

The LLL SIG Newsletter

Program Chair's Message

Joseph V. Dias

This final newsletter of the year is chock-full of interesting articles and short reports of presentations given at the LLL-SIG Forum at JALT 2012 in Hamamatsu, on October 13th of this year. The second part of an article, "Facilitating Online Language Training for Mature Learners," by Don Maybin, will also appear in this issue. It is based on a talk of the same name that he delivered at the LLL-SIG Mini Conference last year.

The LLL-SIG forum at JALT's national conference was on the theme "Reading for life: The making of lifelong readers." Six speakers participated in the forum, with Melvin Andrade (of Sophia University Junior College Division) leading the way with his segment on "A global perspective on adult literacy and social justice: What the developing world can teach Japan about life transformative reading." He contended that although lifelong reading in English for Japanese adults and the basic literacy needs of adults in developing countries are on the surface different, they share some common features. He felt that, essential to the success of literacy programs, is the use of participatory methodologies that address real-world needs and draw on the life experiences of students. His presentation introduced the educational practices of Action Aid's "Reflect" program and case studies demonstrating the life transformative effects of adult literacy. A short listing of the resources he introduced to the audience will be included with the other, more detailed, forum reports.

Gregory Strong, Joseph Dias and Todd Rucynski (professors at Aoyama Gakuin University and Tokai University) were next in the line up with their segment on "Promoting lifelong readers through a teacher-produced video." Twelve reading teachers collaborated to produce a video showcasing the varied ways that reading can be taught, from literary analysis of graded readers and vocabulary apps for cellphones, to dramatic interpretation and task-based approaches that incorporate the skills of speaking, listening, and writing and integrate reading of online content. The suggestions introduced in the video were intended to cultivate lifelong readers who could derive pleasure from reading, rather than simply learn

to decode complex texts. Joseph Dias will summarize what was covered in this part of the forum.

The third speaker was Adam Murray, of Tokai University, who spoke about the almost unlimited reading content (i.e., authentic texts, original and adapted texts written for EFL and ESL learners) available on the Internet, which can be an invaluable resource in the reading classroom. Not only do these texts provide essential input, but the speaker also maintained that they could be a source of motivation for reluctant readers. Prof. Murray, in this volume and during his presentation, introduced a number of resources for paced reading, timed reading, and vocabulary development that could be used in any learning context.

Finally, Atsuko Kosaka (Aichi University), a “reading workshop” teacher encourages students to grow as readers through mini-lessons, conferences, and sharing time. As a lifelong reader and as a mentor, the speaker described how she helps students learn various aspects of reading, including making effective book choices, talking about books, and expanding their reading repertoire through interactions with other readers. This presentation discussed what a reading workshop approach is and explored its potential contribution to EFL reading instruction. Prof. Kosaka expands upon what she presented at the forum in her article in this volume.

It is our wish that you find some gems of knowledge or wisdom, if not both, in this final issue of the LLL Newsletter for this year. May it push you further forward on your journey of lifelong learning.