Message from the President

Summer has finally come and for many of us, the last thing to think about right now is next school year. But please do, for just a second! If you haven’t already marked your calendar, pull it out and place a hold on October 3rd for the VATESOL conference. You don’t want to miss this opportunity to recharge your batteries, connect with colleagues, and break away.

The VATESOL board has been working hard to bring you a wonderful fall conference. This year the conference will be held at Tidewater Community College in Virginia Beach on Saturday, October 3rd.

The theme for this year’s conference is ELL Newcomers.

Our keynote speaker Judie Haynes, author of numerous ELL texts and the website Everything ESL, will give strategies for classroom teachers to use.

Conference news from the Vice-President

By Jennifer Kuchno, 1st VP

Fall Conference Update: ESL Newcomers: Teachers and Students

Summer is here and plans are well underway for the fall conference. Proposals continue to be received and reviewed by the SIG leaders. Thank you to everyone who has submitted a proposal and for sharing your expertise with your colleagues. Presenters who have not already been notified regarding the status of their proposal will be alerted as soon as possible. Presenters will receive more information about the conference schedule later this summer.

The deadline for conference proposals is July 1st. See www.vatesol.cloverpad.org for more information. Since the call for proposal’s deadline has already been extended, we will not consider any submissions after July 1st.

(Cont. next page – VP)
The theme for this year’s annual VATESOL conference will be “ESL Newcomers: Teachers and Students.”

with ELL students.

The deadline for session proposals has just passed and the proposals are now under review by board members. We received a number of excellent proposals this year. These breakout sessions will allow you to network, find out the latest research in your field, learn new techniques, and spur new ideas.

For more information and to register for the conference, visit VATESOL’s website http://vatesol.cloverpad.org/.

I look forward to seeing each of you in Virginia Beach! Have a wonderful summer!
Tanya Gray
VATESOL President

I am including the conference information below (a repeat from the last newsletter) as I know first hand how busy we teachers get at the end of the semester and school year. You may not have been thinking about the fall conference, just trying to get your grades in and finish up for the summer… So, sit back, relax, and read all about the conference below.

It is going to be a wonderful meeting for all our special interest groups. A sample list of the conference presentations is listed at the end. Check it out!

Hope to see you in Virginia Beach!

Jennifer Kuchno
VATESOL Vice President / Conference Chair
The first one is on **Reciprocal Teaching**. Reciprocal teaching is an interactive method used before reading, during reading, and after reading with the goal of improving the learner’s reading comprehension. Through reciprocal teaching, teachers and students alternate roles in leading discussions on segments of a given text using cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies. This method has four stages.

1. **Predicting**
   - *What do you think the story is about?*

2. **Questioning**
   - *What connection can we make between your prediction and the story so far?*

3. **Clarifying**
   - *Are there any words or phrases that confused you?*

4. **Summarizing**
   - *What do you think was the As teachers, we are always after useful tips we can borrow and use in our own classes. Here I have two teaching tips that were tested by two of my graduate students in their elementary level classes with English Language Learners in them.*

   - **Writer’s intention in this chapter/book?**

   Dawn Knight, an ESL teacher for Page County Public Schools and a graduate student in my Methods of Teaching ESL course, has tested Reciprocal Teaching with two of her ESL students. This is what she found out.

   “*Before using reciprocal teaching, my approach to teaching literacy development to ELLs seemed logical and sensible. My expectations were high and my efforts were valiant, but my approach just wasn’t getting the job done. This became very obvious to me when it came time for my students to take their reading test each week. The scores on their tests were hit and miss.*

   *My strategies consisted of three main objectives: new vocabulary, reading the story and comprehending it. The first difference that I noted between my method of teaching literacy development and reciprocal teaching was the amount of planning involved. I saw very quickly that in order to make this an effective method for my ELLs, I needed to spend more time preparing. Each day needed to be carefully mapped out according to what I wanted my students to achieve. They also needed to be aware of what the expectations were for them each day. I began my planning by choosing a story that was at my ELLs reading level. For these two students, it was a high second grade level. I also took into consideration the likes and dislikes of my students. I knew that they both liked animals, therefore, the story I chose was *A Dog Called Bear* by Annette Smith.*

   *When I began using the new approach, I saw a difference in my students right away. Because the reciprocal teaching method was so organized and well planned, my students were much more focused on the lesson each day. I was able to tell them exactly what we would be doing that day and then we did it. Each day that we reviewed information from the previous day, their comprehension and ability to remember details was much better than before. They were able to see the events of the story unfold each day as we added information and it remained visible to them throughout each lesson as a reference point. Making predictions was engaging and it made the learning*
process fun for my students. They thoroughly enjoyed predicting what might happen in our story and then waiting to find out if they were correct. By breaking the reading process down into predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarizing my students not only enjoyed reading a story, but were excited about being able to understand, talk and write about what they had read. For the first time, I saw what it meant to have students engaged in learning.”

The second teaching tip focuses on **Behavior Control**. Sabrena Groseclose, 2nd grade teacher at Mountain View Elementary and graduate student in my Methods of Teaching ESL course, developed and tested this technique to help control student behavior and increase engagement of ELLs and non-ELLs.

Here is what Sabrena has to share with us.

“I began teaching second grade 7 years ago when a new school opened. I was very anxious because part of my class would be English Language Learners (ELL). I had not experienced that before. So, not only were second grade and all the new material a challenge but also non-native kids. What was I going to do with them? Could they understand me? How would I contact or connect with parents? Would they be helpful? Needless to say, that was a very stressful summer prior to the beginning of a new academic year. That year actually was great! I found out one important aspect of ELL students, their parents are very supportive. My favorite thing about ELL parents is that when they are told there is a behavior considered unacceptable at school, it is addressed at home. The parents want to know when things are going wrong. I was amazed and yet intrigued by these learners and trudged forward.

There was too much chattering while group work was going on, not just ELL students, but by all. Some would try to help others and some would just talk out loudly. Therefore, after a great deal of reflection and trials, I have developed a system that turns negative behavior to positive. It is as follows.

- Each child’s name is written on a stick.
- Each child will get a reminder regarding inappropriate behavior. If it continues, they move their stick to cup #1, then #2, then #3.
- At #3, they get an office referral, a phone call home and a strike on the behavior sheet.
- At the end of the day, all sticks are out of cups and ready for the next day.
- At the end of the week there is a reward “Fun Event” for those who have **no** strikes.

**The reward** system works as follows for homework:

- Same sticks are used.
- There is a homework sheet for strikes, like the behavior sheet.
- Each Monday, the students are given an **EMERGENCY HOMEWORK PASS** with their name on it. If they forget homework once during the week, they can use the pass and bring it the next day. This does **not** get them a homework strike.
- If they forget it again that same week, they do get a strike and therefore, have **no** reward on the “Fun Event”.
- Those that have not used their Emergency pass on Friday, put them into a tub for a drawing. The winner gets something from the “Goody Tub”.

The “Fun Event” will be on Fridays for those with **no** strikes at all. There will be a larger “Fun Event” at the end of the month for those who have no more than 5 strikes total (behavior and homework).

Students can have a second chance to move their stick back a cup if behavior improves and stays at an acceptable level. Students tend to get upset if they miss the weekly event. One of my students missed the event 2 weeks in a row and could not help but cry. He told me he would behave not to miss any more fun events and so far, his behavior has improved significantly. He was even worried on a field trip, which happened on a Thursday because he knew the next day was “Fun Friday.”
“Fun Friday” events include extra computer time, play file folder games, chewing gum for a limited time, a sucker, shoes-off time for reading and relaxation. Basically, anything works if it is out of the ordinary.”

Dawn Knight, Sabrena Groseclose, and I will be presenting these topics at the VATESOL Conference in October. Please come see us and get more details on these effective teaching tips.

VATESOL FALL CONFERENCE INFORMATION

**Date:** October 3, 2009

**Theme:** ESL Newcomers: Teachers and Students

**Location:** Tidewater Community College’s (TCC) Virginia Beach Campus
1700 College Crescent Virginia Beach, VA 23453-1918

**Directions to TCC-VB**
http://www.tcc.edu/welcome/locations/vabeach/info/auto.htm

**Map of TCC-VB Campus**
http://www.tcc.edu/welcome/locations/vabeach/info/map.htm

**Check-in and On-site Registration:** Advanced Technology Center (ATC)

**Conference Sessions:** Virginia Beach Building (adjacent to the ATC)

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER:** Judie Haynes

Judie Haynes, a veteran ESL teacher and author of several books on ESL newcomers and the *Everything ESL* web site. Judie will be speaking about strategies for mainstream teachers of ESL students. Judie will also be offering a session on newcomers during the conference. Additionally, Ms. Hayes will be signing and selling her award winning book *Getting Started with English Language Learners: How Educators Can Meet the Challenge*. Read more about Judie Haynes: [http://www.everythingesl.net/](http://www.everythingesl.net/)

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION**

Online membership and conference registration will begin in mid-July at [www.vatesol.cloverpad.org](http://www.vatesol.cloverpad.org). We strongly encourage you to pay online but checks will also be accepted. Please check the web site for registration deadlines. On-site online registration will be available.

**MEMBERSHIP & CONFERENCE RATES - 2009**

**Membership Rates:** Regular - $25, Student - $15

**Conference Rates:** Regular - $35, Student - $20, Non-Members $60

**HOTEL ACCOMODATION**
Extended Stay America Virginia Beach - Independence Blvd.
4548 Bonney Rd
Virginia Beach, VA, 23462
Phone 866-925-8655

**HOTEL RATES:** Studio – Queen $59.99  Studio- Two Twins $69.99
Check In Time - 3 PM, Check Out Time - 11 AM
All rooms have refrigerators, microwave ovens and stovetops; Wireless Internet access for a fee

**SUGGESTED OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS**
(Approximate Mileage From Conference Hotel)

Virginia Beach Oceanfront.................................9 miles
Pembroke Mall Shopping Center ....................... 1 mile
Mount Trashmore District Park..........................2 miles
Kempsville Greens Municipal Golf Course.......... 2.5 miles
Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center...... 9 miles
Cape Henry Lighthouse.................................... 9 miles
Nauticus (Norfolk)...........................................9 miles

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**A Sample of the Fall Conference Presentations:**

Connecting and Empowering ELLs
Teaching Reading to Students Who Don't Enjoy Reading
Typology of Mainstream Teacher Attitudes toward LEP Students: 53 Classroom Teachers Observed and Interviewed
Art Inspirations: Reaching ELL Students through Art
African Refugees and Resettlement: Preparing Students, Preparing Teachers
Building Learning Communities in the Academic ESL Classroom
Improving Scaffolding Techniques and Increasing Student Interaction
WIDA Standards
Remember Your Roots! Growing Oral Assessment Ideas from Your Own Foreign Language Student Experience
Creative Engagement Activities for Beginning ESOL Adult Learners
Rich Internet Applications for Language Learning (RIA)
Teaching Second Language Learners as a Second Career
An Effective Team Approach to the Reading VGLA
Let's Talk About Success! Integrating college success skills into community college oral communications classes
Newcomer Program - Secondary
The Smallest Light: Reading to Learn & EFL as a concept in Macedonian Universities
We aren't in Kansas Anymore, Toto! PreK-12 Culture Shock
Learning from Experience: Evaluating a Recently Implemented ESL Field Experience for Pre-Service Teachers
"YouTube 101" - for language learning
ESL Newcomers
Welcoming Newcomers to Your Classroom and Community
Using Music to Build the Class Community