



جامعة قطر
QATAR UNIVERSITY



Foundation Program

**The English Department
Newsletter**

**Knowledge that is known only to a
few can be used only by a few.
A piece of information that is shared
can go a long way.**



Issue No. 4 - Spring Semester 2006



Foundation Program

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{Knowledge that is known only to a few can be used only by a few.}

(Gloria Steinem - Issues Across the Curriculum, 1997)

{A piece of information that is shared can go a long way.} bbc.com

CONTENTS

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Editor's Note

1

University News & Events

2

Foundation Program

5

Interview

6

Student Writing Section

8

Student Activity Section

13

Accreditation

20

English Department News & Events

21

New Kids on the Block

24

Socializing at the FP

25

TOEFL Report

26

ARTICLES

27

Garden of Verse

42

Is English Easy ?

43

Cartoons

44

Multimedia

45

Miscellanea

47

The Big Issue

48

Photo Gallery

2 & 46

EDITOR'S NOTE

There's a fine line between trusting your instincts, which you must follow, and completely ignoring difficulties. Plans are bound to be revised, so we always try to keep things flexible. Where confusion could complicate even simple arrangements, it also introduces intriguing new ideas.



It took us so long to produce this issue, so we apologize for the delay. However,

the academic year 2005/2006 has been a momentous year for the Foundation English Department. This is especially true as the Department introduced a new English Programme, "NorthStar", in the Fall Semester, established various committees, implemented a new system of teacher evaluation, and started in earnest preparing for its accreditation. These are the highlights in the Foundation English Department.

At this hectic and exciting time, the editors of the Newsletter have been working behind the scenes, doing their bit to add to these achievements. As always, we have stayed true to our creative visions and impulses; thinking up new strategies to improvise, improve and innovate the quality and shape of the Newsletter. Simplicity and elegance are again in vogue. We have used thinner paper and less colouring, and left the background white, but decorated the front and back pages of the cover with beautiful photos, recording our activities and events.

However, it goes without the saying of it that since its inception, the popularity of the Newsletter has increased exponentially. We now know from the faculty's many articles, and from the students' contributions, that it is a valued means of interaction. We feel proud of the enthusiasm and keenness of both our colleagues and our students to contribute. We hope to keep up the good work and live up to our readers' expectations. And may we take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed to this issue and to the previous issues, and to look forward to receiving your contributions for the next issue. We only request that you meet deadlines and submit your writings according to our

specifications, which we will state more clearly in our memo for the 5th issue.

We are honoured this time by the loads of material we have received. At first we felt the pressure – how to accommodate the entire chain of articles and student writing? Eventually, we found a simple solution – use a smaller font. Now there are about 20 articles to revel in, covering various themes: academic articles, poetry, conference reports, personal experience, etc., and brilliant essays written by our students.

Besides our regular sections, this issue has some special attractions. We have offered concentrated coverage of student writing and activities. The regard for students is apparent in the fact that the President of the University has designated the academic year 2005/2006 as the "Year of the Student". We have also included a "Social" section, of which the purpose, as stated by the "Social Committee", is to strengthen social relations and enhance communication among all faculty and staff in the Department. We have also used more photos and pictures to depict a few of the many activities the University, the FP and the English Department have engaged in throughout the Spring Semester.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the invaluable help I have received from my colleagues on the editorial board. My sincere gratitude goes to Mary Lanaghan, the vice-editor, who was especially generous with time and effort and good ideas, and for meticulously looking after every detail, and for preparing the "Student Activity Section". Thanks to the co-editors: Eileen Plumb for editing the "Student Section", and for proofreading some of the material. We cannot thank her enough. Thanks to Aladdin Halwani for taking the time to prepare the "English Department News and Events" section. Thanks to Anthony Heron for proofreading most of the material. We are also indebted to the University photographer, Mustafa Omira, for providing most of the photos, and for our colleagues, Dr Hani Alkutaifan, Allyson Young and Nageeb Alsanosi for providing some of the photos we have used.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to read through this issue. We are sure you will find a lot of interest you, and you will enjoy it.

Abdul Moniem

**At the Career Fair
April 2006**



**At the Graduation Ceremony
June 2006**



University News and Events

[By Abdul Moniem M Hussein]

Qatar University Graduation Ceremony, 2006

[Based on information from Gulf Times, June 29, July 1]

Held at the Sheraton Hotel, Qatar University celebrated the graduation of its 29th batch of students (1353 students), of which 347 are male (June 29), and 1006 female (July 1).

Her Excellency Professor **Sheikha bint Abdulla Al-Misnad**, the President of the University, presided over the two functions, giving speeches on the mission and vision of the University Reform Project, and outlining what has been achieved so far and the future tasks awaiting to be accomplished in the coming few years, to position Qatar University among the top universities in the region.



Excerpts from the President's Speeches

In her introductory address, the President of the University pointed out that this year's

graduates are leaving when the new logo, which symbolizes the radical changes taking place, has been introduced, and when the University has received for the first time accreditation for its Men's College of Engineering, in Chemical, Civil, Electrical and Mechanical departments, from the US-based Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET).

* Now the College of Business and Economics is well on its way towards accreditation, and the College of Arts and Sciences is working with specialized agencies for accrediting its programs. Her Excellency added that the College of Education, which also offers special Education Graduate Programs, has recently received positive evaluation from the UN Development Programs.

* Using the University IT Services, student admission and registration will exclusively be done electronically, commencing the Academic Year 2006 / 2007.

* The on-going University Reform Project will start its first stage of implementation in the Fall of 2006/2007. "When the changes are fully implemented within the next three to five years, we intend to take QU to the top slot among the universities in the region."



* "Qatar University has introduced in the recent past many significant changes in its academic programs and methods of teaching. We have drawn up a clearly defined

program of targets to be achieved by the various colleges of the University after in-depth studies and research conducted by our faculty members in consultation with international experts," Professor Al-Misnad said.

Highlights

* The guest of honour at the male graduation was QatarGas CEO, Mr. Faisal Al-Suwaidi, and the guest of honour at the female graduation was Dr. Ghalia bint Mohammed Al-Thani, National Health Authority Chairperson.

* The Vice-Presidents, Associate Vice-Presidents, Deans of Colleges, other senior officials, faculty and staff, guests and parents were also present.

* Outstanding students were honoured with sashes of distinction.

* 70% of the graduates this year were female students.



* On behalf of the graduates, **Mubarak Al-Ghanim**, a student from the College of Engineering said, "At Qatar University, we have learnt not only from books and lectures, but we have also learnt from our interactions with our teachers, colleagues, and people outside the University."

The Guests of Honour Speaking

* Speaking at the Male Graduation Day, **Mr. Al-Suwaidi**, QatarGas CEO, elaborated on the challenges Qatar is facing on various fronts and how the University of Qatar graduates could play a vital role in the development of their country.



* **Dr Ghalia Al-Thani**, National Health Authority Chairperson, stressed the



significant role of the Qatari women in the society. "However, we should not for any reason compromise our values and long cherished traditions. We have to evolve an optimum method by which we can make use of the education we have acquired and also remain committed to our family values. We have to set our priorities in the right order."

University of Qatar Career Fair, 2006

(Translated from the College of Arts and Sciences Newsletter)

Highlights

* During the period 24 - 27 April, 2006, the University of Qatar organized its first Career Fair, which turned out to be very successful and promising for the students of the University. Approximately 30 companies and establishments participated. In a survey conducted by the University Organizing Committee, it was discovered that these companies and establishments had received more than 3,750 applications from students for training and jobs.

* A week before the start of the Career Fair, the Office of Professional Service in conjunction with the Office of Human Development, organized three training sessions for students in order to perform effectively in the Career Fair.

* **Professor Sheikha: A Guest of the Career Fair Café**

On the last day of the Career Fair, the President had an informal meeting with a huge audience of students and faculty. In a family atmosphere, she opened her heart to her students, heard their concerns and answered their queries. She told her students that the student is the focal

point of the Reform project - "The Heart of the Matter". The Reform Plan aims at equipping students with the necessary knowledge and skills to function effectively in an ever-growing and competitive market.



*** "From the Earth to the Moon"**

Dr Farouq Al-Baz, the renowned Arab scientist, figured as the guest of the Career Fair Café. He met with Professor Skeikha, the President of the University, and a significant audience of students, faculty and staff. Dr Al-Baz expressed his appreciation and pride of the developments taking place at the University of Qatar, and stressed that



university students are the cornerstone in any country's development and progress. Professor Skeikha reminisced of her college days when Dr Al-Baz was there, giving lectures and holding talks with his students. She honoured Dr Al-Baz with a shield of honour.

Japanese Books Celebrated

(A Translation – Arabic version supplied by the External Relations Office)

To promote cross-cultural awareness, Qatar University Libraries Department staged a celebration of "Japanese Books". The books were offered as a gift by the Japanese Embassy to the University of Qatar. The occasion was honored by the presence of His Excellency the Japanese Ambassador to the State of Qatar, **Mr. Masahiko Hori**, and Her Excellency the President of the University, Professor **Sheikha bint Abdulla Al-Misnad**. The Japanese Ambassador expressed his appreciation of the ever-growing and distinguished relationship between the State of Qatar and Japan. At the end of the celebration, the books given as a gift were displayed and briefly reviewed. Also, a "Cultural Corner" was opened where the Japanese "Tea & Kitchen" rituals and Japanese style of flower-arranging were shown and explained. Finally, a brief introduction to Japanese universities was given.

A University Of Qatar Student Excels

Aisha Yousef Abdulla Al Nisf Won Rashid bin Humaid's Prize For the Short Story Competition for the year 2005

[A Translation – Arabic version supplied by the External Relations Office]

The student was congratulated by the President of the University, Professor **Sheikha bint Abdulla Al-Misnad**, who said, "It's my pleasure to congratulate you on this occasion of your distinguished achievement, which could not have been made possible without your diligent efforts and perseverance, and without the support of your honourable teachers in your college. I hope that your achievement acts as the catalyst and the strongest incentive for other students to take part in local, regional

and international competitions and functions."

The student was honoured by **Dr Sheikha bint Jabor Al-Thani**, Vice-President and Chief Academic Officer for winning the prize. In her word on the occasion, the Vice-President stressed that the University is keen on encouraging and helping its students develop their potentials and capabilities. She pointed out that story-telling is one of the domains the University caters for and encourages through the various competitions regularly organized by the Student Activity Office, where the best University story-teller is selected and nominated for the "Prize".

At the Foundation English SLC Grand Opening Ceremony

Highlights

* In the presence of the Vice-Presidents, **Dr Sheikha bint Jabor Al-Thani** and **Dr Humaid Al-Midfa**, Associate Vice-President, **Dr Omar Al-Ansari**, and many other University officials and guests, the Foundation English Department Student Independent Learning Centres were



opened in a grand ceremony at the Women's Activity Building in the Spring Semester. Dr Humaid cut the ribbon, declaring the Centre open.

* SLC Co-ordinator, **Mrs Wafaa Ammar** welcomed the guests and explained the vision and mission of

the centre.

* **Dr Khalid Al-Ali**, the Director of the Foundation Program, spoke on the occasion, and promised more facilities to expand the SLC.

* The English FP aims at bridging the gap between school and college education, and helping students to improve their communication skills in English. "The main objective of the SLC is to enhance learning beyond the English language classroom," said **Dr Madani Othman**, the Head of the English Department. The equipment and facilities available at the centre include reading rooms, TOEFL

clinics, centres for multimedia, tutoring and student counseling. There are also booths for movie, poetry, and drama.



* In the form of a PowerPoint presentation, the English Foundation students presented a visual tour of the

centre, performed a short kit, open mike show, and recited educational poems.

* **Dr Daniel Chae**, Director of the floating Book Fair, M V Doulos, docked at the Doha Port at the time, also attended the ceremony, and kindly promised to donate books to the centres.



Foundation Program Annual Report Summary

At the end of the academic year meeting with the faculty and staff, Dr. Khalid Al Ali, the Director of the Foundation Programme, gave in a lengthy speech an elaborate account of the programme's achievements and future plans.

Major achievements

- Passing the eligibility requirements for the English Program's accreditation by CEA (The Commission on English Language Program Accreditation).



- Becoming an iBT TOEFL Test Center (first center in the Middle East) and successfully conducting several international iBT TOEFL tests.

- Establishment of Independent Learning Centers

(ILC) in both the men and women's campuses.

- Establishment of an English Writing Center to serve the whole University.

- Establishment of an ICDL Training and Testing Center with the collaboration of the Office of Continuing Education.

- Broadening the revenue for the Foundation through continuing education courses to different sectors, testing preparation courses, and renting labs to external users.

- Successful recruitment campaign for large numbers of applicants (974 applications) by participating in TESOL Arabia Job Fair and TESOL International Job Market, USA.

- Completing the IT requirements for all the staff, ILC centers, and establishing a lab in the Men's Foundation Building and another in the Women's.

- Attending of conferences by 35 staff and presenting of 10 papers inside and outside the region in topics related to foundation education.

- Running an academic orientation program for the new staff by each department.

- Allocation of one large housing complex for the Foundation staff in collaboration with the Housing Department.

- Launching a Staff Appraisal System Form starting this year, and evaluating the procedure by staff and heads of departments in collaboration with the Office of Staff Evaluation.

- Automating a student advising system, report generation, and TOEFL and Math & Computer registration. Automated submission of final exam results also started in fall 2006 in collaboration with the Admission & Registration Office.

Future objectives

- Continuous tracking of student achievement in each college after completion of the Foundation Program.

- Seek approval to move the Foundation Program in the organization chart to be under the Vice President for

Academic Affairs.

- Based on student requests for certification on completion of the Foundation Program, a proposal to this effect is being discussed with the Admission & Registration Office.

- Development of better information sources for students who have partial fulfillment and are taking academic courses in their colleges.

- Increase the awareness among the staff regarding self-assessment for the accreditation of the English Department and preparing for self-evaluation that will start next year.

- Expansion of the Learning Center and its services to all our students.

- Implementation of independent learning and critical thinking skills through course content and the Independent Learning Centers.



- Coordination with the CCC Committee regarding the implementation of the new English courses in the Core Course Requirement and evaluation

of the first year outcome.

- Decrease faculty teaching load.

- Expand communication with:

- Supreme Education Council and high schools regarding incoming students,

- University Colleges regarding the tracking of Foundation graduates,

- other Universities in Qatar and the region in order to share experiences and encourage student communication.

- The Program will consider sending some of the outstanding students during the summer to USA/UK.

Conclusion

- The foundation seeks three major objectives during the following years.

1. A short term objective to reduce the length of student stay in the program and reduce the percentage of students who were not able to continue their studies.

2. A long term objective, that the majority of students will be exempted from the foundation so that this program is offered only to weak high school graduates, rather than almost all the students. The program will construct the tests to assess the success of this objective during the following years.

3. Finally, it is expected that going through the self-evaluation requirements for

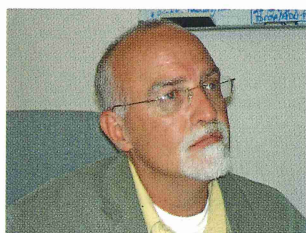
Accreditation, CEA will assume that the program provide the



requirement courses and outcomes to achieve its mission.

Interview with the new Head of the English Department

(Conducted by Abdul Moniem M Hussein & Mary Lanaghan)



Mr. Robert Kennedy, the new Head of the English Department, in a friendly and informative interview, spoke to the editors on a variety of issues, ranging from the personal to the most professional. Here's the full text of the interview.

Some of us know you well, but others would like to know you better. Who is Bob Kennedy? (Where from, education, teaching career, etc.).

Well, most call me Bob, others call me Robert. If in doubt, I guess "Bobert" will do. I was born and raised on the Central Plains of the USA - Kansas, to be more specific, graduating from the University of Kansas with Master's degrees in Curriculum and Instruction: TESOL, and Public Administration. I've been teaching English for a number of years now, primarily in the Middle East (Qatar, the U.A.E., and Saudi Arabia), the South Pacific (Papua New Guinea), and the U.S.A.

You've been around QU for a while. Tell us about your career here, and describe some of the (most significant) changes you have seen since you arrived.

Yes, I've been around for awhile, but it often seems like only yesterday when I first arrived. The most significant changes I've witnessed over the years involve the dramatic increase in the number of students we teach, the number of faculty employed, and the quality and quantity of the programs we offer. As each year passes, the overall quality of the students we teach has also increased. This will continue, thanks in large part to the primary and secondary educational reform process now underway in Qatar, and students becoming more and more aware of the work and effort expected of them in order to successfully complete academic studies at Qatar University.

How do you feel about your new position?



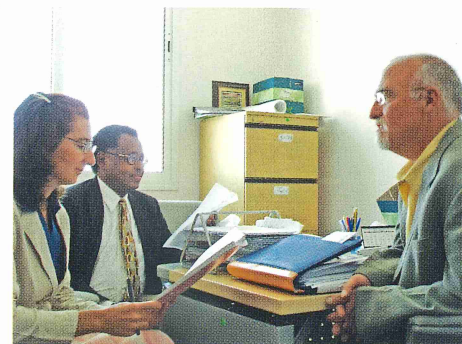
I feel great, but time will tell. I am going to give it my best shot, and only hope that if I turn out to be just half the administrator, half the diplomat, and half the gentleman that

my predecessor Dr. Madani Osman was, then I'll be satisfied. There is a lot of work to be done - student numbers are increasing, faculty numbers are increasing, and programs on offer are increasing. I am very confident that a very capable management team has been appointed

to help guide and oversee the future growth and development of the English Department, ably supported by all Department staff members in this work.

Describe the most significant (positive) developments you've seen in the English Program in the last year or two.

Just a quick review of the academic year 2005/2006 highlights numerous positive developments, including: the establishment of Student Independent Learning Centers on both campuses; the establishment of an iBT TOEFL Test Center (the first in the Middle East) and the successful staging of several iBT TOEFL tests; the setting up of a 'Writing Center/Writing Community' to serve our students and the University Community; the delivery of an introductory BlackBoard staff training program; passing the initial eligibility requirements for the English Program's accreditation by the CEA (The Commission of English Language Program Accreditation), and the attendance/participation of numerous staff members at both local and international conferences - to name just a few.



How do you foresee the growth and development of the English

Department in the coming year? For example, new facilities and resources for teachers and students?

The English Department will continue to grow and develop - more facilities and more resources for more students and more faculty. Two new computer labs are scheduled to open in the Fall in the Men's Foundation Building. A BlackBoard trial run with students is tentatively scheduled for the Fall, along with 6 pilot groups of the new Post Foundation core curriculum course. There will be further developments and improvements as the accreditation process gets fully underway. There are 27 new staff members joining the Department in September, and I'm sure we all look forward to their positive contributions toward the growth and development of the Department.

What do you think of the English courses currently taught? Do you feel they are effective?

I think it is still a bit too early to judge as the Foundation Program is still in its infancy. But, statistics released from the Foundation Director's office, show that those students who entered the program in 2004, and have since exited the program - are performing well in their respective college courses, the majority with a GPA of 3 and above.

Advice to students for how to succeed in the Foundation Program?

Work hard, attend all your classes, don't be afraid to ask your teachers for extra help, and most importantly - look for opportunities for English learning and practice outside your classroom. Plenty of opportunities exist. Join one or more of the SLC student clubs, expand your reading beyond your homework assignments - spend more time in the SLC discovering the wide range of materials and

Interview

resources available there. Contribute to online discussion forums (in English) that deal with issues you find interesting. The list is endless.

Give us the "low-down" on the TOEFL. Is it appropriate to use the TOEFL as a placement tool for a developmental English Program such as ours?

The TOEFL is not a perfect test, but then show me one that is. One drawback is that the Institutional TOEFL we use does not test our students' writing competency, and with our students this is generally considered their weakest skill, and perhaps the one we should be using for placement. With the introduction of the new iBT test, speaking, listening, reading, writing, and note-taking skills are all included, yet it raises the obstacle for many of our students in regard to their generally inadequate keyboarding/computer literacy skills. When you combine our students' relatively slow reading speeds, with generally inadequate keyboarding skills – this test will certainly prove more of a challenge.

The new edition of the TOEFL paper/pencil based test (projected implementation January 2007) will follow the general format of the iBT and emphasize communication/combining skills by including integrated tasks; i.e. students will listen/take notes, or read/take notes and then write – in response to what they have listened to or read. An independent writing task (essay) will also be included. The new edition of the paper/pencil based test, which de-emphasizes 'test-taking strategies/techniques' inherent in the current paper based test while emphasizing communicative skills, skills required in an English-medium university classroom, will, I think, provide a better, more reliable indicator of our students' language capabilities. In addition, special iBT tutorial sessions, for students in levels 3 and 4, are being proposed.

Teachers have expressed feeling pressured by the 20-hour/week teaching assignments, plus the additional committee and Performance Appraisal work.

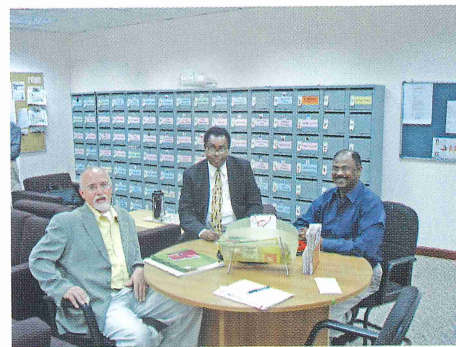
Yes, the pressure is there, but attempts are being made to address the issue. One of the Foundation Program's future objectives, as outlined in Dr. Khalid Al Ali's end-of-year report, is to decrease the faculty's teaching load in view of the additional administrative and committee project work. A short-term measure to be introduced in the Fall Semester 2006 will be to restrict department faculty to one primary work group or project – as opposed to this past year where many faculty members were serving on multiple committees and working on numerous projects.

The Performance Appraisal this past year did highlight some difficulties and problems which we aim to improve on this coming year. 2005/2006 was the first year that the English Department, under the direction of the QU Office of Faculty and Instructional Development undertook a formal

performance appraisal of all staff. It is through this performance appraisal process that we can more objectively determine if we (individual faculty members and the department as a whole) are meeting the goals and mission of the English Department and Qatar University. The performance appraisal process also assists in determining reward decisions, including merit increases, and diagnosing training and development needs. Information upon which scheduling plans, budgeting, and human resources planning can be based can also be provided through this process. All in all, performance appraisal is a necessary component of any organization – my job will be to somehow make the process a bit more user-friendly and manageable.

Can you suggest some effective ways for teachers to continue improving their teaching skills?

Consider networking with other professionals in the field; spending time with your department colleagues discussing methodology /classroom management issues; arranging classroom peer observations with your colleagues; attending professional development sessions when offered; attending local/regional/international conferences; joining or renewing memberships



in relevant professional organizations. Finally, an abundance of information is available online via English Language Teaching discussion forums and websites devoted to methodology, materials, and classroom management issues.

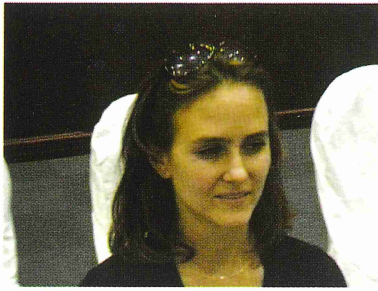
What is your opinion about the English Department newsletter (the three issues so far)? Do you have any suggestions for us?

I think all involved, particularly you Abdul Moniem, have done an excellent job - the editors, the faculty and students contributors, the proof-readers, the photographers, and everyone else associated with the production of the newsletter. I am sure that Mary Lanaghan has been significant help and advice to you during this past semester with all the newsletter tasks undertaken. I am also sure that all your readers look forward to many more interesting issues to come. Keep up the good work.

Thank you very much Bob. This has been really very interesting and informative.

STUDENT WRITING SECTION

{Prepared by Eileen Plumb}



We were very lucky this term to have had so many fine student contributions to choose from. Our students have truly shown their versatility and skill in this issue, with selections ranging from poetry to essays to PowerPoint slides. If you have a piece of

writing or another contribution that you would like to see included in the next Foundation English Department Newsletter, please contact your Foundation English instructor, or e-mail me at e.plumb@qu.edu.qa Enjoy!

The Nature's Enragement

Al-Khawaja - Level 4 - Claire Conroy

One sweltering late afternoon in the middle of August, I walked out to bring some foods from the supermarket for my uncle's family. When I was going back home, glancing toward the north, I saw a terrifying sight. A vast boiling cloud was mounting in the sky, black and sulfurous yellow at the heart, varying shades of ocher red at the edges. When I had arrived, I stood in front of the home's door, the air was utterly still, but the squirming cloud was approaching silently and with great speed. Suddenly I noticed that there were no people to be seen or twittering to be heard. All had taken shelter. When I called my aunty, she watched impotently. Always one for action, she turned fleetly, went indoors and began to close windows. Outside I took my car to the garage and took my uncle's implements that could blow away or smash a window if hurtled against one by the boiling wind. Within hours, my uncle arrived home. He and my cousin sat on the back step, not in their usual restful rumination, but silenced by dread.

At the last days, the dust storm usually blotting out the sun, launching banshee winds days and nights. Since the sand and grit lodge in one's eyes, and the visibility is often reduced to a few feet which can make one completely disorientated, it is dangerous to stray far from shelter. There is nothing we can do but stay inside, waiting for the calm after the storm. Outside, animals which become exhausted and lie down are often sanded over and smothered. Inside, which is not better than outside, it is stifling. Every window is closed against the dust, which oozes unrelentingly through the slightest crevice. Meals are gritty and sleep, elusive. Rising in the morning, one sees a perfect outline of one's body, an after-sensation of white where the dust had not collected on the sheets.

As the wind scorched our land, they took away the dry pasturage, piled it against the fence, and then slowly began to silt over the detritus. It was three days before we could venture out, days of almost unendurable tensity. Seeing the crashing of the boughs of trees against our roof and the sharp holler as a nearly empty tank nightmares I ran, so that when he could fall into a fitful slumber, it

would be to awake screaming.

When we egressed, there were several feet of sand accumulated against the shelterbelt to my aunt's house, and the contours of new sad hills were beginning to form in places where the dust purred and amassed. There was no question that there were many more patches where the remains of dry grass and herbage had lifted and blown away.

A few days after the storm had cooled down, the flowers were smiling and the sun shining. I walked out, listening to the chick 's chittering with the whishing of wind, the rustling of branches. And only several days before (the most wicked days of my life) the wind was agitated, terrifying, and the sky was gloomy, dejected, atrocious, terrible and alarming. It was such extraordinary storm that I've ne'er seen like that before. That was my last trip to the countryside.

Comparison between Qatar and U.A.E.

Aisha Mubarak Al-Katheri - Level 4 - Amy Gates

Plenty of people think that all Gulf countries are completely similar to each other, but this is absolutely wrong. Each Gulf country has its own aspects. By examining both physical and cultural aspects between Qatar and U.A.E, we can notice that although Qatar and U.A.E have some points in common, at the same time they are different from each other in others.

Like Qatar, U.A.E has the same religion, which is Islam. Also, both of them have the same traditions, particularly for special occasions (such as weddings), and food styles. In addition, both of them are located in same Gulf area, very near to each other. Also, the people have some habits in common (depending on their climate), such as falcon-hunting.

Although Qatar and U.A.E share similar attitudes, they differ from each other in many respects. That's right: both Qatar and U.A.E have the same language, which is Arabic, but their accent is a little bit different. There are many words which are pronounced differently in each country. Despite the fact that Qatar and U.A.E are in the same Gulf area, they have different natural scenery. There are many green areas and mountains in U.A.E, but there aren't in Qatar. Because of its big size, U.A.E is divided into seven areas. In contrast to U.A.E, Qatar is very small and has a small population.

Qatar and U.A.E look similar to people who don't know them, although they have several different points. According to my experience in Gulf countries, I think Qatar is very different from U.A.E in the respects that I mentioned above.

The 2006 Asian Games and their Effect on Doha

Ghada Ghallab Mahmoud- Level 4- Amy Gates

At the end of the year 2006, Doha will have a big event on its ground. The Asian Games for the year 2006 will take place in Doha, which will affect the country a lot in different ways. These effects will appear a lot in the

country, especially in the housing.

In the first place, the Asian Games will affect the housing and building in Doha in a positive way. At this time, the government is building a lot of buildings, hotels, houses, villas, flats and high-structure facilities. This improvement will have benefits on the country for the coming years. People can find new places to live in different parts in Qatar, and these houses will differ from one another in size and kind, which will give chances for families and people to choose the suitable one for them.

The improvement of the housing will also affect Doha in a negative way. Many of the buildings and facilities are built for the athletes and audience members who will come from different countries, not for the citizens. The high-structure buildings and housing will be for the audience and the athletes, and the citizens in the country will live in the old housing.

In conclusion, I think that the buildings currently under-construction can have positive and negative benefits in Doha, but the positive benefits will have rewards more than the negative, and Doha will be a very famous country in the world.

Life Imprisonment is Better

Fatima Hassen Al-Hammadi - Level 2 - Lyrma Ingels

In the world, there are many criminals. Some of these criminals go to jail, and the other criminals are killed. I think life imprisonment is better for criminals. In this paragraph I will write about some advantages and disadvantages of life imprisonment.

There are many advantages of life imprisonment. First, it makes life better for the person. They can learn many things in prison and they can even work. Second, it gives them a chance in life. Finally, the person may have been wrongly accused, and the jail is better.

On the other hand, there are many disadvantages of life imprisonment. First, maybe a criminal wants to kill himself because he will stay in jail for the rest of his life and he thinks death is better. Second, many criminals are dangerous, so death for them is better. Finally, life imprisonment is difficult for some people, for example, if they are ill and not able to work in jail.

In conclusion, there are good and bad things about living and staying in jail one's whole life.

Cosmetic Surgery

Somaeya Al-Rayes - Level 2 - Lyrma Ingels

Everyone in life likes to be perfect in everything, especially how to look more beautiful. So, a lot of people start to be obsessed with beauty. They are now having cosmetic surgery. In this essay, I am going to talk about the advantages and disadvantages of cosmetic surgery.

First, it has a lot of advantages. It is helpful to people who have had accidents, such as those who are burned because of fire. It is also useful to improve the appearance of persons (especially children) with physical problems. For beauty reasons, it is good to remove wrinkles and look younger.

With its disadvantages, it has many negatives or minuses. For example, with failed surgery, maybe the person may

look ugly and others may die during the operation. Another thing is that they will cut your skin or tuck them some where; this will make you feel uncomfortable. In Islam, this is forbidden. We must accept what is given to us. Also, it is very expensive. You have to pay a lot of money. This money may be used for something you need, or that is more important.

At the end, I want to say that cosmetic surgery is a good thing but we have to use it wisely, and not just to change our body to be stylish.

Tree-Planting in Doha

Hannadi Belahin Al-Qahtani - Level 2 - Lyrma Ingels

Trees are important in our lives, for people and animals. They give us life. I strongly agree that tree-planting in Doha is useful for three reasons. The first reason is that we must learn the importance of planting trees. By planting trees, we make Doha nice and beautiful. All people need to plant in many areas such as schools, hospitals, and on the streets. Another reason is that trees are important for us humans to breathe clean air, because trees give us oxygen. This helps clean polluted and dirty air. In addition, trees are also important for animals such as horses, camels, and birds. Trees are food for these animals, while birds make them as their homes.

In conclusion, trees are very important for the world. We cannot live without trees because they give flavor to our lives.

My Heartbreak

Wadha Al-Marri- Level 4 - Eileen Plumb

There has been one tragic event in my life that continues to cause me sadness. It all started when my grandfather, the person I most enjoyed talking to and joking with, died. He was old, and his heart was sick.

He passed away on the 12th of September, 2004, in Hamad Hospital. He had been there for more than a year due to his illness. He was my maternal grandfather.

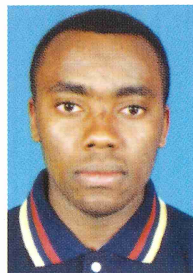
The sadness I feel when I think that I'm not going to see his smiley face anymore is very strong. I lost one of the most important people in my life when he passed away. He always had faith in all his grandchildren, and in the fact that our futures would be successful. I still feel heartbroken when I visit my grandmother and enter his (my grandfather's) house every week.

He was a short man, quite bald, with a white beard and only one eye. When I was a child I used to put my hand on his head and tell him that I had hair, but he didn't. I used to see him every Thursday when I visited, sitting on his chair watching TV. Now, I don't see him at all, and that's a big change for me.

Sometimes people think that when someone dies, that's the end. I know this isn't true because my grandfather is so often in my thoughts, and I will always remember all the happy times I spent with him.

The Movie "Black"

Mohamed Idjabou - Level 3 - Saras Subbaraman



My name is Mohamed Idjabou and I study in level 3 group: 14. My subject of this article is about the movie 'Black' which my teacher showed on one Sunday morning. Many people in the World face obstacles in their lives like the main character in the movie, Michelle McNally, who was deaf, blind and dumb. This movie inspired me in a very special way where I learnt that we should overcome our fear of failure by facing it rather than running away. On 12 - 3 - 06 I saw this movie "Black" with my classmates. It was enjoyable seeing this movie, because it was based on Helene Keller's life who overcomes her disability to be a success in life. The most interesting part in the movie was when Michelle McNally who is deaf, blind and dumb gave a speech in front of many students on her Graduation Day upon getting a university degree. Her mother translated her sign language on her behalf to the audience. Her story and her struggle inspired me to overcome my learning difficulties in English with determination. This movie was shown in connection with unit 2 "Dreams Never Die" of our North Star Reading Book. I believe that everyone can overcome his or her obstacles in life. Thanks, Mrs. Saras!

My Reflections on 'Black'

Saad Sherif - Level 3 - Saras Subbaraman



The movie "Black", which was based on Helen Keller's life, helped us to understand the unit which we studied in NorthStar better. I will never forget what we learnt from the movie about the difficulties of a deaf, dumb and a blind person, Michelle McNally, and I am better able to relate and remember every thing in this unit in our text book and I feel I will never forget it all my life. This was the important point and

the second point that the movie made me realize is that if a handicapped person like Michelle McNally could overcome her difficulties and get a graduate degree after sheer perseverance then I can face my challenge with my obstacles too, and learn how to defeat it. So, movies can also teach us, if not better than books. Lastly, the movie taught me how I must respect my teacher when I watched Michelle McNally trying to help her teacher, Mr Sahay, who was suffering from Alzheimer's to remember, I was very moved. This was the kind of respect, love and understanding between a student - teacher relationship. I thank my teacher Ms Saras for showing us this movie "Black".

POEMS

WHY

Lulua Mohammed Al-Naimi
Post-Foundation

Many questions in my mind begin with why...

So, get ready to hear me, answer me, and don't be shy...

Why did you change? Tell me and don't lie...

Be blunt! I promise you, I won't die...

But, once our love story ends and you're gone...

My life doesn't mean any thing, and you're left to be alone...

GOSSIP

Lulua Mohammed Al-Naimi
Post-Foundation

I am sick and tired of what people think!

When will they stop their talk, it simply stinks...

I guess, there is no way for me to leak this link...

But, to just tell them that talk breaks my heart, shut up for goodness' sake

A Thread of Light

By Ghada Post-Foundation

Instructor: Ms. Sophia Bukhari

Silence..	When...
All around you	The last breath has left you
Death...	What....
Just ahead	Lies ahead?
Cold....	Choice...
Looks are stabbing	By your making
Stone....	Hope....
Hearts are dead	But not dread.

Environmental Field Trip

By Noura Jaber

On Wednesday, May 24, 2006, we made a field trip visit with our class to the Friends of the Environment Centre (FEC), where Professor Ramzy Kotb, Environmental Studies Consultant, met us warmly with his employees. All of them are keen to draw the attention of young people toward making the best of their energy and giving a hand in this field.



The Friends of the Environment Centre was established in Doha in 1992 as a nonprofit and governmental organization concerned with environmental issues. The FEC seeks to spread environmental awareness and to encourage Qatari society—particularly the children and youth—to participate as volunteers to protect our environment.

Professor Kotb told us about the recycling project being carried out in Qatari governmental and nongovernmental schools, where students sort out the recyclable materials from garbage, so they can be transported to the factory for processing and recycled into useful products. The success of these recycling projects has led to a growing recycling industry in Qatar and at this time, plastic can be recycled inside the country. Paper, cans and bottles must still be sent to UAE for recycling.

In addition to the recycling project, Dr. Kotb spoke to us about the serious phenomena of wandering wild animals in the streets of Qatar, which results in bad effects on public health and environmental safety. To address this issue, the FEC aims to sketch out a plan with the cooperation of Doha municipality and the International Animal protection organization to control the increasing risks of these animals without harming them.

Next, we were pleased to learn that Qatar has its own insect species! At least one new type has been discovered

in Qatar, such as the insect which was discovered in the Massaied area and named "Ohm Saiedness." A Qatari insects atlas will soon be issued and we look forward to seeing that.

Finally, we went outside and the professor showed us a special place called "The Green Tent," where social, cultural, scientific and environmental symposia are held. The tent is a large Bedouin tent, decorated in the traditional style with beautiful Arabic furnishings on the floors and walls.

The implementation of projects at the Friends of the Environment Centre is supported by private sector financing, such as Ras Lafan and the banks, and also by the donations and volunteering of many good people.



I hope that everyone who reads this article will visit the FEC in person and volunteer, or at least visit the website (www.myqatar.org), and start making connections

between our daily lives and the environment that surrounds us. Sometimes I forget that my actions affect the health of the environment and that a healthy environment is also healthy for myself and my family. When we hurt the environment, we are hurting ourselves as well.

Dr. Kotb repeated this sentence to us: "Qatar society is the society of safety, security, peace, beauty and goodness." It was indeed a wonderful visit and we thank the FEC as well as teachers Mr. Mohammed Bakri and Ms. Mary Lanaghan who arranged this wonderful and useful visit.

The Philanthropist

Submitted by Mohammed Basher Al-Qassas - Level 2

Teacher: Mrs. Elisabeth Szweczyk

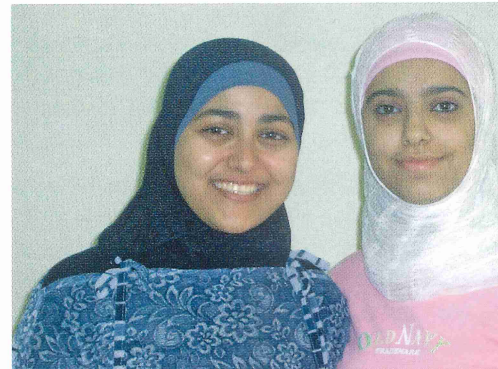
A long time ago there was an old woman named Leila who lived in a small seaside town called Wakra in a land called Qatar. She lived in there with her devoted son, Omar. Leila was a very kindly and sweet woman and all the neighbours loved her. One day, as she was sitting in the garden listening to the song of the birds, she said to her son, "Why don't we feed all the lovely birds who come to us every morning?" Omar replied, "As you wish, my mother." So Omar ran off to buy some bread from the bakery to feed the birds. His mother crumbled the bread and began to feed the birds every day.

This custom went on for many years. Feeding the birds and hearing their song made Leila very happy. One day the old woman became sick. Her son Omar was very worried. He decided to take her to an old Sheikh, a wise man, for treatment. The treatment, however did not work and Leila just got worse. Omar, who loved his mother, took good and gentle care of her. Years passed, the old woman became even more ill than before. Nevertheless, she continued to feed the birds. Omar fretted about his mother. Leila said to him, "Don't worry my son, this is life and we must accept it." Omar cried out with despair but agreed it was God's will. Soon after this, old Leila died. Filled with sadness, Omar took her to the cemetery to bury her. Just after Leila had been buried, huge numbers of beautiful birds flew by and settled on her grave. They sang a sweet song of mourning for the kind old lady who used to feed them every day. Seeing this, Omar was at

Attending the Doha Debates –

Manal Al-Taweel and Nagham Tayseer Issa - Level 4

Teacher: Ms. Eileen Plumb



Part I

The Doha Debates are a monthly series of debates on the burning issues in the Arab and Islamic worlds. The debates are shown on the BBC World channel, and chaired by internationally renowned journalist Tim Sebastian. They are held in the Qatar Foundation Headquarters in Education City. The subject of the last debate, which was on the 25th of April 2006, was: "This house believes it is time for Arab League to be disbanded". There were four speakers: two speaking for the motion, and two against it.

The speakers for the motion were: Dr. Shafeeq Gabra (a professor of political science and the founding president of the American University in Kuwait), and Chibli Mallat (a Lebanese presidential candidate, academic, and lawyer). In their opinion, the Arab League hasn't achieved any goal of its presence. They think that the Arab League should have a greater effect on the Arab World, particularly in stopping wars and dissension in those countries. The speakers against the motion were Hesham Youssef (the Chief of the Cabinet for Mr. Amr Moussa, Secretary General of the Arab League) and Dr. Azmi Bishara (an Israeli-Arab politician and elected member of Israel's Parliament). They were against disbanding the Arab League because now, more than ever, we are in need of having an Arab organization to solve our problems. If it disbands, under whose responsibility will the Arab people be?

At the end of the debate, the audience voted for or against the motion. The result: 60% of the audience voted for disbanding the Arab League, and 30% voted against doing so. It was a great opportunity to participate in a famous program like this. I appreciate the university for giving my friend Nagham Essa and I that chance, and of course all thanks are for Ms. Eileen Plumb, my English teacher, for encouraging us to participate.

Attending the Doha Debates – Part II

On the 30th of April, my friend and I attended a special event organized by the producers of The Doha Debates, featuring a very a special guest: Her Highness Sheikha Moza bent Naser Al-Mesned. Students and teachers from the area were invited to participate and discuss the issue of Qatar and its development.

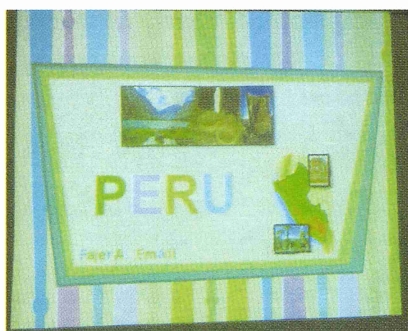
Many questions were directed to Her Highness about Islam and the West, in terms of how the development in Qatar is affecting our culture. Another popular topic for questions involved women in the Qatari Islamic society, and how can they develop and succeed. Also discussed was the situation of ex-pat workers, and how are they having kind of bad conditions. Her Highness announced that there is a large amount of money being spent to give them the facilities they need to create a united charming society. In addition, students got a wonderful opportunity to express their opinions and ask about QU and the future plans for developing its curriculum.

Finally, it was a great chance for the students to meet Her Highness, express their opinions, and tell their ideas. Also, it was great for us to participate in a wonderful well-known program like The Doha Debates.

Student PowerPoint Presentations

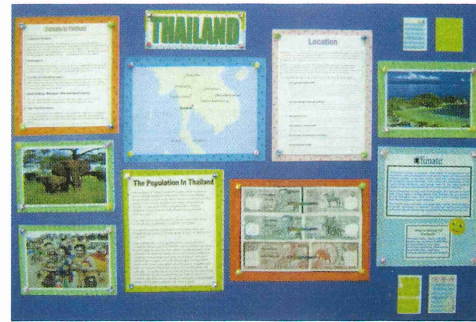
Tasneem Kureishy - Level 2 - Instructor

Spring 06 ended for the students of L2 W-34 on an exciting note. They prepared and gave a variety of Oral Presentations and the afternoon of 30th of May in room 235 (Women's Building) flew by in a maze for all of us. The 21 students, gave presentations on a variety of topics such as "Cosmetic Surgery", "Crime and Punishment", "Laws of Business Advertising", "Status of Men and Women in our



Society Today", "Motorbike Racing", "Global Warming", "Story of Chocolate", "Marriages in Palestine", "Fashion today", "In search of Beauty", "How to get ready for the Final Exams", "France", "Hawaii", "Qatar-then and now", "Weddings in Qatar", "Qatar Before and After the Discovery of Oil" and so on. The girls had about 2-3 weeks to collect information necessary for their presentations, and to prepare for them.

There was variety in their topics, loads of information, and

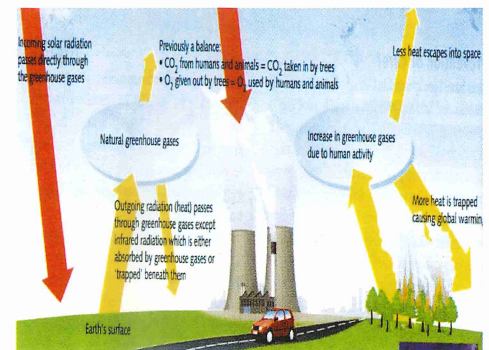


a deep understanding of the subjects they chose to speak about. It was vastly evident that they had gone

to enormous lengths to collect information and pictures for their projects. Special mention is to be made of Sawson Omar Ibrahim, who traced the use of Capital Punishment over the ages, its different forms, the criminals executed, the kinds of crimes, with reference to true stories and dates. It was a very interesting presentation indeed. All the students introduced themselves with confidence, presented their topics with the use of Signpost language as

Evaluation of the different viewpoints held about global warming by MEDCs and LEDCs

instructed, referred to maps and other information that they projected on the screen with the help



of the OHP, thus capturing the attention of the audience. They made a brilliant use of PowerPoint to enhance their presentations. Unfortunately, no pictures were taken of the event.

However, the students of W- 46 had also given presentations in groups of 3 or 4 students, on the 14th of May, and a few pictures were taken on that occasion. These students also gave interesting presentations on places of tourist interest such as Costa Rica, Thailand, Peru, The Arctic and the Amazon forests.



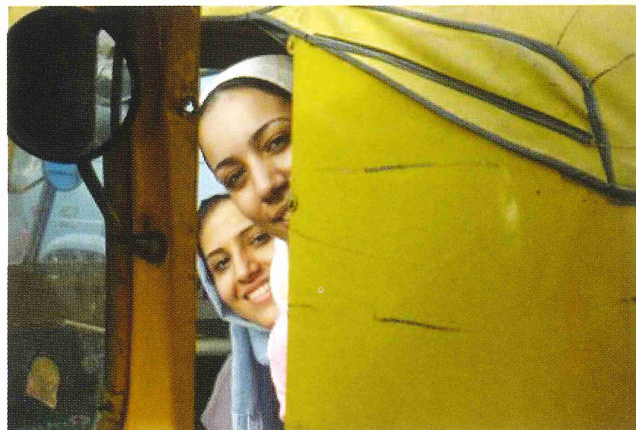
STUDENT ACTIVITY SECTION

Prepared by Mary Lanaghan

Congratulations!!!

To Lobna Hamdan and Zainab Watan

For their leadership and participation in the groundbreaking
Qatar University Service Learning Trip to Madras, India, June 2006
We are proud of you!!!
from your friends in the Foundation Program



Gulf Times

Daily Newspaper published by
Gulf Publishing & Printing Co.
Doha, Qatar

Gulf Times

Student-team to help educate Indian orphans

Published: Friday, 16 June, 2006, 10:43 AM Doha Time

Staff Reporter



The students with the team leader, and two of their faculty members who saw them off, at the Doha International Airport on Wednesday night.

A TEAM of undergraduate students from Qatar University (QU) left on Wednesday night for a six-day India trip. The team will assist non-governmental organisations in educating street children and tsunami orphans.

The all-girls group of Reem al-Kubaisi, Maha Ali Nial, Lobna Mohamed Hemdan, and Zainab Watan, led by QU English instructor, Mohanalakshmi Rajakumar, will visit Delhi and Chennai during the trip, the first of its kind sponsored by QU.

The students did not know each other before they were selected for the trip. However, their common interest in service learning at the first group meeting had them collaborating on teaching strategies and clothing drives.

The team will start in Delhi, working with Children's Hope India and two centres geared towards helping 525 street children. The beneficiaries are to receive English instruction, computers, clothing and school supplies from the QU team.

In Chennai, the QU students will work with children orphaned by the 2005 tsunami to establish a computer centre and offer computer literacy courses.

"The motivation of the four girls in applying for the trip is contrary to the globally disinterested and unaware profile normally ascribed to college students," a QU spokesperson said yesterday.

Zainab Watan's comments reveal her ability to connect her own experiences with children she has never met. "Since I'm an Iraqi citizen, I'm familiar with the words pain and suffering," she said while describing the trip as a life changing experience.

"This is a phenomenal opportunity for these students to see some of the world around them while also understanding how local organisations can make an impact on the needs of people," explained the QU official.

Qatari student Reem al-Kubaisi said she got interested because it signifies the greatest meaning of humanity, which is support and love.

"I was encouraged to enroll in the trip because of my belief that helping others is a part of our duty and it is not something we can choose not to do," she added.

The NEW ART COMPETITIONS

By Allyson Young



The Art Competitions were initiated in order to promote the Student Learning Centre clubs. The plan is for each competition to be based on a theme of one of the clubs.

Our first art competition drew its theme from the Drama Club. We asked students to design an image that illustrates a line from a William Shakespeare play. The Shakespearean lines were:

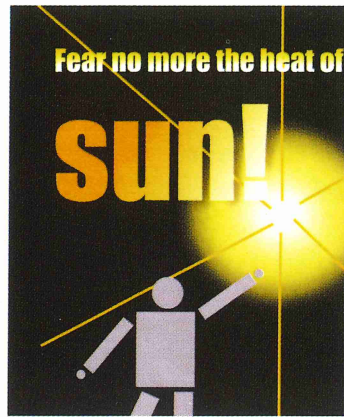
- * **When she weeps, weeps every little flower.** (*From "Midsummer Night Dream"*)
- * **Feed him apricots, with purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries.**
(*From "Midsummer Night Dream"*)
- * **It is good to be sad and say nothing."** (*From "As you like it"*)
- * **Fear no more the heat of the sun!**
(*From "Cymbeline"*)
- * **What? Is the fellow mad?**
(*From "Julius Caesar"*)
- * **Sleeping in my orchard a serpent stung me.** (*From "Hamlet"*)
- * **Why did you leave me here alone?**
(*From "Henry 1V"*)

There were 20 entries from the womens' campus, displaying a variety of artistic media: painting; drawing and images created digitally with Photoshop. The standard of the entries was very high. Dr Mohammed Ali, who teaches in the Art Education Department at Qatar University, was our judge, and had the difficult task of choosing the winners.

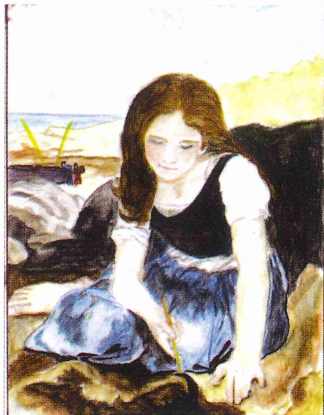


Our winners were:

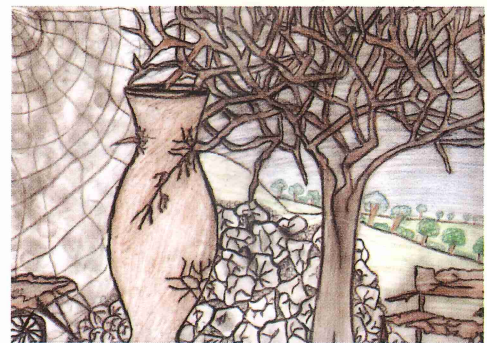
- * **first place: a painting by Laila Ali illustrating "It is good to be sad and say nothing."**



* second place: a digital Photoshop image by Manam Mohammed illustrating "Fear no more the heat of the sun."



There were two joint third places. These were awarded to * a painting by Afsaneh Abdulla illustrating "Why did you leave me here alone?"

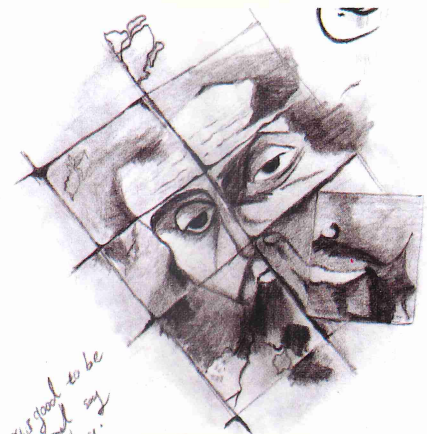


* a drawing by Antesar Mohammed illustrating "Why did you leave me here alone?"

"It's good to be sad and say nothing.



By Antesar Mohammed



By Fatima Abdulla
Rooshenass



**"When she weeps, weeps
every little flower"**

It is interesting to note that certain Shakespearean lines proved more inspirational than others. The most popular line was "It's good to be sad and say nothing". On the other hand, we had no entries for "What? Is the fellow mad?" nor for "Sleeping in my orchard, a serpent stung me."

Majlis- Extra –curricular Activity Committee

by Jay Trimiar



Last semester - I shared a common vision along with Dr. Madani Othman to form English language clubs. Soon after presenting the Majlis proposal, the Majlis Clubs were soon implemented on both the QU Men's and Women's Foundation campuses.

The purpose of these English Language Clubs (now known as The Majlis) is to encourage QU English Foundation students to not only use their academic gifts, but also for

them to use other creative talents and expressions in fun and innovative ways!

It is our desire that each "Majlis" activity focuses on enriching students' critical thinking skills, communicative abilities and capacity for autonomous learning. We also want to encourage students to have an opportunity to build knowledge of world events and intellectual thinking. As a result, we hope that QU English Foundation students will be better able to apply real world issues and problems to the skills that they learn in the classroom. Thus, English Foundation students will broaden their horizons of world events and be pro active communicators, members and leaders in both their local and international communities.

The Majlis currently offers eight clubs all QU Foundation English Language students!

The Book Club

The Debates Club

The Drama Club

Game Show Competitions

The Movie Club

The Music Club

The Poetry Club

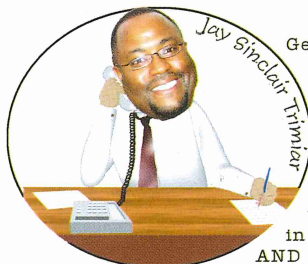
The Public Speaking Club

The clubs are currently being led by QU English Foundation teachers in collaboration with enthusiastic QU English Foundation students. Next semester, we hope that these clubs will become an important part of the QU Foundation students' lives as they complete their first step into their academic careers as life long learners.

the majlis
the majlis
the majlis



The Student Learning Centre invites Foundation English students to join our clubs and participate in extra activities. The times and locations of these clubs and events are displayed in the Student Learning Centre and in the English Foundation Building. Come along! You will have fun, make friends and practise your English in a relaxed atmosphere.

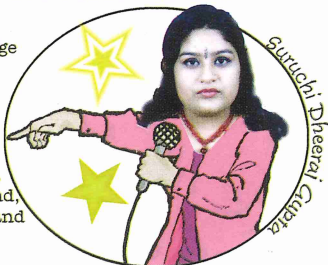


events

Get ready for our big Majlis party that will take place at the end of this semester. At the party our club members are going to present different activities. Students from the poetry club will recite their poetry to us; students in the drama club will act AND PLENTY MORE!!!

game shows

Do you like general knowledge competitions? If so, come to our Open Mike and Game Show Forums. These will be held regularly. We will ask you quiz questions on all types of things: arts, movies, language, culture, history and current affairs. It's exciting and lots and lots of fun.



the music club

Listening to and singing English songs is a great way to learn the language. It is enjoyable and requires little effort. You tell us what type of music you like. We are soon going to sing along using Karaoke music. Perhaps you are asking, "What's this?" Well, come to our club and find out.



the poetry club

Do you love poetry? Do you write your own poems? If the answer is 'yes' then come to our poetry club meetings. Bring your poetry with you and read it aloud to us. And what about your favourite poets? Who are they? And what are some of their poems? Bring them along.



the debate club

Come to The Debate Club and discuss your ideas and opinions in a relaxed atmosphere. Possible future topics will be:

What are the problems of polygamous marriages? Should Qatar University be co-educational? And other interesting topics!!!



the drama club

Acting is a great way to improve your speaking skills. Acting also makes you feel more confident when dealing with others. And it's fun. We will practise speaking loudly and speaking clearly. We will also practise breathing well. At the drama club we will look at short stories, poems, and newspaper articles that we can act out.



FILM FORUM OFF AND RUNNING

By Mary Lanaghan, Ben Crace and Maiss Ghanim



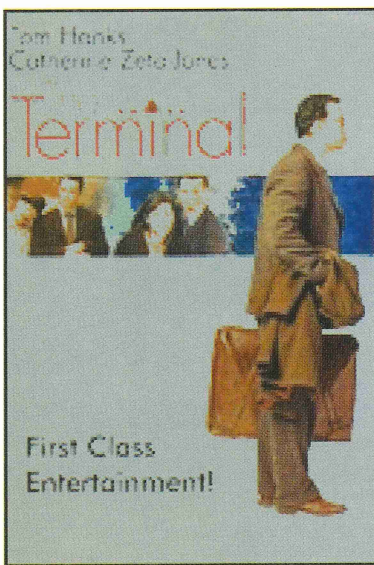
I think we've all arrived at a very special place. Spiritually, ecumenically, grammatically.

– Johnny Depp as Captain Jack Sparrow in Pirates of the Caribbean



A Grand Opening

The Film Forum got off to a running start this semester with the Women's Campus Grand Opening Party in February, during which we spoke to a lot of students about the kinds of films they like. We learned that, while QU women are very diverse, many of them say they especially like comedies (83%), scary movies (70%), and children's movies (76%). The least favorite kind of film was martial arts (43%).



Learning with Movies

Many of us love movies anyway. As we enjoy, we experience natural language used in realistic situations. They capture our attention more than reading a book or listening to a cassette, and, as our language improves, our enjoyment increases! Even films that are not directly connected to our curriculum reinforce what teachers do in class because they present us with the words and structures of English, recycled and presented in an appealing way.

Choosing the Movies

One thing that a lot of people don't realize about the Film Forum is that for every movie we show, we actually screen several others! It takes time, but is a "labor of love," and well worth it! We choose carefully, applying consistent criteria. For example, we especially like movies that...

- haven't seen before.
- appeal to our QU audience
- have cultural or educational value: talented actors, artistic direction, important message, etc.
- use clear English.



Gender Differences?

Well, unsurprisingly, the women's campus chose a little differently than the men. Both campuses, however, watched Pirates of the Caribbean, which amazed us with its fast action and bold characters. (They are pirates, but somehow we like them...) The scary favorite The Sixth Sense inspired lively discussion and interpretation among the women students, and the men are considering it as well.



Ladies' Favorites

America is Closed

The Terminal, directed by Steven Spielberg, is a hilarious story about a kind-hearted traveler who speaks very little English, tries to go to New York City and is never allowed out of the airport.

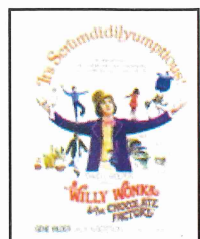


Hollywood goes to Bollywood

The overall favorite for the women was the colorful Indian movie Bride and Prejudice. The themes of culture clash and gender wars were played out by appealing and sometimes quirky characters – in song and dance! What more could we want from a film? And of course, the story itself is based on Pride and Prejudice, the 19th century English novel by Jane Austen.

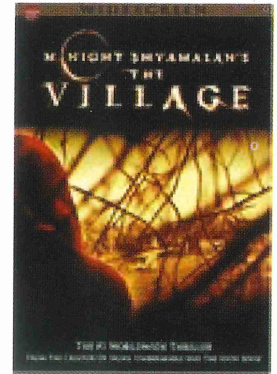
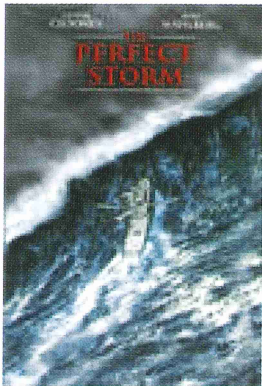
Pure Imagination

Also enjoyed by the women was the vintage classic Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (teacher's choice), starring the legendary actor Gene Wilder. This original version is widely considered better than the 2005 remake with Johnny Depp.



Men's Club

The Movie Club has shown three different movies in the new SLC on the Men's campus. First, we showed **The Perfect Storm**. Most of the attendees had seen this movie before, but it was still a wonderful opportunity for them to practice their English skills. The second movie we showed was **The Pirates of the Caribbean**, which gave attendees another unique opportunity to practice their understanding of different accents and older vocabulary forms. Finally, we screened **The Village**, which had a powerful impact on those present. All of these films reinforce the already tried and tested teaching by film methodology. We hope further participation will increase.

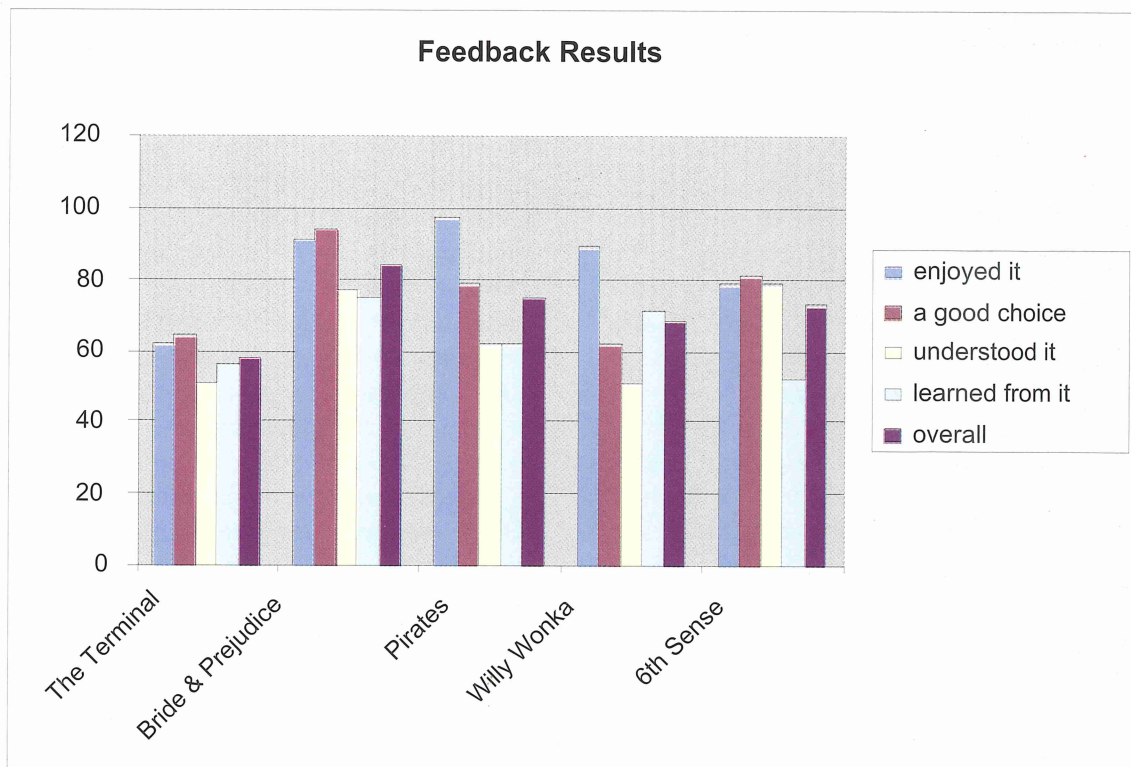


Getting Feedback

After we showed each movie, we asked the students if they understood the language in the film, if they liked it, if they thought it was a good choice, etc. The results from the feedback surveys were interesting and sometimes curious. For example, in terms of enjoyment, Pirates of the Caribbean ranked the highest, but when we asked "did you think this a good choice", then most people chose either Bride and Prejudice or Sixth Sense. Students thought Sixth Sense was a good choice even though fewer of them enjoyed it.

Long-Range View

We hope to continue bringing quality films to the Foundation Department, because films are powerful tools for increasing our enjoyment and understanding of the languages and cultures of our world.



**Mary Lanaghan and Ben Crace are English Foundation English Language Instructors
Maiss Ghanim is a Foundation English Student and Film Forum student coordinator.**

From The Foundation Program Office Foundation English Program Enters Accreditation Process

By Linda Wettlaufer

Accreditation Project Coordinator

The Foundation English Program began the process of seeking accreditation by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) in February 2006 with the appointment of an Accreditation Project Coordinator and six Steering Committee members. The Steering Committee's first task was to prepare substantial documentation of the Foundation English Program's curriculum, faculty, facilities,

administrative structure and student services in order to demonstrate to CEA that the program qualified for review based on the CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions. On March 27, 2006, CEA invited the Foundation English Program to continue the process of pursuing accreditation by their organization. In a letter to Dr. Khalid Al Ali, Foundation Program Director, Teresa O'Donnell, CEA Executive Director, praised the Steering Committee's eligibility package as a "model presentation of preliminary information" and announced that "the materials were sufficient to determine that the program can be reviewed by CEA, and thus, a preliminary visit (an option within our procedures) is not necessary."

Stages in CEA's accreditation process include the eligibility review, the self-study, the site visit, and the accreditation review by the Commission. The self-study is the means by which a program evaluates its own performance in providing quality English language instruction to its students in relation to each of CEA's 52 Standards, which are divided into ten major areas such as "curriculum," "faculty," "student achievement," "facilities," and so on. It is intended to be a discovery process in which a program finds its strengths and weaknesses and to result in on-going improvement in the various standards areas. Multiple levels of input are required from administrators, faculty, and students. Steering Committee members will be responsible for drafting reports of the process undertaken and the record of the findings and conclusions resulting from the process. Changes may be implemented during the self-study process, not just at the end, as a result of the program's recognition of the need or opportunity for improvement.

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According to the agenda set by CEA, the Accreditation Project's next official step will be participation by the Steering Committee in a customized CEA Accreditation Workshop at Qatar University in the early fall, during which they will receive instruction on how to plan, conduct and report on the Foundation English Program's self-study. Following the workshop, Steering Committee members will be given 90 days to develop and submit a comprehensive self-study plan to CEA.

After approval of the self-study plan by CEA, the Foundation Program's self-study is expected to be launched in January 2007. Faculty members will be offered opportunities to work on self-study activities in which they have particular interests. CEA's timeline allows 18 months for the self-study stage, with a possible one-time-only 6-month extension. Following submission of the program's self-study report to CEA, a team of reviewers will conduct a site visit to verify its contents. Finally, their report will be reviewed by thirteen CEA commissioners, who will make the final accreditation decision. Having originated with a TESOL-sponsored Accreditation Task Force comprised of members of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.), AAIEP (American Association of Intensive English Programs), NAFSA (National Association of Foreign Student Affairs), and UCIEP (University and College Intensive English Programs), CEA's standards are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and internationally by English as a Second/Foreign Language professionals as representing the best practices of the field. CEA-accredited programs enjoy world-wide professional and public recognition that their educational offerings and administrative practices have undergone intensive review against benchmarks set by the profession and have been judged to be among the best. The complete list of CEA Standards and a current list of CEA-accredited programs and institutions can be found at <http://www.cea-accredit.org/>.

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ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWS & EVENTS

Prepared by Aladdin Halwani



OU Writing Community Activity

In its pilot semester, the QU Writing Community was able to recruit 25 lecturers to volunteer some of their office hours to serve our students in 30 minute private sessions. Our students were able to access these lecturers through the writing community website: <http://inet.qu.edu.qa.quwriting/>.

Launching this website in April was a major undertaking. Through this website, not only will students gain access to more instructors, but they also gain access to on-line resources, and E-learning activities. These activities include some that are geared towards every phase of the writing process as well as learning skills and critical thinking



activities ranging from "phases in problem solving" to "learning skills self-test". Ultimately the community and the website serve the students as a venue to improve their writing skills before the final exam, and bring

the students beyond mere communicative writing to more expressive writing while also providing support to teachers and encouraging them to relinquish some of their power in the classroom in the name of learner independence.

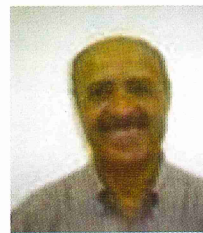
TESOL Arabia

As part of its professional development plan, the Foundation Program delegated as many as 20 English Department faculty to attend the TESOL Arabia Conference 2006. The conference which lasted three days – March 29-31 – was entitled 'The Power of Language'. Among the speakers was our colleague Dr. Kourosh Lachini from the English

Department, Foundation Program. His presentation was entitled 'Meta-linguistic Functions & EFLers'

Qatar TESOL First International Conference

A number of teachers from the English Department in the Foundation Program attended the Qatar



TESOL First International Conference, www.qatartesol.org which was held in Texas A & M University. The conference lasted two days and focused on 'Best Practices in EFL'. Our colleagues

were keen to enrich the conference by actively participating in it. Dr. AbdelHalim Abu Jalalah was the University of Qatar representative to the conference, and Dr. Kourosh Lachini was among the speakers. His presentation was entitled 'Measuring Critical Analytical Thinking through Reading'.

TOEFL iBT Practices

In its endeavor to become an accredited TOEFL iBT Centre, the Foundation Program invited Deborah Philips, author of the 'Longman Preparation Course for the TOEFL' to give a presentation on TOEFL iBT Practices. The presentation was given in Ibn Khaldoon Hall on May 2nd, 2006 and attended by almost all the English Department faculty members.

An introduction of TOEFL iBT

Through Digital Video Conferencing, and in collaboration with the US Embassy, the English Department of the Foundation Program hosted Bruce Rogers from Colorado, USA on May 11th, 2006. He gave a presentation on 'An Introduction to TOEFL iBT'. The presentation was attended by a great number of students and academic members of staff of the English Department.

Professional Development

As part of an on-going professional development activity, the English Department of the Foundation Program organized a series of in-house

presentations, seminars and workshops for instructors. A Testing Forum was held and a number of workshops were given on matters of testing. The speakers were Dr. AbdelHalim Abo Jalalah, Mrs. Elizabeth Crittenden, Mr. Ahmed F.Selim, Dr. Kourosh Lanchini, Mr. Roger Barlow, and Mr.Kambiz Ghadam Kheir.



Many other workshops were conducted on various issues, such as 'PowerPoint for ELT' by Mr. Aladdin Halwani, 'Material Evaluation Feedback', By Dr. Muawia Abdulmajid, 'How to evaluate students' portfolios' by Mr. Ahmed Selim, a workshops on 'Excel' by Mr. Mohammed Al-Bashir, and 'How to prepare students for a workshop' by Mr. Ahmed Selim.



Dr Kourosh Lachini from the English Department, Foundation Program was a guest speaker in the Asian EFL Journal

International Conference held in Pusan, Korea, 28-29 April. His presentation focused on "Metadiscourse Markers and Writing Skills".

Dr Mohammed Fawzi has been nominated as a member of the Qatar University CCC (Core Curriculum Committee). The aim of this committee is to set new objectives and learning outcomes for the University requirement courses. The committee will supervise and evaluate the implementation of the new university requirement courses.



Dr. Mohammad Fawzi, supervisor of the University post-foundation courses, gave a presentation on Wednesday, June 7th on 'the Modified Version of Oral Communication Course.' The audience consisted of members of the Core Curriculum Committee.

The English Department has started two training courses in English for the students of the Primary Education Graduate Diploma Program. A number of teachers are involved in teaching these courses: Dr. Muawia, Dr. AbdelHalim, Ms Rula, Ms Berta, and Aladdin. The two courses are supervised by Dr. M. Fawzi.

A flurry of activities was going on in the English Department immediately after the final examinations.



Dr Yassir Semmar gave a presentation on Sunday 11 June, on 'Motivation,' the conclusions of which had interesting implications and pointed to other related areas of research.

Dr. Ahmed Abdallah also gave a workshop on Monday 12 June on 'Relating ELT Classroom Activities to the Real World'. The workshop included practical applications of real-life situations in the classroom.



As part of the in-house training activities a new training course on 'Blackboard' started on June 11th. Blackboard is a web-based course-management system designed to allow students and faculty to participate in classes delivered online. Mr. Joseph Harrison, a lecturer in the English department as well as a certified Blackboard instructor, are supervising the course.



Mr. Robert Kennedy has been appointed Head of the English Department in the Foundation Program. Mr. Kennedy's promotion will open up a vacancy in his current position as Administrator Coordinator.

The Foundation Program

The Foundation Program has taken the lead at Qatar University in posting the students' final grades on the net. The students can now check their final results from the comfort of their homes.

The Majlis

In its ever-increasing, on-going activities, the English Department has created the Majlis as part of the Student Learning Centre and encouraged students to join the various language clubs: the Public Speaking Club, the Book Club, the Movie Club, the Poetry Club, the Debate Club, the Game Shows Club, the Drama Club and the Music Club. The Foundation Program has turned into a bee-hive of activities, thanks to Wafaa Ammar, Head of the Professional Development Committee and its committed and dedicated members: Mary Lanaghan, Eileen Plumb, Sophia Bukhari, Jay Sinclair, Hala Hadba, Elizabeth Szewczyk, Leslie Butler, Nawar Hago, Abdul Moniem, Bani Sharma and many others.

Other Information



- A farewell party was held on Thursday, June 15th in appreciation of the members of

the academic staff leaving the English Department. Gifts were given out to the leaving academic staff as tokens of gratitude for their great efforts.

- An end-of-year gathering was held in Ibn Khaldoon Hall on June 22nd in appreciation of the academic staff leaving the Foundation Program. The party was attended by Dr. Khalid Al Ali, Head of the Foundation Program and Dr. Madani, the departing Head of the English Department.

Gifts were given out to the leaving academic staff as tokens of gratitude for their great efforts.



Goodbye Madani Welcome Kennedy

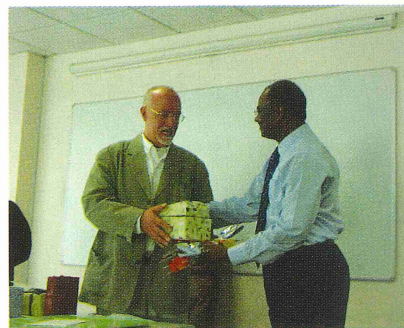
(By the Chief Editor)

Dr Madani Othman, the Head of the English Department,



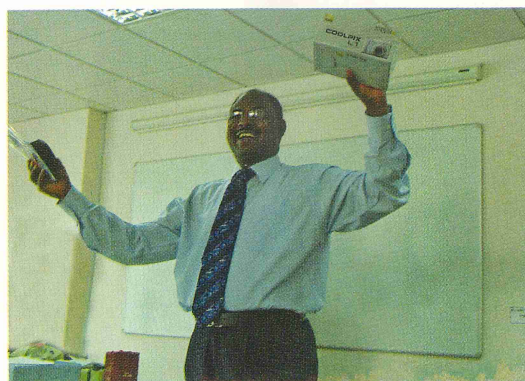
resigned his position towards the end of the Spring Semester, 2006. Dr Madani came over to the English Department from his position as the Head of the

Linguistics Department, the University of Khartoum. Throughout his work here, he has undertaken various responsibilities; science courses co-ordinator, curriculum co-ordinator, administrative co-ordinator, and Head of the Department prior to his resignation. His resignation was completely unexpected. At the end-of-the year meeting he was honoured by Dr Khalid Al-Ali, the Director of the Foundation Program, and by his colleagues in the English Department in a "Goodbye Meeting". Madani



has contributed significantly to the development of the Department. He will always be remembered. We wish him all the good luck for the future.

His successor, Mr Robert Kennedy, is an old hand in the English Department. Robert was the Head of the English Department some time in the nineties. As an administrative co-ordinator, he teamed with Madani and his colleagues, the other co-ordinators, in running the Department. We wish him all success in his future endeavours.



New Kids on the Block

Prepared by Mary & Abdul Moniem

Shaddy



Son of Amr and Norma Saleh,
brother of Adam
Date of Birth:
Jan. 13th , 2006
Weight when
born: 4.0 Kgs.

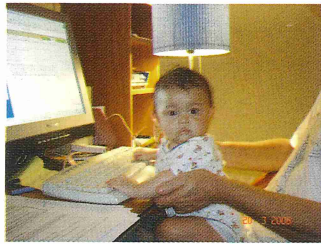
Jude

New baby girl for
Rula and family



Alicia

Daughter of Joe Harrison and Dolma, at five months



Emma

Baby of Mrs (Janice) & Mr Hunderson



Socializing at the Foundation

Contributed by Hanadi Zeinal



Members of the social committee include Shireen Maghraby, Reem Khalid Abu-Shawish, Hanadi Zeinal, Abeer Ja'afar, and Elisabeth Szewczyk (not pictured)

The main objective of the English Foundation Social Committee is to plan and organize different social activities throughout the academic year for the purpose of strengthening social relationships and enhancing communication among all faculty and staff in the English Department.

Social Committee Objectives:

- Organize events, such as social outings, welcome and farewell parties, etc.
- Fund collection to support events/activities
- Announcements of social events (births, weddings, academic achievements, staff updates, etc.)
- Gift Purchase for farewells, special occasions, etc.
- Benevolence fund for unit employees in times of crisis

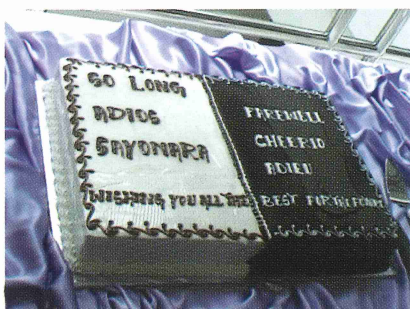


Recent Events:



- Presentation about the MV Dollus Ship that resulted in generous donations of books to the Students' Learning Centre.
- End-of-year gathering 15th of June 2006.
- Organization of a gift purchase and a visit to our colleague Rula Momani for the birth of her baby girl Jude.
- Ladies' potluck gathering on 29th of June 2006.

If you would like to join, have any suggestions, or want inform the committee with your latest social events, please, do not hesitate to contact The Social Committee through this E-mail: committeesocial@yahoo.com



Hanadi at the Career Fair



TOEFL REPORT 2005-2006

by Bino Sarah Paul



In my capacity as coordinator for conducting the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for the Foundation Program (FP) in Qatar University (QU), which is in addition to my teaching duties, I am handling all aspects of conducting two types of TOEFL exams.

These are the Institutional (ITP) TOEFL, and International internet-based (iBT) TOEFL. Students joining QU are asked to get a minimum required score of 500 in either of the tests in order to enter QU colleges.

In the academic year 2005-2006, approximately 6,000 examinees appeared for the ITP TOEFL. The iBT TOEFL was launched on 28 April 2006, after the certification of QU as a test center by the Educational Testing Services (ETS), in the US, the test provider.



A total of three iBT TOEFL have been conducted as of June 10, 2006. QU has a total of 30 seats for the test, with 10 each in

three labs. Two labs are in the FP men's building, and the third lab is in the FP women's building.



Under the supervision of FP Director Dr Khalid al-Ali, my tasks include liaising with ETS on a regular basis, starting with placing the

orders for test materials, sending them back to ETS for scoring, and receiving the scores.

I am entrusted with arranging test rooms, preparing the list of proctors, and providing all necessary facilities for the candidates and proctors on the test days. For iBT TOEFL, I am required to coordinate with the Information Technology Services Department of QU.

I am also involved in professional development activities, organised by FP, on topics related to TOEFL. Two presentations were organised during the academic year 2005-2006 on iBT TOEFL. The noted author of TOEFL Preparation books, Ms. Deborah Philips, gave an overview of the test on 2 May 2006. She also spoke on Creative Teaching of iBT. The event was sponsored by Pearson Longman.

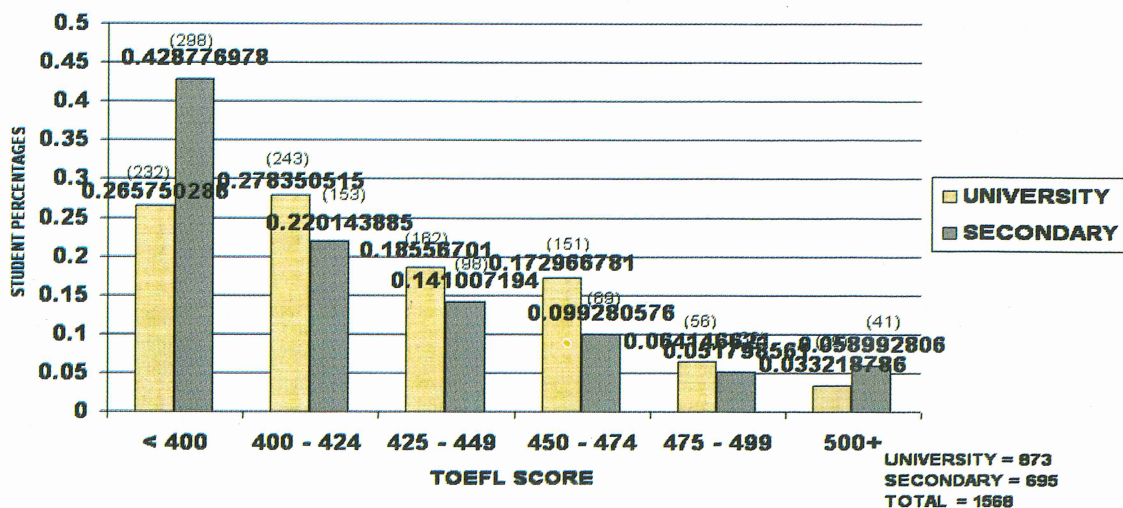
The other event had Mr. Bruce Rogers, another expert on the subject, giving a detailed description of iBT TOEFL on 11 May 2006 in a Digital Video Conference, the first of its kind in QU, organized in collaboration with the US Embassy in Qatar.

Faculty and students benefited a lot from the presentations.

TOEFL RESULTS

Submitted by Hind Jaber - The Foundation Program

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT ON TOEFL TEST (08 April 2006) (UNIVERSITY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS)



Second Language Acquisition

Stephen Krashen's Monitor Theory Revisited

by Abdul Moniem M Hussein

Introduction

In the late 1960s, there was a sudden development in second language acquisition (SLA) studies. This was due to a number of factors which interested researchers in how language was acquired. These factors (Ellis, 1992) were:

- Subsequent work in first language acquisition, e.g. Brown (1973) and associates longitudinal study of three children in English, and de Villiers & Villiers (1973) cross-sectional study to determine the accuracy with which specific grammatical morphemes were performed by children.

- Theoretical conflict as a result of competing views of how language is acquired. The majority of theories which have been developed follow one of two schools of thought:

- nativist: radically, knowledge is innate at birth and develops only through a biologically driven process of maturation, and

- empiricist: radically, the human mind at birth is a tabula rasa (a clean slate). Language develops only through the process of interaction with the external world and the conditioning of behaviour through extensive feedback.

- A growing disillusionment with contemporary approaches to the teaching of L2. The behaviourist theory of language learning has been discarded as a result of the Chomskyan revolution, but no model of comparable scope has been put forward.

However, the controversy between behaviorist and mentalist theories of language learning initiated work in SLA and subsequently led to more advances in research in the fields of observational studies in actual classroom practices and discovery of the conditions needed to ensure successful language learning. As a result, there was emphasis (Ellis, 1992) on explanation and theory-testing rather than on description and theory building. In the midst of all this, Stephen Krashen, a major contemporary influence in applied linguistics and second language teaching, advanced a theory of L2 acquisition known initially as the Monitor Theory, which is perhaps the most influential attempt to construct an overall theory of L2 acquisition.

In this article I shall explain Krashen's ideas, but we have to be wary that Krashen's ideas have been from the beginning a subject of controversy.

The Monitor Model

The 1982 version of Krashen's theory consists of five hypotheses which he describes as making up 'a coherent theory of second language acquisition'. The hypotheses are:

1. The Acquisition-Learning Distinction
2. The Natural Order Hypothesis
3. The Monitor Hypothesis

4. The Input Hypothesis

5. The Affective Filter Hypothesis

The Monitor Model is also known as the Input Hypothesis, as the Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1985a) became the most developed aspect of the theory.

1. The Acquisition-Learning Distinction

For Krashen, the acquisition-learning distinction is perhaps the most fundamental of all the hypotheses. He assumes that adults have two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in second languages: acquisition and learning. Acquisition is an implicit, subconscious process, not influenced by overt teaching or error correction and very similar, if not identical, to the way children acquire their L1. *'We are generally not consciously aware of the rules of the language we have acquired. Instead we have a "feel" for correctness'.*

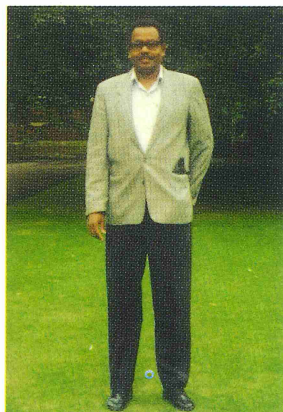
Learning on the other hand refers to conscious, formal knowledge of L2 or explicit learning, and is influenced by learning and error detection. It is *'knowing about the rules, being aware of them and being able to talk about them'.*

According to Greg (1984) "acquisition" is to be identified with Chomsky's language acquisition device (LAD) – an innate structure, although Krashen is not very clear on this. Thus in Krashen's view, *'adults can access the same natural "language acquisition device" that children use.'* Krashen also assumes that knowledge learned cannot be internalized as knowledge acquired. Acquired elements are readily accessible in language production as learners focus on meaning and not on form, whereas learned elements are accessible only through the use of the "monitor". *'Learning does "not turn" into acquisition.'*

2. The Natural Order Hypothesis

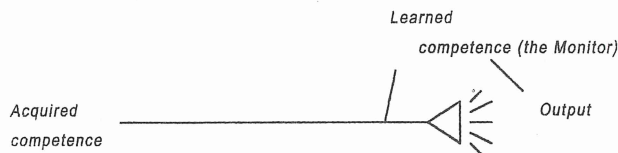
This hypothesis states that grammatical structures are acquired in a predictable order. Acquirers of a given language tend to acquire certain grammatical structures early, and others later. This does not mean that structures are acquired in the exact same order, but there are striking similarities. The natural order was determined by a series of morpheme order studies based on the finding of Brown (1973), who reported that children acquiring English as an L1 tended to acquire certain morphemes or function words earlier than others. Shortly after, Dulay and Burt (1974, 1975) stated that child L2 acquisition was similar to child L1 acquisition. This came to be known as L1 = L2 Hypothesis. These studies were then applied to adults learning foreign languages and it was discovered that:

- the order in which adults acquire structures of a second language was similar to that in which children acquire the same structures.
- the order is the same for any given language, regardless of whether or not instruction is involved.



3. The Monitor Hypothesis

The Monitor Hypothesis states that acquisition and learning are used in very specific ways. The acquired system "initiates" our speech and is responsible for our fluency. Learning has a special function – to serve as a Monitor or Editor – and hence, alter the output of the acquired system. This may happen before we speak or write, or after (self-repair). The following diagram (Krashen, 1982) represents acquisition and learning in second language production:



But the Monitor's use is itself very limited. There seems to be three conditions that must be met. Krashen claims that 'these conditions are necessary but not sufficient,' because the Monitor may not be activated even when all three conditions have been satisfied. The three conditions are:

1) Time 2) Focus on form 3) Know the rule

This implies that learners must be speaking or writing in a situation in which they have time to think, are motivated to speak or write correctly and have learned and not forgotten the rule.

Krashen claims that there may be three basic types of conscious Monitor users: over-users, under-users, and optimal Monitor users. The extent to which a given learner uses Monitoring depends on several factors, such as tasks that focus on form rather than meaning and the personality of the learner.

4. The Input Hypothesis

The Input Hypothesis is a supplement of the Natural Order Hypothesis. It is central to Krashen's overall concept of acquisition as it attempts to answer the most important theoretical and practical question: How do we acquire language? Krashen restates the question: 'Given the correctness of the natural order hypothesis, how do we move from one stage to another?' The Input Hypothesis provides the answer: Second languages are acquired 'by understanding messages or by receiving "comprehensible input"' (Krashen 1985).

Krashen defined "comprehensible input" as that bit of language that is heard or read and that is a 'little beyond' a learner's current state of grammatical knowledge. Structures a learner already knows, or those way ahead of a learner's current knowledge are not useful. Stating the hypothesis somewhat formally, Krashen claims that an acquirer can move from a stage (i) where (i) represents the acquirer's current level of competence to a stage (i + 1) where (i + 1) is the stage immediately following (i) along some natural order reached by understanding language containing (i + 1). Krashen assumes a language acquisition device (LAD) – innate structure – which the input activates, but only input (i + 1) will be useful in altering the learner's grammar.

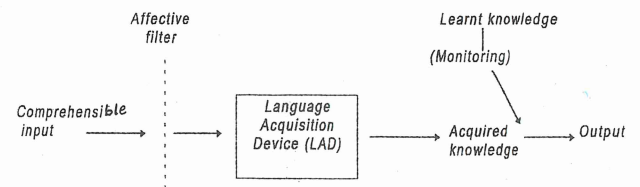
5. The Affective Filter Hypothesis

This hypothesis states that attitudinal factors relating to success in L2 acquisition relate directly to acquisition and not learning. These factors can be placed into one of these

categories: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. To account for success or failure in L2 acquisition, Krashen proposed an Affective Filter between the perception organ and the LAD.

He claims that not all input becomes intake as some input does not reach the LAD. If the filter is up, comprehensible input cannot pass through and there can be no acquisition. If the filter is down or low, and if input is comprehensible, input will activate the LAD and acquisition will take place. The LAD is totally available in L1 acquisition and only available in L2 acquisition according to the level of the filter. So, in Krashen's view, the Affective Filter can be higher or lower depending mainly on the quantity and quality of attitudinal factors and is responsible for individual variations in L2 acquisition. Thus the Affective Filter accounts for failure in L2 acquisition in one of two ways: insufficient input and high affective filter.

At this point I might as well present the following diagram,



(Adapted by Cook, 1993), which captures Krashen's main ideas of L2 acquisition:

Conclusion

In this article I have explained the basis of Krashen's ideas of L2 acquisition. The Input Hypothesis Model of L2 learning and production constitutes the core of L2 acquisition theory. An overall picture of the ideas of Krashen and colleagues of how second languages are acquired or learned is found in Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982). They recognized fourteen major conclusions from L2 acquisition research.

Although Krashen's theory of L2 Acquisition has been criticized for being marked with serious flaws, in my view almost all critics agree that Krashen has offered a theory of significance for L2 acquisition. Let us look at the following quotes to illustrate this viewpoint:

Krashen has called our attention to certain interesting phenomena – especially to the finding that the same order difficulty is found for certain English morphemes in L2 learners regardless of age, primary language, or experience with English. His pedagogical advice – that classroom instruction should be oriented more towards communication and less towards formal rules and error correction – is undoubtedly well taken. [McLaughlin, 1979]

I agree with him that most learning is unconscious, that comprehensible input is vital for learning ... that the affective barriers can prevent successful acquisition of a second language ... it is to Krashen's credit that he has tried to go beyond these observations and to unify them into a single theory. [Gregg, 1984]

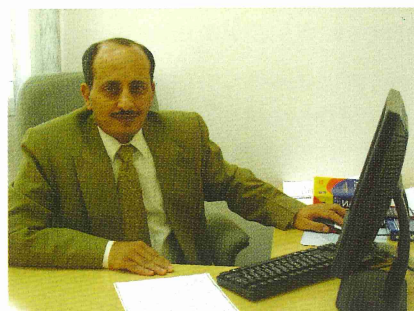
Krashen proposed a theory that was extremely stimulating and that provided the first attempt at a wider explanation of second language acquisition. [Cook, 1993]

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Do Not Blame Mature EFL Learners!!

By: Ameen Al Hemyari



There seems to be a consensus among the EFL researchers that a second or a foreign language can be acquired best before the age of 15. After this period, there is a decline in L2 acquisition. Children are believed to be better at learning languages than adults. According to Penfield and Roberts (1959), a child can learn 2-3 languages as easily as one. During the ages 9-12 the child's brain becomes more rigid. Lenneberg (1967) held a similar view that limits the critical period for the acquisition of a language from two years old to puberty. Pinker (1994) suggests that successful acquisition of a language is rare after late puberty. Even more recent studies emphasize the same view. Birdsong and Molis (2001) indicate that L2 learners acquire a language more proficiently during what is called the "critical period" from 5-15 years.

Birdsong claims that increasing age entails a loss of ability to acquire or learn a foreign language. If this is the case, how are foreign language learners at tertiary level expected to be proficient in few months? Our students in the Foundation Program struggle hard to learn English as fast as they can. What can be observed is that learners at this stage tend to be slower than children in acquiring a language. Moreover, they tend to avoid learning the language skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing and, instead, learn about the language, focusing on the structural rules, morphology and phonology rather than acquiring the language skills. Because age is the most important variable in language learning, teachers have to be more patient with students and not blame them for being slow. Adult learners need more exposure to L2 than children do. More research needs to be done on the time adults need for exposure to a foreign language in formal instruction in order to be proficient, as well as on the extent of proficiency they can achieve.

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Why bother Speaking about "Speaking"?

Introducing Speaking and Building an Assessment Framework

By Amr Salah

The English Department has recently introduced the NorthStar Series as the textbook for students in the Foundation Program. One of NorthStar's apparent traits is its Skill Integration adoption that is demonstrated through the topic choice for each skill, and the woven theme line that runs through the two main books for each level: the



Reading/Writing book and the Listening/Speaking book.

Speaking as a skill has been long ignored in many syllabi taught at different schools and universities. This might be attributed to the fact that Speaking is considered a "Low Order

Categorical Skill" when it comes to the academic needs. In other words, Speaking is not directly needed by academic learners whose production is mostly written, rather than oral. Another reason why speaking was not given much importance is because it is one of the difficult skills to be assessed.

Lately, this misconception has been fought and argued against. Several studies show that people, in general, can judge someone's language solely from their speaking abilities. One study revealed astounding results. In this study, a number of employers needed to select some employees based on their proficiency of English, and all their final judgment and hiring decisions were made only on the basis of the applicants' speaking ability as the sole factor that showed, according to the employers, the applicants' mastery of English. Regarding academia, Speaking forms 75 % of the medium of communication between lecturers and students. If this skill is not studied or mastered, there is undoubtedly a risk of much

misunderstanding between instructors and students.

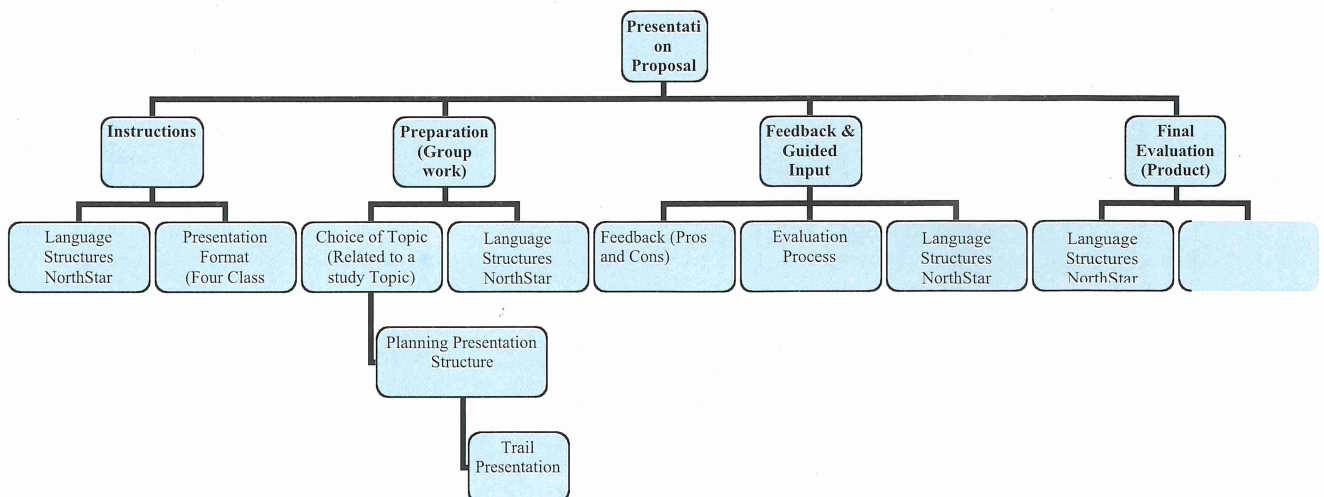
In light of the above, I believe it has become imperative to give Speaking more weight than it has had in the English Foundation Program. Speaking has occupied some room in the syllabi taught to the four levels. However, assessing it was not present within the picture frame. As a consequence, I have endeavored to offer an Assessment Tool by which teachers can evaluate and assess their students' speaking products.

The first stage of developing my proposal was a rationale for choosing the Speaking Assessment Tool based on analyses of different Speaking tools derived from different school experiences. In my proposal, I discussed all different advantages and disadvantages of: Verbal Essays, The Free Interviews, The Controlled Interviews, Information Transfer, Information Gap, Role Plays, and Oral Presentations.

Based on the analysis of each assessment tool, Oral Presentation was deemed as one of the best Speaking Assessment Tools to be used by students in the Foundation Program.

regarding speaking. Presentations are meant to aid teachers evaluate their students' speaking skills. Nevertheless, it is an incomplete job to divorce it from classroom instructions. Back to the hammer, when I give someone a hammer to make a chair, it makes sense that that person looks at and examines the hammer briefly, especially if it is his/her first time to hold such a tool. Presentations are the hammer to students' production (of the chair) and teachers' assessment of it (Speaking).

Since we are asking students to demonstrate their speaking proficiency level through presentation, it makes much sense to familiarize them with it. I have presented some guidelines and an introduction to a brief, yet enough-for-our-need method of teaching presentations. When first planning introducing presentations, there was a suggested plan that can be summed in the following graph:



The main reasons why 'Presentation' is used as the speaking assessment tool are that:

- It has more reliability and validity more than other assessing tools.
- It is a good tool in terms of time economy. Many students can be in one presentation, and they can still be assessed individually.
- Presentation is an asset in academia as students will use it in the rest of their academic career. (Curriculum more than Testing, but still a valid reason)
- According to the analysis of the spoken language assessment tools, presentation is considered one of the tools with the most advantages and the fewest disadvantages.

Why Should English Teachers teach Presentations?

It is worth noting that Presentation is used as a means and not an end. When it was suggested for teachers to briefly introduce their students to the techniques of Presentations, it was meant to give them a hammer by which they can make a chair, not a hammer to show them how to manufacture another hammer. In other words, presentation was suggested to let students demonstrate what they learn

For practical reasons, and since presentations are recently introduced to the course, the plan is modified to include only one final and main presentation during the semester.

The following table is suggested to help teachers assess students' presentation. It is clear that most of the weight is for the Speaking skill. However, since presentations occupy part of the instruction, it is granted marginal grade consideration.

Name	Gram- mar 15%	Clari- ty 15 %	Volu- me 15 %	Accu- -racy 15 %	Pro- nu- n 15 %	Intro 5 %	B o d y 5 %	Conc 5 %	Trans 5 %	Topic com- mand 3%	Confi- dence 1%	Body Lang. 1%	TOTAL 100%

From the above table, it is clear that the Speaking aspect is the main focus of assessment (75%), whereas the presentation structure and delivery aspects-that are not the main focus, yet cannot be totally ignored- weigh only 25 % both.

If the way of introducing presentation as a tool and the time frame put for it prove to be inefficient for any reason, the whole process can be reweighed at the end of the semester. Hence, I am reconfirming the fact that this is only a pilot trial that should be assessed at the end of the semester.

The door is still ajar for adding, deleting and modifying the process. I welcome any comments regarding this issue.

Finally, I would like to thank the Testing Coordinator who helped a lot with suggesting the idea, monitoring it, and disseminating it among the faculty members.

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TESOL ARABIA 2006 Report

Can Computers Really Rate Students' Essays?

Presentation by Peter Davidson, Zayed University, Dubai, UAE & Paul Jaquith, UAE University, Al Ain, UAE.

Synopsis by Fatma Alyan



The presenters introduced their topic by giving some advantages of using computers in testing. They then proceeded to show how computers rate essays. They also discussed issues of reliability and validity.

How it works:

Computers now use artificial intelligence to rate students' essays in the following manner:

1. Three to six human raters identify the variables (up to 50) to be incorporated into the scoring algorithm.
2. Computers rate 200-300 scripts (the training set)
3. The computer then generates a 'model'
4. It then matches new scripts against the model to produce a score.

Reliability:

Reliability was as high as 92% when compared with human raters' scores.

It should be noted that when the computer's score did not match with that of the human rater, a third rater was asked to rate the essay . The third rater almost always agreed with the computer!

Validity:

The presenters contended that e-rating had different types of validity: content validity, construct validity, concurrent validity, criterion validity, predictive validity and systemic validity.

Advantages :

It is cheap, fast, accurate, immediate, and students have shown a preference for it.

Disadvantages:

Teachers are vehemently distrustful of it.

Possible Washback:

Students will do more writing.

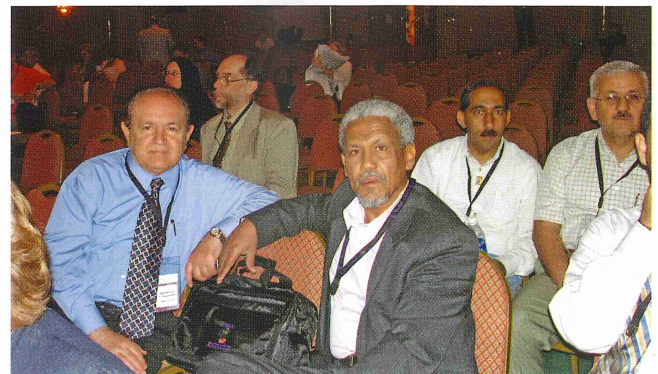
Writing will take a greater weight because of the increase in the reliability of scores.

Students will engage in word-processor mediated writing.

Teachers will update their teaching methods to reflect the modern world.

Photos from Q-TESOL Conference 2006

held at the North Atlantic College



Strategies for looking at listeners

Dr. Mohammad Fawzi M. Mohammad

One of the most important guidelines in delivering oral presentations is to have eye contact with the listeners. In fact, to look at the listeners is one of the most effective ways of building good relations with them. It shows that the speaker is interested in his/her audience personally. In addition, it enables the speaker to judge how things are going. The speaker can see the reaction of his/her listeners: their nods of approval, their smile of appreciation, or their puzzled looks. These signals can enable the speaker to adjust his/her talk, if necessary.



One of the major activities in course E811201-1 is that the students must deliver oral presentations. To many of these students, especially those who are exempted from the Foundation Program, this task is rather new and they need to be aware of the strategies of how to deliver such presentations. Among the many guidelines the students must learn and apply is to make eye contact with their listeners. In fact, many of these students face difficulty when they stand in front of the class and look at the eyes of their peers. I remember one student said, "when I look at the audience, I forget everything"

In this short article I will present some strategies, from my personal experience, that have helped students overcome the problem of "looking at the audience."

1. The speaker must look around at his/her audience before starting to speak. This will give the student the opportunity to make initial eye contact with the listeners when he/she is not concentrating on what to say.
2. The speaker can look at a particular section or group of the listeners when speaking about the first main point in the presentation, and can look at the other section when dealing with the second main point, and so on.
3. The speaker can avoid looking at the eyes of the listeners directly. Instead, he/she can look at the foreheads or noses. This strategy is effective, especially when the listeners are not so close to the speaker.
4. The speaker can focus on an individual for four or five seconds rather than to skim over the faces in the audience. This can give the feeling that he/she is paying attention to that individual. Then the speaker can move his/her eyes to look at another listener, and so on.

In conclusion, it can be said that the above strategies helped many of our students in the Post Foundation course E811201-1 to succeed in applying the eye contact guidelines when delivering their oral presentations.

TEACHING READING AS INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION

James Moody

SUMMARY

It is generally recognized that reading underpins all other aspects of learning English as a foreign language. Psycholinguistic studies of reading have limited practical value, however, for even when teachers are able to identify the skills required for successful reading, the pedagogical problem remains of how to impart these skills to students. Teachers and textbooks usually approach the reading comprehension passage by explaining and testing its meaning rather than by encouraging students to engage actively in working to discover meaning for themselves.



By using the text of a traditional story as a practical example, the presenter attempted to illustrate how the reading lesson can show the learner that reading is a process and that successful reading depends upon discovering how a text means as well as what it means. Suggestions were made for ways teachers might construct materials for class use by placing questions inside the text. Thus, students will be engaged in interacting with the text in a pragmatic manner, similar to processing information in other types of interactive communication, such as conversation. By developing a habit of reading in this way, students should be better able to cope with the demands of understanding new texts.

The text and questions follow:

The Invitation

[1. From the title of the story alone, what do you think it is going to be about?]

Khalil rushed home from his farm as fast as his legs would carry him. He had been invited to a feast at the large house of Ahmed, the merchant, and he didn't want to be late.

[2. Who do you think Khalil is? Where does he live? At what time of day is the story happening? How do you know? Have you changed your answer to Question 1 in any way? Do you think Khalil will enjoy himself at the feast?]

"Your bath is ready!" called his wife, as Khalil ran towards the house.

"Thank you, he replied, "but there's no time for a bath! I'm almost late now!"

"Then at least change your clothes. Everything is ready for you"

[3. Who is speaking these last two sentences? How do you know? Do you think that Khalil is going to change his clothes? Why or why not?]

"I'll have to go just the way I am, my dear," he said. "And I must go now. The invitation said that the feast would begin at sundown. Look! The sun is almost behind the mountain now. Prepare my donkey, please, and I'll be on

my way."

[4. Why doesn't Khalil take a bath and change his clothes before going to the feast? Do you think his wife is happy with his decision?]

"I hope you won't be sorry, Khalil, my husband," she said as she brought the donkey to him, "I'm sure all the people at the rich man's house..."

[5. What do you think Khalil's wife is going to say after the word house? Why does she think Khalil might be sorry for not changing his clothes?]

"Sorry?" Khalil interrupted her. "Sorry for what? Ahmed and his friends know that I work hard in the fields from dawn to dusk. Surely they will not accept or reject me because of the way I dress. They are sensible people." As the farmer spoke, he looked at his dusty clothes. Then, gesturing with his hands, he said, "This is honest dirt. They know that. In fact, maybe they will admire and like me for being a hard worker."

[6. What does Khalil mean by the expression honest dirt? Do you think he is right about how he says Ahmed and his friends will react to him?]

"Perhaps," said his wife softly, "perhaps". But her looks showed that she didn't agree with her husband. Khalil was too busy getting on his donkey to notice. With a wave of his hand and a kick of his foot, he was off down the road.

[7. Why doesn't Khalil's wife agree with him? Which one of the two do you agree with more? What do you think will happen when Khalil reaches Ahmed's house?]

When the farmer arrived at the rich man's house, he walked in confidently and mingled with the guests. As he spoke, however, no one listened. He soon thought he was speaking to their backs rather than to their faces.

[8. Why do you think the guests are not listening to Khalil? Have you changed your opinion about the answer to the second part of Question 7? Do you think that the host, Ahmed, will treat Khalil in the same way as the guests do?]

Then Ahmed himself came into the room where all the guests were and invited them into the banquet hall. Khalil greeted the host by name. But Ahmed only frowned, acting as though he didn't know him.

[9. Why does Ahmed frown and act the way he does? Do you think that Khalil is surprised by Ahmed's action? Why or why not? How do you think Khalil will react to his treatment by Ahmed and the other guests?]

Khalil watched the other guests enter the hall. They were all clean and wearing their best clothes. Finally he stood alone near the door. Then, he looked at his hands, which still carried some of the dirt from the fields, and he noticed once more his dirty clothes. Instead of entering the hall where the feast was being held, he quietly stepped out into the night, got on his donkey and rode home.

[10. Why does Khalil leave the party? What is he going to do?]

"The bath, Fatma, is it still ready?" asked Khalil when he arrived at his house. "Bring me soap, my good shoes, my best turban and, of course, my new coat."

[11. Who is Fatma? How do you know? Why does Khalil ask

her to do these things?]

Fatma rushed to help him, not saying a word about his return. Soon she sent out a better-dressed Khalil than she had seen in years.

[12. What is Khalil planning to do? Why doesn't Fatma say anything to him? What do you think she would like to say to him?]

Khalil hurried back to the rich man's house. As he entered, the servants bowed and the other guests nodded their heads and smiled. Someone then took him to one of the highest tables. When he sat down, those around him spoke freely with him and asked him questions.

[13. Compare the way Khalil is treated by the other people now to the way he has been treated by them when he first came to the party. Why is he treated differently this time? How do you think he is going to react to the way they treat him now?]

While Khalil answered their questions politely, he heaped his plate with the best things on the table. Then he stood up, smiled, gestured to the other people and cleared his throat as though he were going to give a speech.

[14. Why does Khalil stand up? What is he going to say to the other people at the feast?]

When Khalil, who was now a neatly dressed farmer, had the attention of all the people in the hall, he opened his coat. Then, to the surprise of everyone present, Khalil started to stuff the food from his plate into the inside pockets of his coat.

[15. Are you surprised at Khalil's behaviour here? Why does he act this way? What will the other people think of him?]

"Eat, coat! Eat!" said Khalil. In went a slice of meat, a piece of bread, a pickle and a fig. "Eat, coat! Eat!" he said again, as he jammed more and more into his coat pockets. The guests looked on in amazement, but no one said a word.

[16. Have you changed your answer to Question 14? Has Khalil lost his mind, or does he have a reason for this strange behaviour? If so, what could it be?]

Finally, Ahmed, the host, approached him. "Khalil, my good friend," he said, "what is the meaning of your actions?"

[17. What will Khalil say now?]

"Does it seem strange to you, sir, that I am feeding my coat? I don't think it should. For when I came here a little while ago in my work clothes, no one would so much as look at me, including you. Then, when I came back with my best coat on, you and everyone greeted me and nothing was too good for me. I can only conclude that you invited my clothes, not me!" Then he scooped some more food into his coat pockets as he said again, "Eat, coat. Eat!"

[18. Is the reason Khalil gives for his action here different from what you have said in your answers to questions 15 and 16?]

19. Do you now want to revise your answer to Question 10?

20. How do you think the people at the party will react to what Khalil says to them?

21. Who do you think is wiser, Khalil or Fatma?

22. Say in a sentence or two what you think is the main idea or reason for telling this story.

23. Can you think of a situation in real life in which it would be appropriate to tell this story?]

Success and Failure: Taking classes to the Careers Fair

Leslie Butler

Two stories



• Story Number One: When I took a women's class to the '05 careers fair, it was at their suggestion and it worked out very well. We walked round the corner to the exhibition and managed to stay together as a group throughout. A couple of confident, dominant

girls, supplemented by myself, asked questions of the presenters while the shyer ones listened and took in the situation. I felt that this engagement with real English was a good use of class time.

• Story Number Two

When I took a women's class to the '06 careers fair, it was at my suggestion and it worked out badly. To save time (as I thought) and walking, I arranged to meet by the shuttle bus terminus at the ECO building, instead of in the classroom. The bus didn't come when expected and so eventually we walked down and by the time we arrived, of course, some girls had drifted off. This class doesn't have any natural

leaders, and the more confident ones this time went off and did their own thing. A couple of girls



did discuss matters in English with presenters, but overall this was a waste of class time.

Conclusions

- The '05 trip worked because the logistics were simple, because the particular class dynamics kept them together, and because the students 'owned' the idea,
- The '06 trip didn't work because the logistics were

messy, because the class wasn't cohesive, and because the idea was imposed. I should, of course, have prepared the students and set them tasks. I didn't, because my easy experience the previous year had made me over-confident. **Morals**

- Every class, every group and every day is different.
- Spontaneity's great, but can't be relied upon.
- Always have a plan up your sleeve.

Worklessness is due to Unlearnedness

by Leslie Butler

I commended the student who wrote the sentence above, and gave her full marks.

The class had been doing affixes such as 'un-' and '-ness', and we'd also been discussing the causes and effects of certain social problems. However, I hadn't used the term 'unemployment', nor had I used any simple expression to indicate low levels of education or qualification in society. (Is there is one?) Consequently, the coining of 'worklessness' and, even better, 'unlearnedness' in a grammatically correct and comprehensible 'due to' sentence showed that the student was actively engaged with what we'd been doing in class and I commended her for it. Of course, I had to tell her that these weren't current English words, unfortunately, but still – Good!

Question: What would you have done, colleague? Not everyone sees it my way. In another Doha institution, I had an argument with an exam writer whose test for a low level class marked "Sorry we're late, we didn't find a taxi" as incorrect, the 'correct' answer being "couldn't". In my view 'didn't' is perfectly correct logically and grammatically, 'couldn't' being a collocation that pre-intermediate students can't be expected to know.

There's an important issue here. The current consensus is that students should Take Risks and Actively Engage while Negotiating For Meaning with their Consciousness Raised. Even if we don't entirely believe in all that, it's surely wrong to slap students down for language use that accords with what they've been told or have observed, but which happens to fall foul of some eccentric English collocation. So me, I give full marks for application of principles, as much as for usage. However, I'd be interested to hear other opinions.

REPORT FROM TESOL ARABIA

Not All Verb Tenses are Created Equal,

presented by Helina Campa

Recap and Review by Lynn Hassouna

Given the number of high tech seminars I attended, I was surprised to find that Ms. Campa's findings were the most relevant to what and how we teach now. Her seminar addressed the subject of how ESL programs teach grammar. She has completed research analyzing the frequency of verb tenses used in both spoken language and written texts. Her findings have important implications for our program and the text series we are using.



Eight verb tenses were used in her study: simple present, simple past, simple future, present progressive, past progressive, present perfect and present perfect progressive. Eliminated from the study were infinitives, modals, reductions and imperatives.

She found that the combined frequency of oral and written language uses:

- 61 % present tense
- 21% past tense
- 10% past progressive tense
- 5.9% present progressive tense
- 5.6% present perfect tense
- other tenses were negligible

In her survey of four ESL text series, of which one was Focus on Grammar, she found that the representation of tenses was as follows:

- 13% present tense
- 17 % past tense
- 27% present perfect
- and higher for the more difficult the tenses

She concluded that we dedicate far too much time to teaching the more difficult perfect and progressive tenses when students are still struggling with subject-verb agreement. Also noted was her observation that grammar should be taught sequentially, in the order it would be acquired naturally. Again, she found that the arrangement of texts does not support this assumption.

The implication for us seems clear. Our students need not struggle with the harder tenses we teach. In my teaching of Level 4 students, I have found that very few students are able to master the more difficult tenses; attempting to learn them causes anxiety and frustration.

I have never been a teacher who suggests the downgrading of material, but Ms. Campa's findings should be noted. Perhaps we can focus more on the tenses used more frequently, making sure students can master those.

Numbers –

Do They Really Matter? They do Matter!

By Lyrma R. Ingels

One day on my way to work when I was reading the newspaper, a story caught my attention. It said:

'Gatlin was timed at 9.76 secs (seconds) at IAAF Grand Prix meeting in Doha on May 12, a mark which was one – hundredth of a second faster than the existing world record set by Jamaica's Asafa Powell (sic) last June in Athens'.

It goes on 'But in a statement, the IAAF said that the actual timing for the American was 9.766 seconds, which meant it should have been rounded up to 9.77 and not 9.76....Therefore, Gatlin's time will now be adjusted to 9.77 and pending ratification, will equal the previous 100 meter record of Asafa Powell set in 2005'.

From: Philips, Ian. Gulf Times Sport. May 18, 2006. p40.



At first, I thought it was hilarious! Was it a joke? After a while, it dawned to me that this event was so significant in the light of things especially the dreaded evaluation and examinations! In fact, numbers do matter a lot! They can change our lives, alter history, to the extremes, they can destroy and rebuild friendships and societies. The implications are endless!

Aren't we at a stage whereby our entire lives revolve around and involve facts, figures and numbers? We are made up of gazillion cells. With the recent book by Dan Brown, the Da Vinci Code claiming the infinite Pi's existence in the living – plants, animals and humans. With ever increasing technology, everyone nowadays is identified by our ID numbers. Especially in teaching and learning settings, numbers have a very high place value, i.e. marks.

In retrospect, do these numbers really place a value on what they purport to stand for? Are numbers capable of quantifying human nature, our personal relationships, our services and hard work? Does a mark of 78 % clearly denote the real meaning of effort exerted? Is a student's mark of 57 % a summation of all the late nights or none of these, all the learning or lack of it, clearly a verifiable indicator?

Or is a qualitative report a better option? Can a statement of accounts give a greater impact rather than a singular number? Can we swap accountability to letters instead of numbers?

Anyhow, whichever way we look, we are still accountable to everything. In the final analysis when everything falls into place according to the Divine plan; will you be delighted to get an A+ on your report card or a card that says 'Well done!' with a smiley face? J

On a final note, if Arts is one language of the unseen and the intellect – wouldn't letters be a better manifestation or would numbers be a better indicator because they are more graphical? The answer is clearly stated. The choice is yours!

American English or British English?

By Mu Mu Winn

There's nothing wrong with American English. In fact the globalization of the American entertainment industry, in the form of movies (or films as the British would say), TV programs (or should we spell it 'programmes') and popular music, has popularized American expressions to such an extent that using American English would now be accepted as the norm rather than the exception in most English language classrooms throughout the world. However, teachers come from different backgrounds and many of us who have learned and used British



English all their lives, though aware of the much more popular American expressions or spellings, find it difficult to change life-time habits in switching over to American English when we try to teach it to our students. My students do ask me from time to time, questions such as "Is 'summer holiday' the same as 'summer vacation'?", or "Why do you spell the word color 'c-o-l-o-u-r'?" Which is the correct spelling?" I invariably end up giving the classic explanation that there are two acceptable forms of English, and that it's up to them to choose what they prefer, American or British. Thus, the hard choice – should we continue using British English (and keep explaining to our students they don't have to do the same), or should we adapt ourselves to the changing times so that we speak the same kind of language that is in the new "bestselling" course books?

The first time I realized that Americans and British didn't exactly speak in the same way was when I first became friends with two colleagues, one American and one British who joined Qatar University many years back. In those days, the tendency was to prefer British course books, and a considerable number of the English teachers were British. Bettie-Lou, my American friend who had never left the US before, was rather surprised to discover that she had difficulty following what some of her British counterparts were saying, although they spoke the same language! The problem was mainly accents or pronunciation, but there were also some expressions which caused communication problems because they meant different things in American and British usage. Once, my British friend Rosemary was slightly annoyed that Bettie-Lou had actually meant "jam" when she said, "I've run out of jelly. Could you bring some when you come over for brunch?" Rosemary had brought some jelly made from gelatin and Bettie-Lou had laughed and said, "But back home, we call that jell-o, not jelly!"

What was most encouraging about the realization was that being neither British nor American, I had picked up enough of both kinds of English to understand most expressions, though sometimes without being aware whether they were American or British. The hope here is that our students will also have the good fortune of being able to use both forms of English without confusion.

Back to English in the classroom, I can still remember the days when I used to insist that students pronounce 'advertisement' as "advertisement" (_d'v_:tism_nt) and not "advertaizment" (_ædv_r'taizm_nt), and correcting their spelling of certain words like "travelling" when they spelt it with a single "l". "Cheque" and not "check" was the preferred spelling when teaching Business English, as was "catalogue" rather than "catalog". But with the influence of American English growing each day with regular exposure to movies and American TV, more students are choosing to say "advertaizment" and spelling the American way. This is fine if they are consistent in the use of one system of spelling or the other. Far too often, there is either confusion or an attitude of "what does it matter?" when the teacher lets students pronounce words or spell them any way they like, resulting in some students spelling the same word differently in the same paragraph, or coming up with hybrid expressions like "I had fried chips today!"

These days, many teachers themselves often use a mix of American and British English, as is evident in some of the literature that is circulated on campus. Most of our examination cover sheets have the title "English Foundation Program" printed on them, while the content of the exam may contain some words spelt in the British way, such as "programme", and "dialogue". Some of us refer to the Fall Semester as the Autumn Term, and some simply say the Fall Term! Not surprisingly, the Mid-Semester Examination cover sheet may sometimes read "Mid-Term Examination," and at other times "Mid-Semester Examination."

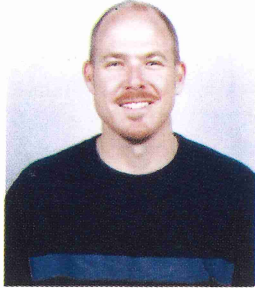
Perhaps it is time to reflect on where we are heading – are we moving towards American English, or a form of global English which could be a mix of both kinds, with perhaps more frequent use of the "simplified" form of American spelling which is usually more popular with students? Or do we prefer to remain true to our origins and stick to whatever form of English we have grown up with? Should we insist on writing "The Student Learning Centre" when preparing written announcements about the center's activities? Or should we tell students to put a "period" at the end of a written sentence instead of just reminding them to put a "full stop"?

Whatever we ultimately decide on, the reality is that English is a living, vibrant language that is continually developing and changing while it is being used globally by more people than ever before. Whether we teach British English or American English, we should not miss the opportunity of helping our students use it effectively, with the awareness that there are different forms of expression, spelling and style. At the end of the day, it is not really that important whether our students say "mobile phone" or "cell phone," or talk about taking the "lift" or the "elevator" because these expressions are usually commonly understood. But we should be able to explain to them that if they intend to go to the US for postgraduate studies, they have to apply to a "graduate school". And if they happen to be studying in the UK, and go to a supermarket to search for zucchini or eggplants, they should ask for "courgettes" and "aubergines", otherwise they will probably come back empty-handed!

The Climbing Adventures of a Qatar University ESL instructor

By David Hess

Several years ago I rediscovered a long lost love of mine - climbing mountains. As a child, I was captivated with mountains. I memorized the heights of many of the world's famous mountain peaks. My parents laughingly remember how I would tell anybody who would listen the names and heights of all the mountains we would see when driving around Southern California where we lived.



When I was around 30 years old, I discovered a good friend of mine had climbed Mt. Whitney (14,495ft/4419m) twice - the highest mountain in the U.S. outside of Alaska. I had always wanted to climb it and decided to climb for the first time in over 10 years.

After successfully making it to the top in 1999 (the year we moved to Qatar), we continued our climbs in California every summer, summiting different peaks above 14,000ft/4267m. We also learned how to climb on the snow with ice axes and crampons.



It wasn't long before we began to be interested in going higher and started to look outside of California. The first place we looked was Iran and our target was the region's highest mountain, Mt. Damavand (18,598ft/5671m) - a mountain,



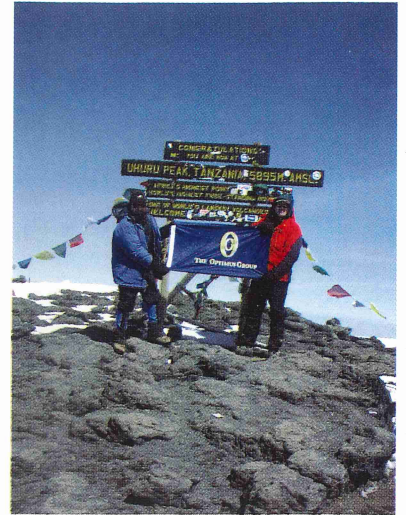
incidentally, I had known about since I was a child.

This mountain was 4000 feet higher than anything we had climbed before and would test our ability to cope with high altitude. Five of us flew out of Doha to Tehran in June of 2003 to climb this snow-capped volcano. It was an incredible three-day climb and thankfully we were able to overcome the altitude and make it to the top.



I returned to Iran the following January to go skiing with my son,

Joseph. Iran is an incredible country and the people are amazing. What is astounding for the westerner however are the prices! Hotels were \$35 per night and the skiing only cost \$6 per day (compared to \$65-75 a day in the U.S.). We will definitely go back to Iran again in the future.



Mt. Damavand was great, but of course I wanted to go even higher - where would we go next? There are only a few places in the world (South America and the Himalayas in Asia) where mountains are higher -- except for one other place, Mt. Kilimanjaro (19,340ft /5,895m) in Tanzania, East Africa. Easily reached from Doha!!

From the time I was in High School I had always wanted to climb Kilimanjaro - a teacher of mine had done it and captivated us with his stories of a six month trip to Africa - for me, I remember only one thing, his adventure in reaching the top of the this peak that is nearly 6000 meters tall.

Mt. Kilimanjaro is not a mountain to be climbed quickly. As somewhat experienced climbers, we chose the most challenging non-technical route of ascent, but we still needed six days to climb and descend the mountain. Storms had been hitting the mountain for a solid week with snow, but on the day we attempted the summit, it cleared up. After climbing most of the night, the following morning we were standing on top of Africa.



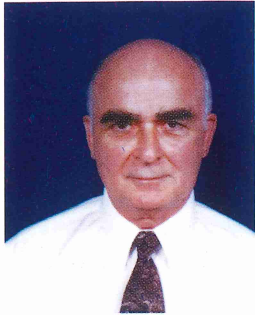
I don't know where we go from here - the only places we can climb higher are in South America and the Himalayas. The Himalayas are only a short flight from Doha - who knows where the next climb will be?!

Being an English instructor gives me plenty of time off to travel, and Doha is an incredible place to live in order to pursue these types of adventures. We have skied in Lebanon several times and next year I am seriously considering a ski trip to Gulmarg in the Kashmir where the world's highest skiing can be found. Turkey is another mountainous country that has amazing skiing and climbing opportunities. As many westerners head to Europe, they completely miss out on the adventures to be found in nearby Middle Eastern countries - and they end up spending ten times more money as well!

LEARNING TO COUNT

By John S. Morris

In that valley, like a remembered dream, the town lies sunk in evening haze, only the chimneys visible from the hillside, the wood smell drifting upward from the flat-spread smoke, and further out, a cowbell sounding toward the barn.



Moonlight slanted through the window, throwing its long silence across the room. He waited, propped, hand behind his head, half up in bed. Then he heard the soft series of flame-like sounds; it sounds blue, he thought, knowing the automatic pilot to the water heater had just lit the row of gas burners. He slid down between the cool sheets and concentrated on

the cloud shadows that sliced the fallen light. Through the window and beyond the pecan tree, he saw the moon and the clouds sailing past, and for a moment, he couldn't tell whether it was the moon or the clouds that sailed. Is it the ocean or the ship, he asked himself.

Beyond the moon and deep into the horizon, he saw the black sky lashing out at the hills. Now rising from the static, a tree frog screamed. Then the crickets and shedding cicada shrilled, and all the pasture frogs joined. An owl startled. A whippoorwill rose and called, and the sound floated over the pasture and the house. And for a second, everything seemed to hold its breath and listen: "whippoorwill" Then it all started again, and the sky joined in, distant and deep. An almost inaudible roll: and the lash. It was like the swing of a flashlight--that quick, and then it was gone--and later, the deep small rolling. It sounds black, he thought.

And then the scraping began from the closet. Tentative, faint. A scrabbling, searching sound at first, then the gnawing.

"Big Daddy," he whispered, "Big Daddy, that old rat is at it again." He waited a little, then asked, "You asleep, Big Daddy?"

There was a little time passed, and he noticed all the insects and frogs outside again, and heard the limbs rattling as the wind rose, then died.

"I heard," Big Daddy said. "Now you mind, once that old rat gets in, he'll start gnawing back out. Rats ain't got much sense. All belly and tooth. Mean."

"What's he want in here for, then," the boy asked, feeling the mystery in his question.

"Nothing he's gonna get. Probably thinks we're rich--that's why he'll go back out once he gets in here," Big Daddy said.

"Gonna rain, you think?" the boy asked, once again knowing the answer and because he knew it, feeling good about the wait and the silence and the expected sound of the old man's voice that would suddenly come out of the darkness like a warm hand and touch him.

"I reckon so. Hear that there rumbling? How far off it is?

Been hearing it now for a while. It's coming this way, you can bet, and that's not even a gamble.

And there was silence again. But this time, Big Daddy had baited it, and he was waiting. He knew the boy would hold as long as he could.

"How come," the boy said, true to form. He felt that the old man was primed now, ready to talk and while away the dark till sleep. "Rain's always a gamble. Ain't nobody can tell the future."

The boy stayed quiet then, knowing Big Daddy was waiting for something. Off in the distance, the sky lit again, and then, under the frogs' and crickets' songs, came the low rumble.

"There," Big Daddy said, almost whispering.

"Hear that? See that? You watch now."

And not long, came another flash and another deep rumble.

"Hear how it's louder that second time. Did you hear? Listen again."

He did that, straining his ears after the flash of light at the edge of the sky. and sure enough, it did sound louder.

"Yep, heard it--so what?"

"The closer a thing," Big Daddy answered, after a bit,

"the louder it sounds. You think some. Remember how, when your maw calls and you can barely hear 'cause you've gone off too far, and how walking in you hear her plain? I know it's so. Well, that's how sound works, so the further off the lightning, the weaker the thunder."

"Yeah, reckon that makes sense," the boy answered.

"Like your pocket watch when you put it up to your ear." Then stubbornly,

"But that don't mean it's gonna rain none once it's here--even if them clouds do come over."

"You got lightning like that and you got rain with it. Use your nose some. Smell that air? Got dust on it. Wet leaves. Creosote steam from the roads and hot roofs. Got all the wood smoke from the chimneys in it, too. All that stuff heavy with the rain and settling out of the air. That's why it's gonna smell so fresh after it hits, and why morning's gonna be so blue it'll hurt." He cleared his throat a little. "It'll rain in about eighteen minutes."

"You gonna say how soon now?" the boy asked, in wonder.

"You can tell, too," Big Daddy answered.

"Next flash, you start counting like this: one thousand one--one thousand two--one thousand three. And however far you get, that'll be how far away. Then you catch the next one, count it, and see how much closer or further away it is--that tells if it's gonna rain or not, and when."

The boy was quiet until the next bright flash, then began counting, "One thousand one--one thousand two," and when he got to one thousand fifteen, the sky broke like potatoes emptied on a plank floor. Then, in a few seconds, another bright flash lit the sky, and he began counting again. This time, it was a little closer.

"Big Daddy," he said, half between a whisper and normal, "I figure it to be closer- on to thirteen minutes."

Big Daddy laughed a little, then answered,
 "Could be right. I ain't as good as I used to be when I was a boy like you." Then he added, "But it's still the counting that counts. If it lightnings and you don't have time to count, you just as well give up because it's too close to matter anyway--and too late to be scared."
 "That's what I reckon, too," the boy said, and adjusted his pillow so he could look out the window better. He waited a little, then asked, "When you was a boy like me, how old was you?"
 "Oh, almost as old as you, I reckon--only the time was different."
 "How so?"
 "Well, Colville was just a mud-hole on the way to Fort Smith. I recall back when the Model A Ford was near new and there was a fine woods down where the plant is now."
 "Back in 43." the boy offered.
 Big Daddy smiled. "It was a fine time to be growing up in."
 The boy turned over, trying to keep the bed springs from creaking.
 "One day--it was in August," Big Daddy continued, . . .

Yesterday

By Khalid Ismail

Yesterday, I took me for a ride;
 There, we met myself in the moonlight;
 Together, we spent an unbelievable night.

* * * * *

I + face = identity;
 I + spirit = personality;
 I + body = mortality;
 I + soul = eternity;
 I + thoughts = infinity

* * * * *

You came once from somewhere;
 And will stay trying to go nowhere;
 And you all leave with a silent tear;
 Why do you scratch the world with fear;
 And so much senseless useless benign care.



Star-like Words

By Khalid Ismail

It is said that few people say and others try to follow and apply. Those who tend to say find themselves committed to enshrine vivid opinions in ever lasting star-like words. Yes, it is impossible to reach or catch the stars, but not so to follow suit or trace such sublime thoughts through hard work, perseverance, endurance, and endless patient longing for

the best in a life, an amazing trip that is very short on earth compared to other beings.

Here, I find myself cornered with no choice, but anchored to thoughts by vibrating threads of ever sparkling utterances that would inevitably guide the restless souls to some supposedly safe haven. Therefore, I join myself in weaving some highly condensed human experiences in few words. Still, it remains your choice to select and follow, or ignore with no sorrow.

Learn from your mistakes. Focus on what you can do right. Remember you always get another chance to be better. Force yourself to do and be a little better. Be clear on what you want and focus on the next step. Get your mind to focus on your goals by always thinking about them and always searching for ways to make them a reality. From time to time, you have to stop your pursuit of being the best, and just be happy. The world is all yours if you know how to approach and enjoy.

"...To steal moments of peace and tranquility...."

By Tasneem Kureishy



We have successfully concluded yet another semester amidst all its stresses and strains and undoubtedly, all of us are in dire need of de-stressing. So let me help you with a few suggestions - not my own though!

"...To steal moments of peace and tranquility..." -- that's one theft that doesn't land you behind bars or into serious trouble for sure! On the contrary, it can keep you out of serious health hazards! So why not make the most of it and steal several moments of calm and peace from our stressed out lives? Whichever way one looks, one beholds tensions and anxiety, exhaustion and ill health, and lately, accidents resulting from stress too! Our world has become so very competitive and so hectic.

However, we have a lot to learn, to achieve, and "the woods are lovely, dark and deep, and I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep and miles to go before I sleep." That brings to my mind the fact that the poets of yore really knew how to find the rare commodities of peace and tranquility in their simple day-to-day lives. Wordsworth, my favourite nature poet, wandering over the hills and dales of Lake District in England, had said, "Ne're saw I, never felt a calm so deep." Calmness and tranquility are synonyms for good health and long life. A psychiatrist Dr. Redford B.

Williams says that the hearts of calm and tranquil people last longer because their nervous systems act like "stop switches" and their level of adrenaline doesn't rise up very high in moments of stress and strife.

I take inspiration from Mr. Paul Wilson, Chairman of an advertising agency, a strategic consultant to some of Australia's major corporations, director of a hospital, a father of three, and the author of two bestselling books, *Instant Calm* and *The Calm Technique*. Instead of focusing on stress, he is an authority on calm. He has also written a handbook called *The Little Book of Calm* where he has given some very useful tips to finding a path to inner peace and tranquility. "Carry it with you to steal moments of peace and tranquility. At any time, in any place..." he says. That is where I took the title for my writing.

I wouldn't say it is a bad idea adopting some of his advice if it can buy us some time to live longer and healthier lives. We need such sustenance to keep us striving over miles and miles of competition, weariness and heartburn ahead of us in the years to come.

- "WORRY WHEN THE TIME COMES. Most worries are future-based. They revolve around things that, in most cases, will never happen. Concentrate on the present and the future will take care of itself."
- "START TEN MINUTES EARLY. By starting a journey ten minutes early, you will not only avoid the stress of haste, but if all goes well you'll have ten minutes to relax before your next engagement or class."
- "SEEK THE BEST IN EVERYTHING. Make a practice of looking for the best in people and situations. You'll find that simple approach induces optimism and positivity, both of which lead to calm."
- "PRETEND YOU ARE HUMAN. Leave it to others to be perfect, to be wonderful. Be content with what you are- you'll be much more relaxed as a result."
- "JETTISON THE PAST. There is seldom any rational reason for having regrets about past deeds or events. Because the past does not exist in any way other than in your memory. When you recognize this lack of reality, you can be calm."
- "STEAL THIRTY SECONDS. When you are tense, go somewhere quiet- even the bathroom will do at a pinch- and take thirty seconds to gather your thoughts, and work out how you are going to become calm. They could be the most useful thirty seconds in your day."

- "SPRAY ORANGE BLOSSOM. Add three drops of orange blossom oil to a cup of mineral water, and spray it from an atomiser when you need to feel relaxed."

- "LOWER THE CROSSBAR. One of the greatest strains of life is constantly having to live up to the standards we set for ourselves. Do yourself a favour and from time to time, relax those standards a little."

- "WEAR WHITE. The clothes you wear have a distinct influence on the way you feel. Loose garments, natural fabrics and light colours all lead to calm. This is why yogis wear white."

- "SLEEP LIKE A BABY. Anything that interferes with your sleep- coffee, cola, alcohol- interferes with your ability to become calm. Do whatever is necessary to get as much sleep as you feel you need."

- "TAKE THE BACK SEAT. However much you think you might enjoy driving, it is a stressful business. Take the back seat (with a driver you trust), and spend the journey sharing your calm."

- "CONTROL ONLY WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL. Be rigorous in differentiating between what is achievable and what is a waste of time. Then devote your energies only to those tasks you can achieve (pass on the others to someone else)."

- "ACCEPT ONLY ONE DEADLINE. Deadlines are at the root of so many stress problems. Take on only one deadline at a time, and you will become master of your own time."

- "PRACTICE SAYING NO. There is only so much you can achieve before affecting your efficiency and state of mind. Only take on what you can do- then politely, but firmly, turn down all other requests."

- "SAY YOUR PRAYERS. If you have spiritual or religious beliefs, you probably have access to one of the world's most time-honoured methods of achieving tranquility: PRAYER."

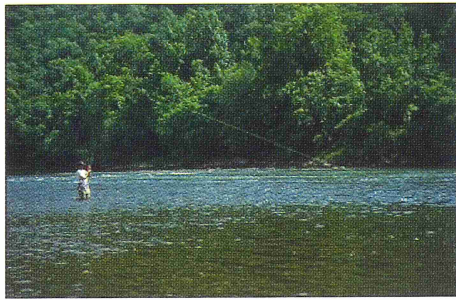
These are only some of Paul Wilson's recommendations. Most of what he has written is not unfamiliar to us. Yet we tend to hedge about and fret and fume needlessly. It is his strong belief that by following his simple advice we could attain calm and tranquility even in the most difficult moments.

Personally, I am not averse to trying out some of these myself.

John Morris

The Garden of Verse

The Stream, for Ron Hardaker



Memory cries,

"Give us green mountains, the dust of roads,
each year's all-out endings,
leaves burning green and gold.
Keep always these sun-apple settings,
these wheeling deep-blue edges
and the moon's tenses, forever----."
Though gone, our old friends wade
knee-deep, still angling
where bright fish leap
and time takes its time.
And so today, they are here,
gathered at God's oldest river:
Their voices cast-out
over still water,
lives flashing in the sun.
They wade amid choirs
of mosquitoes, stunned,
their lines singing overhead.

Bringing In The Clothes

The morning sun from mist and hot midday
the white stratus streaming, then cumulus
the black muscles flexing overhead
to the first cold point,
rain.
Rush, Mother called as I ran, thunder
through flashing air, down-gathering
the silk and nylon from the line, piling
high in her kitchen gowns and blouses, soft
and full of sun, red ants and wind
and out again for all sundry,
the clouds breaking,
sun.

DAR

During the years I lived beside her
there were winter Saturdays that drifted
white over her yard of swans, sifting

onto the porch swing where vines
wound the chains. And on warm days
I would look out where our bedrooms faced
and see her shadow move on her window
as she sang her favorite doll to sleep.

Long in the evenings she would look out
where the hitching boy stood, deep in weeds,
patient near the dirt road. And as the wind
moved around him and came in low, moaning
over the swans, her song would touch out
soft like a child's hand and her head
would nod toward sleep.

A Sudden Loss Of Crickets

Birds plundered the mulberries all summer
and sun's fry on the new pavement
shimmered Stillwell Hill to a blur.
As evening cooled, ripe chinaberry pods
dropped and from the cot where I slept
soft air filled all the corners of night
and settled in over the earth.
But suddenly I sat up, stared out---
I saw darkness descend on the world,
heard the static of a thousand radios,
the cold blast of stars pulsing through time
a million trillion years between,
and I knew the reason for that insect silence
at twilight, at dawn.

Homecoming Game

That night the clouds bellied over,
boiled and thundered;
the wind whipped at and tore.
Then the rain.

They jogged out; their eleven, then ours.
The cheerleaders tumbled, the parents roared.
It got still. black moved over all
casting strangeness on the field;
then the anthem, and then the kickoff,
and with that the coming on of low jets,
close trains; my word
out houses, cows and cars flew over
with a single silent baby grand
and whatever else God knows we ran
Ah but our eleven and theirs out there
on that night's field, oblivious,

caught up in pure plan and execution,
 huddled and ran Lord they played it out
 despite all it could do, and by God
 when we got home to homes
 that either were or weren't came word
 we'd won
 and it was good to stand
 amid all that rubble and wind hell
 and think about. And now to tell
 how it had been.

Ark

The black horse stands on the hill.
 The mares answer softly,
 their voices lifting from the grass.
 Thunderheads stretch out for miles on the air.
 I whistle the black horse from the storm
 and the mares follow unafraid.
 Inside, there is the smell of good hay
 and the horses gentle me with their voices.
 I stay with them all night
 and dream the rain continues.

A Man Drinking

Mulberry Creek coils beneath the mountains.
 When Indians lived here, deer and bear
 drank from it. That must have been beautiful.
 Driving Highway 64,
 I think of that.
 I get out and kneel.
 I kiss the water.
 When This Red Land of the High Ozarks
 When this red land of the high Ozarks
 shines in burnt sedge
 and the bare stones break through
 when gourds on the fence row swell
 and persimmons
 in the first frost ripen
 when high overhead in the dawn
 geese honk over the low lakes
 and the dog's bark steams

 when the cat stays in
 and sounds drift out
 and night is a clean cool sheet then.

**All of these poems are copyrighted by John S. Morris,
 April 14, 2006.**

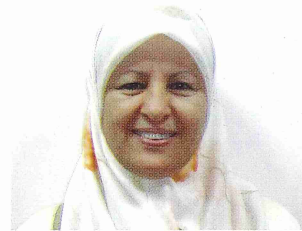
**All but "The Stream" have appeared previously in
 various magazines and periodicals.**

Do You Think English Is Easy!?!?!?

[Author Unknown]

Submitted by Dr. Fatima Abu Jalalah

Let's face it - English is a crazy language. There is no egg
 in eggplant, nor ham in
 hamburger; neither apple nor
 pine in pineapple. English
 muffins weren't invented in
 England or French fries in
 France. Sweetmeats are
 candies while sweetbreads,
 which aren't sweet, are meat.
 We take English for granted.



But if we explore its
 paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing
 rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea
 nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing,
 grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham? If the plural
 of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth, beeth? One
 goose, 2 geese. So one moose, 2 meese? One index, 2
 indices? Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends
 but not one amend? If you have a bunch of odds and ends
 and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a
 vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat?
 Sometimes I think all the English speakers should be
 committed to an asylum for the verbally insane. In what
 language do people recite at a play and play at a recital?
 Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run
 and feet that smell?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while
 a wise man and a wise guy are opposites? You have to
 marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your
 house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a
 form by filling it out and in which, an alarm goes off by
 going on.

English was invented by people, not computers, and it
 reflects the creativity of the human race, which, of course,
 is not a race at all That is why, when the stars are out,
 they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are
 invisible.

PS. - Why doesn't "Buick" rhyme with "quick"

You lovers of the English language might enjoy this.

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meanings
 than any other two-letter word, and that is "UP."

It's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at
 the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning,
 why do we wake UP? At a meeting, why does a topic come
 UP? Why do we speak UP and why are the officers UP for
 election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a
 report?

We call UP our friends. And we use it to brighten UP a
 room, polish UP the silver, we warm UP the leftovers and
 clean UP the kitchen. We lock UP the house and some
 guys fix UP the old car. At other times the little word has
 real special meaning. People stir UP trouble, line UP for
 tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses. To be
 dressed is one thing, but to be dressed UP is special.

And this UP is confusing: A drain must be opened UP
 because it is stopped UP. We open UP a store in the
 morning but we close it UP at night.

We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP! To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of UP, look the word UP in the dictionary.

In a desk-sized dictionary, it takes UP almost 1/4th of the page and can add UP to about thirty definitions. If you are UP to it, you might try building UP a list of the many ways UP is used. It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don't give UP, you may wind UP with a hundred or more. When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP. When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP.

When it rains, it wets the earth and often messes things UP.

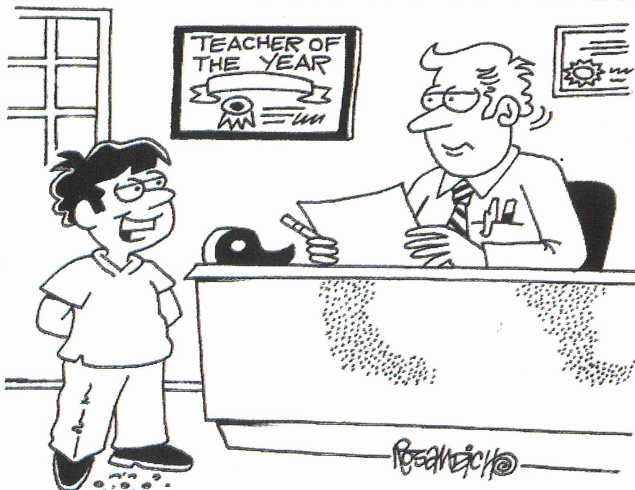
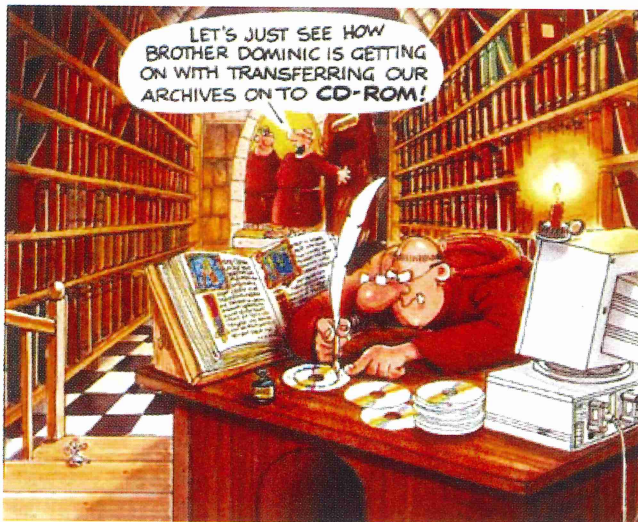
When it doesn't rain for awhile, things dry UP.

One could go on and on, but I'll wrap it UP, for now my time is UP, so..... it is time to shut UP.....!



Cartoons

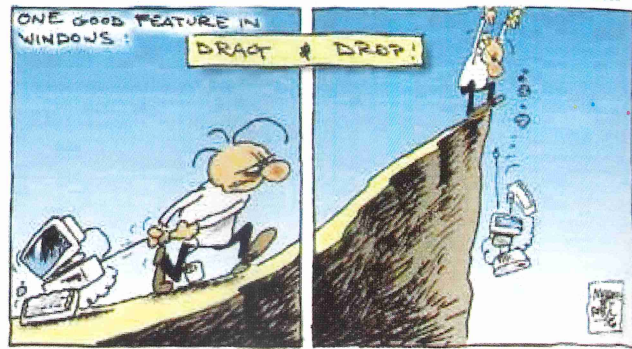
Submitted by Reem Khalid



"You'd never won it if I was easy to teach."

GNURF

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FOR SALE BY OWNER

Complete set of Encyclopedia Britannica.
45 volumes.
Excellent condition.
\$1,000.00 or best offer.
No longer needed.
Got married last weekend.
Wife knows everything.

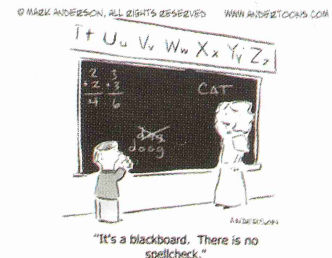
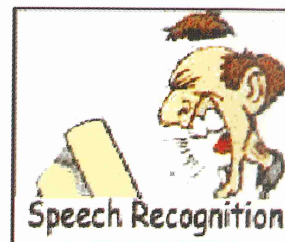
"We discover fire, invent wheel, build server"

Microsoft
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Microsoft
Windows NT Server
Version: 4.0
NT: Neanderthal Technology

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CaveOffice

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"You should check your e-mails more often. I fired you over three weeks ago."



Multimedia in the Foundation Program

Prepared by **Aladdin Halwani**

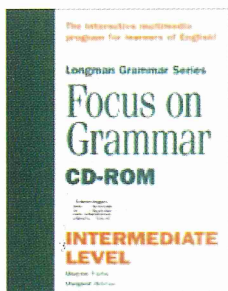
Multimedia is the integration of text, graphics, audio, video, animation and telecommunications with computing. In its commitment to keep abreast of new developments in technologies and learning systems to give our students in the Foundation Program the skills to succeed in their academic work, as well as in a global work environment, the English Department, under the umbrella of the Foundation Program, has managed to harness into the chariot of language teaching a number of interactive multimedia software packages:

1. Planet English
2. Focus on Grammar
3. StoryBoard and GapMaster
4. Hotpotatoes Exercises
5. NorthStar Videos.



Planet English

Planet English (PE) is an exciting, high tech, interactive learning resource as part of an academic teaching program. It exploits Computer Assisted Language Learning technologies. Language is taught in context and carefully graded and recycled through a variety of interactive activities. PE provides students with the opportunity to compare their language and pronunciation with that of English speakers when recording their voices and comparing them to the original. PE offers a rich communicative environment and gives learners the opportunity to interact with English speakers through role play. PE content is delivered on 8 CD-ROMs covering nearly 1000 hours of study materials.



Focus on Grammar

This is yet another innovative multimedia software package which has been used by students in the Foundation Program. It is a clear, contextualized, and interactive, user-friendly, four-level software program that provides extensive multimedia grammar practice

through lively reading, listening, and writing activities. The course is available for learners in the Foundation Program on a basic, intermediate, high-intermediate and advanced level (one CD-ROM per level). Some of its main features are as follows.

- Abundant contextualized exercises.
- Target structures presented in full reading and listening passages, not just isolated sentences
- Immediate interactive feedback to guide the learner
- Extensive pop-up grammar charts, notes, and appendices for easy reference



- Record-keeping functions for keeping track of individual performance
- Opportunities for original writing
- Special TOEFL®-type review tests

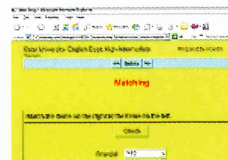
Storyboard

A popular, flexible, and useful text reconstruction program based on a simple principle: a short text (up to 2000 characters) is entirely obliterated on screen, each letter of each word being replaced by a small "blob," leaving only the title, punctuation, numbers, and spacing intact. The student is to restore it by guessing single words. When a word is found, it is printed in place wherever it occurs in the text. With its excellent help features, Storyboard lends itself to a variety of different uses and learning styles. These features give students the choice to: ask for difficult words (selected by the teacher) to be given at the start; ask for hints (for words determined by the teacher); ask for any letter of any word to be provided; ask for any whole word to be provided; guess prefixes and suffixes; save an incomplete exercise and resume later; and to see the whole text at any time, an option which can be switched off by the teacher.

GapMaster

The Student Program offers the student a choice between an Exploratory Mode, which gives immediate feedback and allows exploration of a range of different answers for each gap, and an Exam Mode, which delays feedback until the end of the exercise. In either mode, students can move freely from gap to gap and fill them in any order. In the Exploratory Mode, students may also use the optional "shape" feature, which guides them towards an acceptable answer, and can call up any hints accompanying the gaps. In the Exam Mode, students review their answers after finishing the exercise, and can ask to see the answer.

Hot Potatoes Exercises



Hot potatoes are in-house electronic exercises. They include interactive, multiple-choice, short-answer, matching/ordering and gap-fill exercises for the World

Wide Web. The students in the Foundation Program use these exercise in their multimedia laboratories to reinforce their language skills.

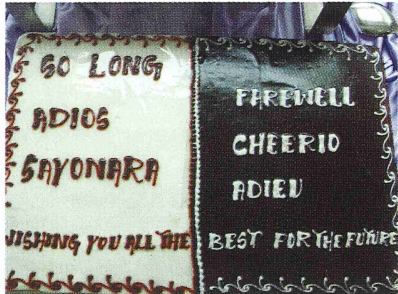
NorthStar Videos



It is a four-level video series integrated into the NorthStar series. Ten short segments per level (Basic/Low, Intermediate, High-Intermediate and Advanced) showcase various genres, including documentaries , interviews and cartoons, all correlated to the unit to add listening comprehension, as well as material for discussion and writing.

Other multimedia activities involve using the Internet, which offers a variety of authentic target-language resources, and a network-based communication.

AT THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT FAREWELL PARTY



Miscellanea

(Selected by Abdul Moniem)

{from various sources: Reader's Digest, the Sun, Life's Like That}

Quotable Quotes

- * An invasion of armies can be resisted, but not an idea whose time has come.
- * If you wait, all that happens is that you get older.
- * The history of every country begins in the heart of a man or a woman.
- * Bureaucracy is the art of making the possible impossible.
- * Happiness is a way station between too little and too much.
- * When something important is going on, silence is a lie.
- * Better to ask twice than to lose your way once.
- * The biggest threat to our well-being is the absence of moral clarity and purpose.

Kids Stuff

- * My sister's daughter, who is five, loves to talk to me on her parents' mobile phones. When she came to visit and saw my ordinary phone attached to a long cord in the living room, she asked: "Is it tied to the wall because it was naughty like our dog?"
- * My granddaughter Sharon has just turned three. The other day she hugged me around the neck and said: "Nanny, I love you the best in the whole world – except for ants." "Ants," I said. "Why ants?" "Because," she said, "ants are beautiful." I can't say her remarks have done much for my ego.
- * I was looking after my four-year-old granddaughter while her parents went out. "Ooh, Nanny," she said, "we're on our own. There aren't any grown-ups to keep an eye on us." I rather like being thought of as a little girl too.
- * When my little niece stayed I asked if she would like a bedtime story. "Yes," she said, "the one that begins, 'Once upon a time ...'"

Life's Like That

- * At my college of further education I continually encouraged my English language students to choose descriptive words like "obtain," "reach" and "receive" instead of the overworked "get" and "got." Towards the end of one course I had to spend a few weeks in hospital and received a Get Well card from my

pupils. The word "Get" has been crossed out and replaced by "Become."

* "Ours is a good restaurant," said the manager. "If you order an egg, you get the freshest egg in the world. If you order hot coffee, you get the hottest coffee in the world, and –"

"I believe you," said the customer. "I ordered a small steak."

* The student finished reading her book report aloud to the class and returned to her seat. "That was very nice," complimented the teacher. "And I'm so glad you didn't reveal the story's ending." "Well," replied the girl, "if they want to know, they could rent the video themselves."

A Contest

The Chief Editor with the Great Wartime Leader, Winston Churchill

Where do you think this picture was taken?



Hints:

- Churchill visited the Sudan some time during his lifetime, and stayed for two years.
- Churchill died in 1965.
- The Editor visited Churchill's family's home: "The Blenheim Palace".
- The Editor visited the Houses of Parliament.

Please e-mail me your answer.

The first correct answer to arrive wins the prize.

The prize is a bestselling novel.

- * The editors of the Newsletter are not eligible to take part in this contest.

The Big Issue

Picking Up More Steam

An Extensive Reading Program Proposal

[by Abdul Moniem M Hussein]



*** Learning is not attained by chance. It must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence.**

*** Comprehensible input is vital for learning. Only Input (i + 1) will be useful in altering the learner's grammar. (Stephen Krashen - The**

Input Hypothesis)

*** I believe two things will survive the Internet: books and bicycles.**

(Isobel F Abdulhoul - Friday Magazine, June, 2006).

This time I have chosen to write about an issue, which I think of the greatest importance for our curriculum development: the inclusion of an "Extensive Reading Component" in our English curriculum. This has been initiated by my article (in this Issue) on Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which emphasizes comprehensible input as vital for learning, and by a previous teaching experience of an intensive/extensive reading program.

Surely, reading is still alive and well, and it is high time we flagged our serious intent to boost reading in full swing. Reading should be a matter of concern for us all as educators. It is the antidote to ignorance, the content for writing, and one of the greatest pleasures of life. Books entertain, enlighten and empower us. But just look around you! How many of our students in the English Foundation Program can read story books? How many of them are out there from secondary school, whose imagination remains untouched by the power of fiction or non-fiction? There is a gaping hole in our curriculum: "Intensive Reading" and "Extensive Reading" are missing, and this should not be mistaken for the teaching of literature - you know what I mean. We should aim at launching a reading programme where simplified and advanced texts will provide a step-by-step approach to the joys of reading for pleasure. My calling here is for "Extensive Reading", though "Intensive Reading" should also be considered. If we ever wanted to develop our students' English standards, this is probably as close as we will get.

My idea is not a bolt out of the blue. It is based on a sound learning theory (see my article on Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis in this issue), and from a fond memory that now springs to my mind. I had an experience teaching secondary school students for three years, using an intensive (in-class sets) / extensive (out-of-class sets) reading program as an essential component of the English curriculum. The result was astonishing. My students scored

very high in English in the Sudan School Leaving Certificate Exams. They excelled and even figured in the top slot of the English-Medium Schools. I think the three-year reading programme helped them improve their overall language proficiency.

The idea of the Foundation English Department's "Student Learning Centres" was great, especially the "Movie & Reading Club". However, the SLC Reading Room remains of limited value, as only a small number of students, out of thousands, can benefit from it. This is not to mention that students are not allowed to check books out of the SLC.

Here's an outline of the extensive reading program I propose:

Suggested Set Books:

* Penguin Readers / Longman simplified and advanced books (as the books at the SLC): Levels 4 & 5 Readers for Foundation Levels 1 & 2, and Advanced Readers for Foundation Levels 3 & 4. Of course, I do not exclude the possibility of selecting titles from other publishers.

* To select as many suitable titles as possible, and to purchase them in sets of 25 copies of each title, enough for all the anticipated groups in the Fall Semester.

* Three books should be read each semester (one book per month).

Suggested Methodology:

Each book in the Penguin Readers has an Introduction and Extensive Activity Material Section. The Introduction introduces the writer and the story. The Activity Section provides varied exercises.

* The teacher introduces the writer and the story: reads out the Introduction, and the short Summary on the back cover.

* The teacher divides the book into four equal parts to cover four weeks of reading, and assigns select exercises from the book's activity section to be done by the end of each week.

* At the beginning of the following week the teacher checks the students assigned exercises and discusses with them the portion they have read to make sure that they are reading, and making progress in terms of understanding and enjoying the story.

* When the students finish reading the story, the teacher holds an overall discussion with the students.

* The students should keep a "Reading Portfolio" of all their reading exercises. (10 marks to be allotted to this activity, as the "Writing Portfolio".)

* At least one hour per week to be devoted to "Extensive Reading".

I cannot wait to hear your positive responses.

I believe there is one story in the world, and only one, that has inspired and frightened us. Humans are caught - in their lives, in their thoughts, in their hungers and ambitions, in their greediness and cruelty, and in their kindness and generosity too - in a net of good and evil.

There is no other story. A man will have only one question left at the end of his life: was it good or was it evil? And all novels, all poetry, are built on the never-ending contest in ourselves between good and evil.

{John Steinbeck - East of Eden (1952)}

**At
The
Foundation
End-of-
Year
Party**

