and Adult Education English language learners.

The easy part was finding committed and dedicated ESL students who wanted to enter the healthcare field. However, the course schedule was intense. Because of the end date of our grant funding and the number of hours mandated by MBoN for the course, students had to attend class for more than 4 hours, 3 nights a week. Theory tests and quizzes were given every week and students had to pass them in order to earn their certification. As well as studying theory, our ESL students had to master many skills, such as taking a patient's blood pressure, making a bed, and giving a patient a bath. Clinicals were held at a local nursing home and our students had to work several weekends

English for Burmese Refugees

Laurel Conran and the ESOL program at Bollman Bridge Elementary School were recently featured in Voice of America: English for Burmese Refugees

The article has a video link in which we can see Laurel in action with her students. Laurel is a past MDTESOL Board member and ESOL Team Leader at Bollman Elementary School in Jessup, Maryland.

homes and sometimes act as surrogate parents for their many students.

Over the last ten years, I have had the unimaginable good luck to act in several different capacities within the program. My first job in the ESOL office was as a Bilingual Liaison for Spanish speaking families in the Annapolis area. This position was one of the earliest shifts in our county that recognized that the ESOL office was not just a department of instruction, but also represented the need of ESOL teachers to be supported in engaging families and giving parents of English Language Learners more equal access to their children's education. This position, and the ones like it throughout the state, was a fledgling attempt to engage families at a more fundamental level. As immigrant families began to make their homes throughout Maryland, the school systems, and ESOL teachers in particular, felt the vacuum being created as more students entered the schools and their parents were unable to access those schools because of language barriers and, more profoundly, because of confusion about the role of parents in education in the United States. In Anne Arundel County, the position of the Bilingual Liaison has been upgraded from a TA position to a professional support staff position and has moved from the ESOL office to the Office of Family and Community Engagement. I believe these changes reflect not only a shift in the school system in general to engage all families, but, more fundamentally, reflects the never-ending challenges that the ESOL departments are facing in advocating for students in an academic setting.

At the end of my first year as an employee in the school system, I was hired as the county's first International Student Registrar. This was one of the most exciting opportunities I have been given in my professional career. While the title sounds less than glamorous, in this position, I was asked to spearhead starting the first International Student Office in Anne Arundel County. The office was charged with moving the registration of international students out of the school setting and into a centralized processing center. At a time when more and more students were entering the school system and fewer and fewer came with legal immigrant documentation, the school system was faced with the challenge of not only welcoming these new

Americans, but of also giving them the same access to education to which they are entitled. In the early years, the schools were reluctant to give up control of registering students, but as more students came through the International Student Office, it became very evident that there had been a huge disparity in how families were received at the school level, how their transcripts were evaluated, how students were placed into classes and patterns of retention within various schools. While strong leadership in the ESOL Office at the time had ESOL teachers and staff on the same page in terms of these issues, schools, school personnel and classroom teachers often had very divergent ideas as to how ESOL students and their families should be "dealt with". The need for equal access and equitable treatment cannot be overstated. With the creation of the International Student Office and established guidelines for registration, transcript evaluation and student placement in order, many of these issues no longer are the responsibility of the ESOL teacher in Anne Arundel County. However, there are many urban systems in Maryland where these issues are not able to be dealt with in a central location and ESOL teachers are still called on to act as registrar, school counselor and interpreter.

Last year, after eight years in the International Student Office, I switched gears to become an ESOL teacher at Glen Burnie High School. In the classroom, I can feel first-hand the juggling act required by ESOL teachers to accommodate the needs of their students. As a second year teacher, not only do I face the challenges of any new teacher in a new building, but the challenges inherent in working with students that require so much advocacy on their behalf leaves me feeling as if I cannot adequately meet their needs in terms of the outside-of-the-classroom issues and still do a good job with language instruction. I am fortunate, however, to be working with the best team of ESOL teachers in the county. The support the other ESOL teachers at my school give me is unparalleled and together I feel like we can advocate for our students within the school, at the central office level and within the community. This means that as ESOL teachers we spend more time making student schedules, ensuring that they are not over-tested, making course selection suggestions, planning parent meetings or advocating for a student

that is brought up for retention. Whatever the case, ESOL teachers must give a voice to students that desperately need it.

In my various positions in Anne Arundel County I have seen how important it is to ensure that EOSL students have equal access to education, that their interests are protected and that parents are informed to the same degree as a native English-speaking parent, and perhaps even more than that. Our families are entering a new school system with different rules and they need to understand that as parents they have a voice in their children's education. As ESOL teachers, support staff and advocates, it is our responsibility to our ESOL families to make sure they are aware of the influence their presence can have and the choices available to them. Over the years, the program has changed to meet the needs a new population. The changing face of our country and our state has required that ESOL personnel wear many hats. We must be willing to take on these roles if we are to move forward as a school system and a community.

SUMMER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Collected by Sarah Barnhardt,
MDTESOL Newsletter Editor

Would you like to advance professionally this summer? Check out these professional development opportunities.

TESOL Summer Academies

TESOL Online Educational Opportunities

Institute on Teaching Reading sponsored by the Center for Applied Linguistics

Hot Topics in ELL Education sponsored by the Center for Applied Linguistics

Intensive Summer Workshop: International Research and Practices in Bilingual Education, American University

National Capital Language Resource Center, Summer 2012 Institutes

starting at 7:00 am. They also had to complete a CPR class held on a weekend. The course included tutoring outside of class hours for those students who needed extra support. After all, several of our MI-BEST students had not had the advantage of a completed high school education, and navigating a healthcare textbook and developing new study skills were a new challenge. Also, the services of the community college were made available to students through the course Navigator. At the end of the course, our MI-BEST students sat for a final theory exam as well as being tested on the skills they had acquired. Most students also took an additional external exam to earn their Geriatric Nursing Assistant (GNA) credential in order to find employment in a nursing home.

Our second round of MI-BEST is currently underway, and we have the same CNA teacher and a new ESL teacher, but she is familiar with the MI-BEST project because she tutored students during the pilot. There is an extensive data collection component now in place in order to provide the evidence for the success of the project, and we have extended other wrap-around services including making career advising a major component. Also, we put in place ESL-only classes during the week before the CNA theory lessons began in order to pre-teach complex healthcare vocabulary and to introduce students to organizational and study skills. We have ten students who are now about one-third of the way through the course.

MI-BEST has put our students on the first step of a career pathway and equipped them to earn a decent wage in a relatively short period of time. We're hopeful that MI-BEST-type classes are here to stay at our college.

References
Preparing for the Future http://www.marylandibest.com/index.html

Highline Community College, I-BEST Resources http://flightline.highline.edu/ibest/

visual appeal, features, etc. When we came back together we decided to go with the Massachusetts TESOL web provider. It seemed to be the best overall.
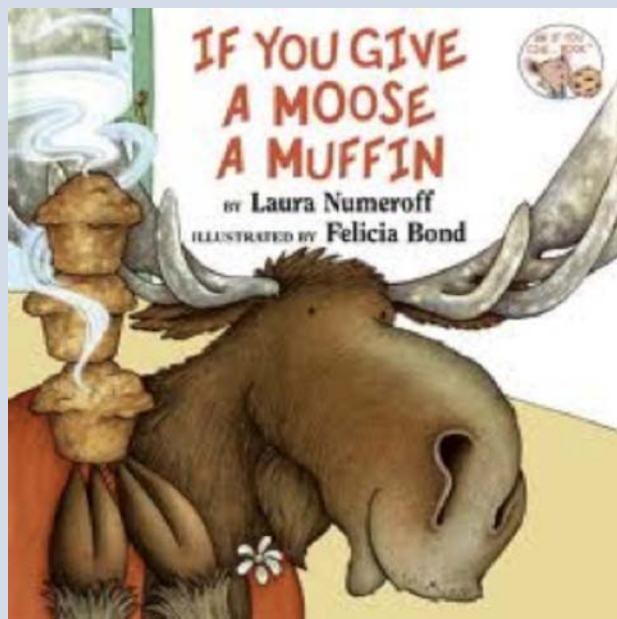
We were greeted by the website provider with open arms. They set up a conference call with the board, and we listened to everything they had to say. We were guaranteed that they would be extremely supportive and that everything was going to be easily transferred from our old website to our new website. We were also told that we had to do nothing since they would handle everything. However, have you read the book, If you Give a Moose a Muffin? The process ended up being similar to that story. In case you have not read it, the moose was given a muffin. Then he wanted:

- jam for the muffin,
- more and more and more muffins,
- a sweater when the door was opened (because the baker had to go out to buy more muffin mix).

After that, the moose noticed one of the buttons was loose on the sweater, which reminded him of the puppets his grandmother used to make, so he wanted:

- a puppet show,
- old socks to make the puppets,
- cardboard and paints for the scenery….and so on.

Well, FYI: we started the website process a year in advance of our annual state conference to ensure that we had everything ready to go so you could all find information about the conference. But, the website provider continually stopped the process of building the website because they wanted more and more and more

information from us. They asked for things they were supposed to take care of. They had us making calls to our old website provider, the gateway, the merchandise service provider, and so on. You name it we called it. Once we had the information they requested, they were hard to get a hold of. (Their sales person was different than their support person.) And, the support person provided much misinformation along the way, causing us to make more calls to clarify what they truly needed.

In addition, the old website had to be put into a dormant state to get the new one activated. Thus, we couldn't even use the old website to keep you informed about the conference. The conference came around before they had it set up. Oh my! Nevertheless, through much perseverance, the website as you know is up and running. I would like to thank Karen Blinder and Sofia Marshak for all of their hard work in getting it to where it is now, as well as the board. We hope that by the time you register for the next conference you can pay online! (That is still in process.)

Tips for you in case you are setting up a new website:
- When searching for a website provider, not only should you review the website and call them to hear their level of support, but also use a website provider that is recommended to you (or a trusted colleague).
- If you run into the same problem of the new website taking time to get set up, make phone calls, emails, send/post flyers, use Facebook, and your work websites to get your information out.

Remember, life is about the journey not the destination... ;-)

Reader's Theater to Promote Fluency and Vocabulary Development

By: Ann Burdette, ESOL Instructional Team Leader, Hollifield Station Elementary School, Howard County Public School System

Why Reader's Theaters?

The fifth grade newcomer from China struggled to wrap his mouth around Pooh's lines: "How very readily one sees that these are whose—but whose are these?" for the tenth time. The words were sounding more and more like they should, and his voice had gained strength and expression throughout every rehearsal of a reader's theater of "Kanga and Roo Come to the Forest and Piglet Has a Bath," by A.A. Milne. The boy's face relaxed into a smile as he responded to Rabbit's declaration, "Pooh, you haven't any brain," with a simple, yet expressive, "I know." Tasked with speaking in Pooh's old-fashioned vocabulary and with finding at least four ways in which to say, "Aha!" this student, whose "silent period" had stretched longer than any other student I had ever taught, had found this reader's theater a real challenge.

There were times during the students' several weeks of learning the lines and practicing pronunciation and expression that I wondered whether this piece of literature was a good choice after all. Granted, it had tons of dialogue, real voice, and humor that everyone eventually "got," but A. A. Milne's vocabulary was so sophisticated, and the humor so subtle that I wondered if the kids were up to the task of making it come alive as a presentation. Reader's theater depends upon voice. There are no props; there is no real "action." Actors must use their voices and facial expressions to create meaning and character, no small task for any young student, but even more daunting for an English Language Learner (ELL).

My students and I have been writing reader's theaters from literature for many years. All students benefit from the opportunity to read aloud for a purpose. Repeated reading is a valuable fluency strategy. Giving students an opportunity to listen for cues and develop a meaningful voice for a character is consistent with the English Language Common Core Curriculum. Developing projection and enunciation skills is a lifelong aptitude. Additionally, other students love to listen to student reader's theaters, as they imagine themselves taking on the various roles. But nowhere is there greater benefit to be derived from using reader's theaters than with ELLs.

How to choose and prepare a reader's theater

I do not use published reader's theaters for several reasons:

First, the decision about which reader's theater to perform should come from the students. In order to make that choice, students need to listen to and read a variety of literature to enjoy the voices and personalities of the characters. When the students choose the story, the reader's theater created together is richer. The group of fifth grade ELLs who chose the Milne story from an anthology of The Junior Great Books, decided that, while it was really a "kid's story," the characters and vocabulary were sophisticated and interesting enough for them.

Second, the process of adapting the selected text to a reader's theater format offers important literary mini-lessons and skill practice.

- Recognizing and transcribing dialogue require the students to search for and name the punctuation associated with it. Most often I ask the students to read aloud the dialogue from the text while I transcribe it onto a projected image. They must take responsibility for telling me who is speaking, where to capitalize and place punctuation, and when to stop writing when the original text uses, "he said," or " she announced."
- Changing long, descriptive portions of the original narrative to dialogue asks that the student give voice to a character by "showing, not telling," about the action. In the folktale, "Coyote and the Butterflies," second graders derived great pleasure in changing the narrative text, " the butterflies laughed," into a variety of oral giggles and guffaws.
- Writing stage directions with students is an instant

application of adverb and adjective use. Second grade students helping to adapt Arnold Lobel's, "The Lost Button" into a reader's theater needed to describe how Toad's growing anger should be read by the actor. Students discovered the nuances of "anxious," "frustrated," "irritated," and "furious," in a vocabulary lesson with real context.

- Finally, reader's theaters support the acquisition and development of speaking and listening skills. Through repeated readings of reader's theaters, ELLs are able to practice using and pronouncing a wide range of English words. Students are asked to listen to and duplicate vocabulary that might ordinarily not appear in their level reading books. Classic literature and folktales offer complex characters with complex ways of expressing themselves. Shy speakers are supported by their co-stars, and must listen carefully for their cues. Listening to one another, they are able to offer suggestions that reflect their comprehension of the text.

Practice Makes Perfect Sense

The fifth graders performed "Kanga and Roo Come to the Forest, and Piglet Has a Bath" to enthusiastic reviews from their peers. Audience members were amazed that their silent classmate had such a voice! After the flush of opening day, the group immediately began poring through their anthology for the next appropriate piece of literature to transform into theater. "The Elephant's Child" is a current favorite suggestion because of its fascinating snake, crocodile, and other African animal characters. It promises to be interesting listening to the kids attack Kipling's alliterative, ". . great, gray, green, greasy Limpopo River, all set about with fever trees!" As long as it's their choice, they will perform brilliantly, expand their vocabularies, and develop their fluency, not to mention their self-esteem.

TESOL 2013 : CALL FOR PAPERS AND REVIEWERS

TESOL 2013 is now accepting proposals.

Interest Section Summary

The Elementary Interest Section

News from the Elementary Interest Section The Elementary Interest Section held a fun and informative session in March called, "Listening: The Cinderella Skill." Presenters, Maha Abdelkader (Howard County Elementary ESOL Resource Teacher) and Sandy Keaton (Elementary Language Arts Instructional Facilitator) shared techniques designed to help teach students how to listen for comprehension.

MARYLAND
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