## Breaking the Ice in the Classroom

by Kimberly Sanford

e all know that using icebreaker activities in class can serve a variety of valuable purposes. Icebreakers can relax students and lower their affective filters. They also help students to get into "English mode" when they enter the classroom. Icebreakers also fill up those first few minutes of class, allowing the teacher to begin class on time but also accommodate students who arrive late.

I confess that I used to incorporate icebreakers into my daily lesson plans but somehow I've become less diligent over the years. Perhaps this is because I feel increasing pressure to keep up with the curriculum, stay on schedule and pack as much material as possible into my hour-and-twenty-minute class period. Of course, these are good and necessary goals, but I'm afraid I've lost something in the process. If I have fallen into this bad habit, I'm certain there are other teachers out there who have as well. It is for this reason that the Winter Issue of the ITBE Newsletter features icebreaker ideas. Hopefully you will find at least a few ideas that will work for your class-room and optimize your students' learning.

One of my favorite sources for icebreaker ideas is actually to remember the simple party games I played as a child. I frequently use the Toilet Paper Squares game in the classroom. As students arrive, I hold out a roll of toilet paper and instruct them to take as much as they would like. When class begins, I tell them to separate and count the number of squares they have taken. That number represents the number of things they have to tell the class about themselves (or perhaps about whatever topic we are studying that week). This gets students talking and, because there's toilet paper involved, giggling quite a bit.

Of course, brainstorming activities are another popular icebreaker that can easily be adapted to lead directly into your daily lesson. I like to do brainstorming in small groups to encourage collaboration and oral communication. For example, if I'm teaching a grocery shopping lesson in a beginner class, students can brainstorm food words. In a grammar class, they can brainstorm verbs or adjectives. In a writing class, students can brainstorm essay topics. The possibilities are nearly limitless. This activity can easily be turned into a fierce competition by

giving candy to the group that comes up with the longest list.

Conversation cards are another one of my favorite icebreaker activities for intermediate or advanced classes. I give each student a card with a question on it. I then tell students to circulate around the room and ask-answertrade. They ask another student their question, answer that other student's question and then trade cards. The purpose of trading cards is that they will always have a new question with each new partner they talk with. I like this activity for its flexibility. I can limit it to five minutes or let it go on for twenty depending on the needs of the class that day.

If you are looking for more icebreaker ideas, check out the activities submitted by ITBE members on page 7. There's also a great little book called Five Minute Activities and you can find a review on page 6. Finally, there's always the Internet. Although overwhelming in the number of choices it offers, you can find some quality activities if you know where to look. May I offer the following websites as a jumping-off point:

http://www.eslflow.com/ICEBREAKERSreal.html http://www.esl4teachers.com/icebreakers.php http://www.eslpartyland.com/teachers/nov/conv.htm (for the conversation cards I mentioned earlier)

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### About the Newsletter ......

he newsletter is a publication of Illinois Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Bilingual Education, a non-profit professional organization, founded in 1970, which disseminates information, provides a forum, and serves as an advocate for students, educators and administrators in the field. Illinois TESOL BE is an affiliate of TESOL, an international organization.

Membership in Illinois TESOL•BE is open to all interested individuals. To join, please use the form in this issue of the *Newsletter;* for further information about membership, call **(312) 409-4770** or visit our web site at <u>www.itbe.org</u>.

#### **Submission Information**

Illinois TESOL•BE welcomes letters and contributions to the Newsletter. The Newsletter is published four times per year with the following copy deadlines:

March 15 ● June 15 ● September 15 ● December 15

Articles and other items for consideration should be submitted as Microsoft Word attachments to email and sent to: news@itbe.org

Citations and references should conform to APA guidelines. The editors reserve the right to modify any material selected for publication to fit the available space, or to improve on clarity and style. Authors will be consulted prior to publication if changes are deemed by the editors to be substantial.

#### **Advertisement Information**

The *Illinois TESOL*BE Newsletter limits the space devoted to advertising. To inquire about placing an ad in the *Newsletter*, contact Marsha Santelli at (773) 525-3960 or e-mail marsantell@aol.com.

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## 2009 Fall Workshop Draws Record Numbers

The ITBE 2009 Fall Workshop, held on October 17th, boasted a record number of attendees. The theme "Tech Talk for ESL/Bilingual Educators" drew nearly 150 people to Harper College. The outstanding plenary address, delivered by Susanne McLaughlin was entitled "Smart Classrooms, Smart Teachers." Susanne is the Director of the English Program at Roosevelt University and also serves as the Treasurer on the ITBE Board. In addition to the plenary, the Fall Workshop offered 12 breakout sessions on various technology-related topics. The ITBE Board would like to extend a special thank you to all who participated and presented at this overwhelmingly successful event.

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us at the Spring Workshop on April 10, location to be announced.





## 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention February 26-27, 2010

Holiday Inn Select, Naperville

Amid economic, political, cultural and technological changes, the field of TESOL and Bilingual Education continues to grow and evolve. ITBE's annual convention gives you the opportunity to stay current and energized:

Re-familiarize yourself with tried and true teaching methods that have withstood the tests of time:

Catch up with new ideas and approaches that are currently evolving;

Explore the latest publications and teaching materials;

Connect with colleagues from around the state;

Re-discover your passion for the field of TESOL/BE!

#### Convention speakers include:



Dr. Janet Zadina



Luis Urrea



Dr. Patsy Lightbown



One Heart for Congo



David Barker



**Brock Brady** 





Dr. Gary Cook & Dr. Paula White

For more information or to register visit www.itbe.org.

## Register before January 23<sup>rd</sup> for special rates!

Attendees can earn up to 6 CPDUs and/or Adult Education professional development hours on each day of the convention.

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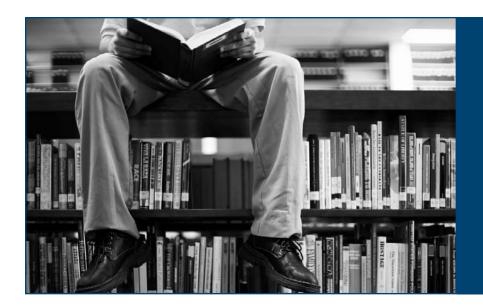
Friday – Saturday • February 26th - 27th, 2010 • Holiday Inn Select • Naperville, Illinois

Both convention registration and membership, including payment of fees, can be processed via our web site: www.itbe.org.

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Complete the following infor	mation to join o	or renew your membership. Th	hen register for the	he Convention at the member ra	te.
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For hotel accommodations, contact the Holiday Inn Select at (630) 505-4900. Rooms available for \$89 plus tax when you mention ITBE.

Special convention rates are only available for reservations made by February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010.



## Resource Review

Book review of Five Minute Activities

Penny Ur and Andrew Wright have produced a great little book entitled <u>Five-Minute Activities</u>. It is, exactly as the title suggests, a collection of activities designed to take up about 5 minutes of class time. The authors recommend using their activities as icebreakers, vocabulary review, closing activities, or even in the midst of a lesson as a light transition from one topic to the next. Best of all, these 130+ activities are designed to require a minimum of preparation. In other words, teachers can flip this book open, point to any page and implement the activity in class immediately. With a very few exceptions, all of the activities in this book can be used at any level with only minor adaptations.

The only drawback of the book is its organization. The activities are arranged in alphabetical order, by their titles. This method of organization works well, as long as you remember the title of the particular activity you are seeking. However, it would be more convenient to have the activities divided into sections based on skill. For example, if a teacher is about to present a vocabulary lesson, it would be helpful to have all of the vocabulary activities grouped into one section.

To give a flavor of the book's content, I'll share one of the more intriguing activities called "It was the way she said it." In this activity, students take one word or short phrase (numerous suggestions are provided in the book) and say it with as many different intonations/meanings as possible. One of the example phrases is "Come here." Students can have fun saying "Come here" with excitement, with authority, with pleading, with panic, etc. The authors suggest, if time allows, discussing the circumstances in which each intonation might be used.

Published by Cambridge University Press, this is a great tool for language teachers.

## We asked... You answered: What's your favorite ICEBREAKER activity?

• "Find Someone Who. Students circulate around the room and find someone who...

Is from Asia

Has a pet

Speaks French

Etc.

This is a great activity for working on question formation."

Jill B.

- "Name Chain. Everyone stands in a circle and someone says, "I am John." The person next to him says, "He is John, and I am Mary." Person #3 says, "John, Mary, and my name is Miguel." etc. It's TONS of fun, breaks the ice right away people are not shy anymore to call each other by name after this, also gives everyone a chance to double-check the pronunciation."

  Diana B.
- "Two truths and a lie. Each student takes a turn telling others in class three things about themselves—two of them are true, the third is a lie. The others are to guess which one is the lie. As an extension, at the end the teacher can compile a list and then students take a "quiz" to see if they remember who's who."

Gevik A.

• "Telephone. You can use this to practice key language learned in previous day's class. Write down a list of sentences. Have the student at the one end of the line read and whisper a sentence. Have them repeat it to their neighbor. You sit at the end and write them on the board. At the end, go through them and analyze mistakes."

Heather T.

- "Hot Seat. One student volunteers to sit in the "hot seat" and answers questions from the class. Questions about likes and dislikes and daily routines work best. The students like being the VIP of the day. (You can also teach, "I'd rather not say" for questions that are too personal.)

  Betsy K.
- "ABC lineup. Ask students to line up in alphabetical order by last name using the two key questions (What is your name? How do you spell that?). Usually in this process they also learn each other's first names and start chatting. This also gives students who are late the first day a chance to find the room and immediately become aware that this is no passive listening class!"

  Jacqueline C.



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## Message From The President

Maja Teref - ITBE President 2009-2010

## Ringing in the New Year with ITBE

As we emerge from a long string of holidays, your favorite professional development non-profit organization, ITBE, has been working full throttle, planning, negotiating, advocating. As we ring out 2009 and welcome 2010, we at ITBE have much to be thankful for and much to look forward to.

The Fall Workshop at Harper College, organized by Professional Development Chair Diana Booth with her team and fearlessly promoted by Publicity Chair Rebecca Walker and Technology Chair Steven Teref, was indeed a resounding success which still has us reeling. We know you enjoy technology, which is why the attendance was extraordinary and your feedback highly complimentary. ITBE is thankful for your continued support and loyalty. I am sure you would like to know that the very team which organized and promoted our fall event has already planned the Spring Workshop titled "Active Learning" April 10th, 2010 with distinguished Dr. Alan Seaman from Wheaton College as the plenary speaker.

The upcoming convention "Changing Times, Changing Lives," ITBE's annual crowning event, chaired by our brilliant Convention Chair Jill Blair, is taking place in Naperville, on February 26<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>, 2010, and I assure you it will be a blast: this time we will be featuring Dr. Zadina, a neuroscientist, Luis Urrea, a famous novelist and frequent NPR guest, renowned applied linguist Dr. Lightbown, and a presentation by the Heart of Congo. Not to mention the numerous break-out sessions which promise to span a wide range of topics to keep you abreast of the latest trends in our profession. Also, while at the convention, I would like to encourage you to introduce yourselves to us, your friendly ITBE board members, and inquire about becoming involved in the organization, or simply say hello. The convention is, after all, our largest annual meeting, and we are very enthusiastic about meeting you.

On another note, I would like to inform you about a new trend at ITBE whose outcome will be informed by your feedback – the electronic newsletter. In an effort to conserve paper, save trees, and, technologically speaking, move on with the times, ITBE has been considering switching exclusively to the electronic (PDF) form of the ITBE quarterly newsletter. Publicity Chair Rebecca Walker and Newsletter Editor Kimberly Sanford have already sent you a postcard requesting your input, and as soon as we hear from you, we will put this idea to vote. If it passes, ITBE will be able to be more environmentally friendly, continue to support your teaching efforts and reward your successes with its scholarships and grants.

Speaking of money matters, even in these financially difficult times, ITBE proudly continues to support you, by offering numerous professional development and scholarship awards, and your students, through our Poetry and Writing Contests.

Moreover, to assist you further, ITBE has added two more opportunities for you to excel in your teaching efforts, namely, two up to \$1,000 Teacher Innovation Grants and the \$500 Elliot Judd Outstanding Teacher Award. As is customary, the above awards and grants will be presented at the annual convention.

So what are we, at ITBE, thankful for? The ability to provide you, our loyal members, with topnotch plenary speakers, quality break-out sessions, many scholarships and awards, the opportunity to network and learn – this is what fulfills our mission and what gives us pleasure. Above all, we are grateful for you and your dedication to the field of TESOL and bilingual education — for the gift of being part of a dynamic professional learning community.

See you at the convention!

Maja Teref

ITBE President



## PUBLISH? Yes You Can!

### Guest Writer Mary F. Henggeler shares her advice on how to self-publish a book.

The following are some basic steps to follow if you want to self-publish a book. I found it a very rewarding experience and would like to share this process with you.

- Formulate an idea.
- Visualize how your idea could be formed into a book.
- Continue to work on your book.
- Contact a publishing house. I worked with Author House in Bloomington, Indiana. They can be reached at <a href="www.authorhouse.com">www.authorhouse.com</a>. However, there are other publishing houses that help people who want to self-publish. There is an initial cost. In my case it covered the copyright, the ISBN number, a color paperback book, author website with custom domain, 10 copies of the book, book listings on Author House, Amazon.com, and Barnes & Noble.com.
- Sign your publishing agreement.
- Submit your manuscript along with any photos or artwork you want included. Author House wanted everything submitted electronically.
- Participate in the Design Team call. You will be sent the preview layout of the interior pages and the cover to look over.
- Review/Approve or make changes in the interior pages and cover.
- Enjoy seeing your idea in print.
- Set a price.
- Promote and sell your book. Marketing, getting your book out to the public, is the most expensive part of this process.
- My book is "Where's Wendy?" The Curious Cat. It is a book of photographs depicting Wendy, a curious cat, who loves to sneak into various places and explore things around the house. The book is intended for all young children. However, children learning English as a Second Language will also find it can be a fun way to learn prepositions, especially "on" and "in". For example, they can find Wendy "on the copy machine" and "in the kitchen cabinet". In addition to reading the book, children can cut out a picture of Wendy and place her in other locations in and around the house. Doing this they can continue to enjoy Wendy while further developing their language skills.

I enjoyed putting the book together and have received very positive feedback from various members of my young audience. I wish you much success with your publishing endeavors. If you have questions, feel free to contact me at <a href="mailto:m.henggeler@comcast.net">m.henggeler@comcast.net</a>.

## Scholarship Applications and AWARD Nominations are NOW being accepted!

Members of ITBE may apply for the following:

1. Professional Development SCHOLARSHIPS to attend the annual Convention:

http://www.itbe.org/profaward.html?mode=preview

Illinois TESOL / Bilingual Education

36<sup>th</sup>Annual Convention

February 26<sup>th</sup>& 27<sup>th</sup>

Holiday Inn Select

Naperville, Illinois

Theme: "Changing Times, Changing Lives"

2. \$1,000 Graduate Scholarships and \$500 Undergraduate Scholarships:

http://www.itbe.org/scholarships.html

3. Teacher Innovation Grants (up to \$1,000) to be spend during the school year for creative and innovative teaching projects:

http://www.itbe.org/teacherinnovation.htm

4. Nominate a colleague for the Elliot Judd Outstanding Teacher Award:

http://www.itbe.org/judd.htm

5. Involve your K-12 students in a writing contest or poetry contest:

http://www.itbe.org/writing.html

See www.itbe.org for more details.

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Visit our booth at the ITBE Convention February 26-27, 2010

For more program information: http://elf.georgetown.edu or Contact:

Nancy Peters Northcentral Recruitment Center English Language Fellow Program Email: petersn@fvtc.edu Tel: 920-735-4844

OR Georgetown University
Center for Intercultural Education & Development
English Language Fellow Program
Email: elf@georgetown.edu

Tel: 202-687-2608 Fax: 202-687-2555



## Dr. Juan Andrade: Demonstrating Leadership and Inspiring Latino Students

.....over 200,000 students trained......

Dr. Juan Andrade, president of the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute (USHLI.org), continues to guide Hispanic high school and college students. In the 28 years of its existence, USHLI has criss-crossed the country and has trained over 200,000 students in leadership skills, registered over two million new voters and published 425 studies on Hispanic demographics since 1982. The USHLI headquarters and national conference are held in Chicago. A day is set aside at the conference for motivational speakers for the approximately 3,000 high school students in attendance. There is no charge for the students to attend. They are given a box lunch. USHLI sponsors the largest Latino leadership conference in the nation.

Dr. Andrade holds five college degrees: a B.A. from Howard Payne University, a M.Ed. from Antioch College, an Ed.S. and Doctorate from Northern Illinois University, and a post-doctorate M.A. from Loyola University Chicago. He has been recognized for distinction by Howard Payne University, Northern Illinois University and Loyola University. He has also received four honorary degrees.

President Andrade was a political commentator on ABC-7 television for six years in Chicago and WGN radio. He was the only Latino commentator in the nation appearing on English language radio or television. He has worked and participated in the democratization of Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia, Paraguay, Bolivia, Guyana, Surinam and Haiti.

Dr. Andrade has been recognized three times as one of the most influential Hispanics in America. Given his many accomplishments, it is not surprising that Dr. Andrade is a Presidential Medal recipient, honored for "the performance of exemplary deeds of service for the nation".

Access USHLI.org for information on conferences and programs such as SALSA or CLDP. The Strategic Alliance of Latino Student Association (SALSA) is designed to recruit Latino high school students for college. Collegiate Leadership Development Program (CLDP) is a seven week interactive, bilateral, policy-oriented training program for Latino student leaders and university staff, faculty and administrators. The program is designed to focus on how to formulate, exercise, and influence policy.

Research and reports done by USHLI are varied and include an almanac published every two years on Latino demographics state by state.

Other research reveals information such as the following:

By 2040 one in four persons will be Hispanic. By the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the U.S. population will be 40% white, 33% Hispanic, 13 % African American and 13 % Asian.

Myth: Latinos are politically apathetic. Fact: Latinos are registering to vote at a rate six times greater than the general population and turning out to vote at a rate five times greater than the general population

Myth: Beyond providing laborers, Latinos contribute very little to society. Fact: Latinos are creating new businesses at a rate three times faster than the general population, generating over 200 billion dollars per year in revenue. Myth: Most Latinos are poor. Fact: Latino purchasing power is now 700 billion dollars per year and growing at an average rate of one billion dollars per week, 4 billion dollars per month, 50 billion dollars per year.

Information is based on material provided by USHLI and submitted to ITBE/TESOL by Maureen E. KIlty, Ed.D., adjunct faculty at National-Louis University, Lisle, IL

## People in the News

<u>Maja Teref</u>, ITBE President, and <u>Steven Teref</u>, ITBE Board member, recently had their book of Serbian poem translations published by Host publications. Entitled <u>Assembly</u>, this bilingual book contains translations by the renowned poet <u>Novica Tadic</u> and can be found at http://hostpublications.com.

<u>Kristin Lems, Leah Miller, ITBE</u> Board Member, and <u>Tenena Soro</u> are the authors of <u>Reading in a New Language: Linguistic Insight,</u> which was published this fall by Guildford Press. The book covers reading and language theories with classroom applications for teachers of English Language Learners. The authors, all ITBE members, have also presented several times at ITBE Conventions.

<u>Susanne McLaughlin</u>, ITBE Treasurer, and <u>Jane Curtis</u>, Directors of the ELI at Roosevelt University, have been invited to give their workshop, "I Caught, You Caught, YouTube" at the New Jersey Adult and Higher Education Conference in Mont Clair, New Jersey. The workshop caught the attention of New Jersey when it was presented as one of the "Best of the Affiliates" presentations at the 2009 TESOL Convention in Denver.

<u>Diana Booth</u>, ITBE Professional Development Chair and Assistant ESL Director at Triton College, had an article published in the October 2009 issue of Essential Teacher. The article entitled "Wikis: One More Great Tool" explains what wikis are and why and how they could be used in the ESL classroom.

<u>Elise Klein</u>, frequent keynote speaker at TESOL conventions, teacher and leader died recently. In 2006 she was the plenary speaker at our own ITBE Convention in Naperville. She was one of the founders of the Social Responsibility Caucus which became a TESOL Interest Section. As President of Teachers Against Prejudice, she constantly strove to make the world a better place through education.

Submit your professional news for publication in an upcoming issue of the ITBE Newsletter.

Send to news@itbe.org



The next issue of the ITBE newsletter will be focused on the issues and concerns of part time teachers. The ITBE newsletter staff invites your questions, comments or letters to the editor concerning this topic. Please send submissions to news@itbe.org.



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GELERATED PROGRAMS.

## THE PROFESSIONAL PLANNER

Feb. 26- ITBE State Convention

Feb. 27 Holiday Inn Select, Naperville

Contact: www.itbe.org

March 24-27 TESOL Convention

Boston, MA

Contact: www.tesol.org

**Apr. 10** ITBE Spring Workshop

Northeastern Illinois University

Contact: www.itbe.org



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