

# TNTESOL

SINCE 1978

TENNESSEE TEACHERS OF ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

Spring 2014

Newsletter

Vol. 35, Issue 2



Warren County High School Dancers

Conference Photos by Victoria Duff

## Inside This Issue

Message from the President.....	3
TNTESOL Conference Reflection.....	5
TESOL Membership and Conference....	6
Teacher of the Year.....	7
Message from the State.....	8
Technology Benefits Students.....	9
Communication and Advocacy Day.....	10
Interactive Word Walls.....	11

Conference Awards.....	13
Wrapping a Scarf around Parents.....	14
Conference Chair Thanks.....	15
In Memoriam .....	15
An Old Fashioned Idea for Today .....	16
Maximize Classroom Funds.....	17
Save the Date.....	18
Conference Photos.....	19
Call for Papers.....	23

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Shelby County Schools  
[president@tntesol.org](mailto:president@tntesol.org)

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[parliamentarian@tntesol.org](mailto:parliamentarian@tntesol.org)

### Newsletter Editor

Andrea Bontempi  
Rutherford County Schools  
[newsletter@tntesol.org](mailto:newsletter@tntesol.org)

### Journal Editor

Johnna Paraiso  
Rutherford County Schools  
[paraisoj@rcschools.net](mailto:paraisoj@rcschools.net)

### TN Dept. of Education Representative (Ex Officio)

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Tennessee State Dept. of Education  
[Jan.Lanier@tn.gov](mailto:Jan.Lanier@tn.gov)

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[henegark@k12tn.net](mailto:henegark@k12tn.net)

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*Courtesy of the Nashville Zoo*

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[nina.morel@lipscomb.edu](mailto:nina.morel@lipscomb.edu)

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[arood@k12tn.net](mailto:arood@k12tn.net)

Becky Young, 2015  
Dayton City School  
[youngbe@daytoncity.net](mailto:youngbe@daytoncity.net)

Deana Conn, 2016  
Nashville Metropolitan Public Schools  
[deanai@hotmail.com](mailto:deanai@hotmail.com)

Debra Frantz, 2016  
Shelby County Schools  
[dfrantz67@gmail.com](mailto:dfrantz67@gmail.com)

Abasi McKinzie, 2016  
Shelby County Schools  
[abasi.mck@gmail.com](mailto:abasi.mck@gmail.com)

Jason Groppe, 2017  
Clarksville-Montgomery County Schools  
[jason.groppe@cmcss.net](mailto:jason.groppe@cmcss.net)

Joseph Whinery, 2017  
Williamson County Schools  
[webmaster@tntesol.org](mailto:webmaster@tntesol.org)

Michael Thompson, 2017  
Metro-Nashville Public Schools  
[michael@michaeldavidmedia.com](mailto:michael@michaeldavidmedia.com)

## Message from the President

Lee Ann Kelly  
Shelby County Schools

Thank you for bestowing the honor upon me to serve as the 2014-2015 TNTESOL President. I am truly grateful to be a part of such an outstanding organization.

TNTESOL 2014 was a great success! Thank you Cary McPherson and Jason Groppe for being such wonderful conference chairs. Many thanks to your team for all of the hours and hard work they endured planning and carrying out a top-notch conference.

TNTESOL continues to grow as an organization and remains committed to its purpose. TNTESOL's mission is to develop the expertise of its members to help them foster effective communication in diverse settings while respecting individuals' language rights. Our purposes are to promote scholarship, to disseminate information, to strengthen instruction and research in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages or dialects, and to cooperate in appropriate ways with other groups having similar concerns. TNTESOL would like to reach out to all individuals having the desire to join our awesome organization. We continue to seek new membership and offer opportunities to interested individuals.

In addition, I would also like to thank Dr. LaWanna Shelton for her exceptional leadership and true compassion for TNTESOL. She is responsible for many technological advancements that have taken place within our organization. Her vision for growth has enabled our organization to be vibrant as we enter into the future. Moving forward, we must not forget those who are leaving the Board of Directors: Diane Mackey, Dan Schlafer, Christine Tennyson and Sunita Watson. We appreciate all of the time and effort these outstanding individuals have contributed to the growth of TNTESOL. They will be greatly missed! On a special note, Diane Mackey receives special recognition – TNTESOL 2014 – was her 25<sup>th</sup> consecutive TNTESOL Conference. Thank you Diane for your fearless dedication. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to *welcome and congratulate* our newest board members: *Michael Thomsson, Joseph Whinery and welcome back Jason Groppe*. Thank you Julie Harrison for taking on the important role as TNTESOL Treasurer.

Mark your calendars and write your proposals for our upcoming conferences: **SETESOL** will be in Rogers, Arkansas, October 8-11, 2014 (<http://arktesol.org>). **TN TESOL** will be in Kingsport, March 5-7, 2015 ([www.tntesol.org](http://www.tntesol.org)), and **TESOL** will be in Toronto, Canada, March 26-29, 2015 ([www.tesol.org](http://www.tesol.org)).

On a final note, let's continue to collaborate and promote our organization to the fullest. By promoting the organization we grow as professionals. The *TNTESOL Newsletter* and *TNTESOL Journal* are excellent educational tools and provide a plethora of useful information. Feel free to reach out to me or any other TNTESOL Board Members, help us grow as a community for the betterment of all learners.





Victoria Duff—hopeful to win the autographed guitar

TNTESOL is an active and vital organization and we encourage and promote all TESOL professionals. If you know someone who would be interested, please let us know. We look forward to hearing from you.

The **TNTESOL Newsletter** is published three times a year. Submissions are accepted on a variety of topics. We welcome book reviews, issues in the fields of K-12, Refugee ESL, Adult Ed, Higher Ed and more, as well as articles on teaching strategies, news related to TNTESOL or the field, jokes, classroom anecdotes, even recipes.

The style for submissions can be informal and articles are typically 500-1000 words. Of course, exceptions can be made! A bibliography is not necessary unless the article is research-based.



Send your ideas via email attachment along with your personal information by the issue deadline to:  
Andrea Bontempi, Newsletter Editor  
newsletter@tntesol.org

#### Deadlines

#### Issue

August 1, 2014	Summer/Fall 2014
December 1, 2014	Winter 2015
April 1, 2015	Spring 2015



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## Gundi Ressin Memorial Scholarship Recipient

### Reflections on my Experience at the 2014 TNTESOL Conference

Renee Tolliver Combs  
District-Wide ESL Teacher  
Campbell County Schools

I wanted to give a brief overview of my experience at the 2014 TNTESOL conference. First, the venue for the conference, The Nashville Airport Marriot, was the perfect setting- convenient, accommodating, not to mention- beautiful and inviting. The check-in process was seamless. My tickets for events were all ready for me at the TNTESOL conference registration. The state day was especially informative with an overview of the new WIDA Standards, and assurance by Jan Lanier that we would be receiving WIDA training- YEAH!!

The quality of the "Breakout Sessions" was superior. They were diverse and informative. I especially liked the presentation by Dr. Patty Davis Wiley- "Goanimate Your Classroom- Lessons Ready To Go." Anytime I can have something fun and done for my classroom, I am very happy, and I know that I am hearing an "Amen" from time-strapped teachers.

Having received the TNTESOL Travel Grant, I also was honored to present at the conference. My presentation was "Grammar, No Labels." I know from not only professional, but personal experience that grammar is key to decoding in a second language. Transliteration can only work to a point. Meaningful translation and learning happens when direct presentation of material is followed by opportunities for students to engage and use it. What do I mean by this? Well, as I stated in my presentation, I can spell almost anything, but I still remember being "sick to my stomach" by having to "label" short and long vowels. There is no connection to the usage and the label. In my classroom, I follow this pattern:

- Set clear objectives
- Build on prior knowledge
- Direct Presentation of material
- Use graphic organizers
- Engage and Involve which 99% of the time means games

I move as quickly as possible to a game. For me, this has been extremely effective in motivating my students to learn. I presented two games. One was "Touch the Board" and the other was the "Academic Word Game." Both can be viewed on the TNTESOL website. I had evidence that these worked today as I had my students write a summary of a movie we had watched. I was literally "floored" by the fluency in their writing. I asked what had done this and they credited the "Academic word Game." This for me proves that God helps the desperate. I was simply looking for a way to incorporate a "bell ringer" and practice with academic vocabulary.

I assumed that not many people would be that interested in grammar. Boy, was I wrong!! It was "standing room only, "and my knees were shaking! Not only was my audience interested, but excited to put the games I had created to use in their classrooms. They loved the aspect of concentrating on the usage and not the labels of grammatical concepts. It felt so good to be able to share with my colleagues.

On the technical front, I was surprised that when I went to "set up," I had two technicians to help me. The forethought given to possible problems with technology was impressive. For example, before I even went to the conference, I received communication on what was available as far as interfaces with the system. This had been a problem for me at a different conference because I had a Mac and there was no compatibility with the system provided- PANIC!!!

*Continued on page 6*

*Continued from page 5*

Let me take a moment and talk about what really made the conference special. The conference ran like a well-oiled machine and for that I “tip my hat” to the hard work of the TNTESOL Board. They worked very diligently so we teachers could enjoy, relax, share, and learn. However, what really made the conference special for me was the quality of the attendees. We are told to have “professional learning communities.” Too often, pride and fear interrupt the sharing of useful practices and information. I was amazed at the graciousness and professionalism of my fellow ESL teachers in Tennessee. Not only were they more than willing to share, but they were also excited to learn any practice which would make them more effective in their roles as teachers and mentors.

If I had to advise anyone if they should attend our yearly conference, I would say, “only if you want to be refreshed and reinvigorated to face another year. “



## ANNOUNCEMENT from TESOL International Association

Current members of TNTESOL who have *never* been members of TESOL International Association or have *not had a TESOL membership in the past 3 years* will receive a 25% discount off the full price of a TESOL Professional Membership. 1 Year: \$98.00 discounted to \$73.50 or 2 Years: \$166.00 discounted to \$124.50. To receive the discount, enter the *promotion code\** at the beginning of the application.

(Code will be good through May 2014.) Be sure to enter TNTESOL as your affiliate.

Web Link: [www.tesol.org/join](http://www.tesol.org/join)

\*The *Promotion Code* can be accessed through the *Members Only* page of [tntesol.org](http://tntesol.org).

## TESOL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Lee Ann Kelly  
TNTESOL President

The beautiful northwest city of Portland, Oregon was the site for the 2014 TESOL International Convention and English Language Expo. With more than 6,500 fellow TESOLers from more than 120 countries, the convention center was a bustling arena filled with a plethora of educational experience. The mornings offered keynote speakers that followed with days filled with a multitude of interest sections. Strategies for Building Academic Vocabulary in Every Content Classroom, Common Core Meets Mother Goose, and Digital Media as a Catalyst for Second Language Development were some of the most interesting sessions. It is with great pride when I can say that our State TNTESOL Conference is very much in line with the International Convention.

The annual Affiliate Assembly gave me an opportunity to represent TNTESOL. This leadership session provided me with a chance to collaborate with educators from as close as Texas and as far away as Argentina. Overall, the convention was extremely informational.

## TNTESOL Teacher of the Year

Christine Tennyson  
TOY 2014 Chairperson

We are delighted to recognize outstanding teachers from the state of Tennessee. Every year we select three K-12 teachers who have been nominated by their fellow teachers and former students. The teachers must be members of TNTESOL to be nominated. We are looking for teachers who are not only great classroom teachers, but are also leaders at their schools and go beyond the classroom and school to help in the community. Nominations are open at the TNTESOL website from the day after TNTESOL through the end of September. The Teacher of the Year committee then selects a winner from each of the three divisions of the state. From those the Board of Directors selects an overall winner.

We began this award because, in the past, ESL teachers were not often recognized by their schools. Now, this is changing. In fact, our own Byron Booker was Tennessee state teacher of the year a few years back. In addition, we have had many teachers who have been TOY at their school or for their district. We have a fellow member, Ms. Doubleday, in the running for CORE Teacher of the Year. If you have been nominated in your school or district this year as teacher of the year, please contact us. We would like to recognize you in the newsletter.

This year we had many wonderful nominations! The committee, Angela Rood, Debra Frantz and I had a challenging time selecting the winners. If you nominated someone this year, please feel free to nominate them again in the future.

### Western Region:

**Dana Siegel**, from Shelby County Schools, had two nominators. She has taught ESL for several years and before that taught Spanish. She was chosen as one of the 20 models of ESL programs from the US Department of Education. She works tirelessly to serve her students and support the teachers of her building as they assist the English Learners at their school. She works in the community as an advocate for her students. In addition, she is a teachers' teacher and has had several articles published. As a presenter at professional conferences, she is known throughout the country as a strong instructional resource for all teachers. She is also an active member of TNTESOL and has served on the board in the past.



### Eastern Region:

**Christy Evans**, from Alcoa City Schools, was nominated by a former student. That is one of the highest honors a teacher can have. The student wrote "She helped me become a better reader and writer by letting me stay after school to read with her." She let us borrow books and taught us in the summer so that we could grow in the summer too.

### Central Region:

**Tiffany Wilson-Mobley**, from Williamson County Schools, is this year's OVERALL Winner! She is a dedicated professional both for her students and the families in her community. For several years, she has run parent-student learning communities that met after school to teach the parents English. She is also a productive member of the teaching profession and has presented at several conferences. She is an active member of both TNTESOL and TESOL. In addition, she is a board certified teacher, a distinctive honor.

Congratulations to all our winners!



# *A Message from the State*

Dear TNTESOLers,

TNTESOL had a dynamic conference in Nashville March 19-22. Thanks to all, especially Jason Groppe and Cary McPherson, who worked to make this one of the best TNTESOL conferences ever. Tammy Harosky issued an invitation to come to Bristol for next year's TNTESOL conference as we "Race to the TOP."

The Tennessee Department of Education supported several guest speakers. We began the state day with the announcement that Tennessee will be administering the WIDA ACCESS test for the first time in winter 2015. Following our announcement, Jesse Markow spoke to us about WIDA standards and services.

Presenters Joann Lucero, Ryan Mathis, and Allison Gauld presented information about Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2). The presentation was especially designed for ESL administrators and teachers. This gave ESL professionals the opportunity to ask the questions and to express concerns as we move forward with a program that will better serve all of Tennessee's students, including English Learners. This dynamic presentation offered needed support and identified the goals that we all share.

Presenter Lori Nixon shared information about testing accommodations and about the PARCC assessment. Mary Battiwalla presented the Tennessee Landscape for English Learners which was a well-received session that highlighted Tennessee's demographics with this population. Joann Lucero and I presented new guidance about the WIDA standards and expectations for ELs in Tennessee. Additionally, on the last day of the conference, I shared new documents that will support districts with intake and identification of ELs, and an outline of Title III plans for the future.

The Friday night entertainment and dinner at the Governor's mansion was a wonderful evening. We heard from Commissioner Huffman, were delighted by the music and presentations by some of Tennessee's most talented students, and were warmed by the music and stories from Dr. Ming Wang.

During April, May and June, the department will provide training regarding "The Pedagogy behind the WIDA Standards." This summer the department will also provide training showing us how to use the WIDA standards to enhance instruction. We are inviting both ESL teachers and other core education teachers to attend. Lori Nixon is moving forward with training for the WIDA screener, the W-APT. Connie Casha is working to support the adoption of WIDA standards for pre-K students.

Enjoy your summer.  
Jan

Jan Lanier  
ESL Coordinator/Title III Consultant  
Division of Special Populations  
TN Department of Education  
Jan.Lanier@tn.gov  
Twitter: @TNedu  
Facebook.com/TennesseeEducation





## Gundi Ressin Memorial Scholarship Recipient

### Technology Benefits Students in Unexpected Ways

Lori Likins  
First Grade Teacher  
Glengarry Elementary School

My name is Lori Likins and I am a first grade teacher at Glengarry Elementary School. I work in a blended classroom with 14 EL and 6 non EL students. Most of my students qualify for free and reduced lunch and most come to school excited to learn each day. This year I have students whose families come from 8 different countries. I feel blessed to work in a school with such exceptional diversity.

In my search to learn more about meeting the needs of my EL students I have benefitted from excellent training from Tennessee State University and from Metro Nashville Public Schools. However, as you may guess, securing needed resources has always been the challenge in my classroom. The academic needs of my 1<sup>st</sup> graders span from early Kindergarteners to early 3rd graders. I have students reading at very low and very high levels. I have students who have not yet mastered identifying numbers from 1-120 and those who are ready for regrouping addition and subtraction. While I differentiate in my classroom to accommodate for language, academic and social emotional needs, I am always on the lookout for new ways to engage my students in differentiated activities while I work with small groups of students. I also want to give my students access to and practice with the latest technology.

Over the years, I have found many wonderful websites and apps with the same goals as my own, supporting students, giving opportunities for basic skills practice in highly scaffolded, highly engaging ways. Today, the issue has changed from *what to use to engage students* to *how to acquire the necessary tools to give students access* to differentiated programs like Starfall, Brainpop Jr, Turtle Diaries, and so many more.

I feel honored today to say thank you to TNTESOL for awarding me the Gundi Resin Memorial Scholarship for the purchase of an iPad and a subscription to an online reading program that supports language and literacy development. Raz-Kids has delighted all of my readers. It supports reading levels from A-Z or from K-5<sup>th</sup> graders. It has proven to be very user friendly, and my students report that they are not only using this product at school but when they go home. That was my secret hope. Some are even using mom's cell phone to access their reading materials. They have also reported that their siblings want to read as well. Yes! That was an unexpected bonus. My hopes are high that *families* will be able to use the program to learn to read. We'll see.

Let me say again how grateful I am that TNTESOL honored me with the Gundi Resin Memorial Scholarship. I am anxious to evaluate my student's growth in reading after several months of access to this highly engaging and supportive tool which the scholarship made possible in my room.

I will keep you posted. Thank you from all of us in Likins 1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom at Glengarry Elementary for this wonderful opportunity to grow and learn.



TNTESOL 2015. If you would like to help with the TNTESOL conference, contact Tammy Harosky at [trharosky@king.edu](mailto:trharosky@king.edu)  
Thanks!

# Communication



**Linked In** — Search for and join Tennessee Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TNTESOL).

TennesseeESL@Yahogroups.com — moderator Deborah Sams



**Facebook** has a private TNTESOL group with closed membership. If you would like to join, please contact the TNTESOL webmaster.

Follow TNTESOL on Twitter



**Advocacy Day** — Do you know of issues that need to be brought to the attention of political leaders? The TNTESOL Advocacy Representative, Debbie Vaughn will listen and bring your concerns to Washington. Contact her at [vaughnd@k12tn.net](mailto:vaughnd@k12tn.net).

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## Advocacy Summit 2014

Debbie Vaughn  
TNTESOL Advocacy Liaison

This year, TESOL is celebrating forty years since the landmark Supreme Court ruling **LAU vs. Nichols**, as well as passage of the **Equal Education Opportunities Act**. Also, we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the **Civil Rights Act (1964)**. TNTESOL is again participating in the annual TESOL Advocacy Summit in Washington, D.C. As your appointed Advocacy Liaison, I will attend orientation meetings on Monday, June 23, and Tuesday, June 24.

Monday, Advocate Orientation Day, is an opportunity to learn about the latest national education policies, and to gain valuable insight into the current federal and state political climate in Washington. This year, the Executive Director of the Office of English Language Acquisition (O.E.L.A), Dr. Libi Gil, is the invited Keynote speaker. In addition, Education Policy experts from around the country will be present to share information on current education issues and to help prepare the Affiliate Advocates for Tuesday, June 24, when the work *really* begins!

Months ahead of time, I will arrange face-to-face meetings with Congressional members of both the Republican and Democratic parties to discuss issues specific to Tennessee English Language Learners. Some of these issues are: **DREAMERS** and immigration policies as they affect high school and college English Learners, Civil Rights issues relative to Immigration Reform, the role of teacher evaluation, and reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

I invite every TNTESOL member to email me with questions and topics you would like to share with your state and federal educational leaders. Please send your questions and topics of discussion to: [vaughnd@k12tn.net](mailto:vaughnd@k12tn.net).



## Gundi Ressin Memorial Scholarship Recipient

### Research-Proven Strategies for Improving Content Vocabulary for Middle School English Language Learners

Jane M. Russell  
Ph.D. Student  
Bellarmine University

As a believer of affirmative action in education, I feel that it is important to equip English Language Learners (ELLs) with the power of content vocabulary so that their academic achievement will proclaim: "Success, I've got content vocabulary power in my second language!"

I know that I was born to teach. I have a passion for life-long learning and believe that education is eternal! Last fall, I was excited when my professor in my Academic Literacy Research in High Poverty Middle & Secondary School Settings class at Bellarmine University included writing and submitting conference proposals as a prerequisite for the course. I had never done anything like that before. I was both excited and nervous; however, my passion and enthusiasm of learning and trying new things worked in my favor! Since I worked with ESL teachers and learners, my goal was to write and submit my proposal on ESL relevant content. English was not my first or second language, and through my experiences as an ESL student, vocabulary played a very important role towards my academic success. Research indicates that ELLs may be thousands of vocabulary words behind compared to their age mate peers. Vocabulary knowledge accounts for over 80% of the variance of reading comprehension scores at grade level (Rashidi & Khosravi, 2010). Therefore, it is important for ELL teachers to use teaching strategies that will get the students to attain content vocabulary proficiency as determined by age and grade appropriateness.

I searched for various conferences that had "Call for Proposals" and most had expired deadlines. I was very happy when I found TNTESOL. I submitted my proposal in November and waited patiently for a response. In January, I was elated when I received the congratulatory news that I would be presenting at the conference. I was beyond excited! I immediately explored TNTESOL, joined membership and found various grants on their website. I applied for the Gundi Ressin Memorial Scholarship and was overjoyed when I received an email from the TNTESOL Vice-President notifying me that I had been awarded the grant. Because of the grant, my worries of affording to travel to Nashville for the conference were put to rest. I continued working on research-proven strategies of teaching content vocabulary to middle school ELLs and compiled resources for my presentation for the conference.

There are numerous strategies that can be useful in helping ELLs succeed in content area vocabulary. I wanted to share with the conference audience and my session participants, research-proven strategies that work in the classroom. I chose to focus on word walls as one of the strategies. In my presentation, I discussed and gave examples within each of the various types of word walls. They were: (1) Interactive word walls, (2) High Frequency Word Walls (Tier II) and (3) Content Area Word Walls. The content rationale in delivering my presentation involved joint production and hands on activities that would bring clarity through experiences for the participants. Since I speak numerous languages, I chose to present a scenario similar to that which newcomer ELLs face in the classroom. I told the participants a story in Swahili. I presented the story verbally in Swahili with the accompaniment of pictures. After that first story, we discussed and debriefed with regards to comprehension. Most participants had no clue what the story was about. Some were able to use the pictures based on prior knowledge to make out what the story was about. I repeated the story two more times. Each subsequent time, I added a new strategy. I added words to the pictures and subsequently used total physical response (TPR), pictures and the vocabulary words below each picture. Each time we debriefed, the participants' knowledge of content vocabulary had improved. Webb and Chang (2012) state that repetition should be frequent for explicit vocabulary instruction.

The emphasis of my session was to impart to the participants the impact and effectiveness of word walls in the acquisition of content-based vocabulary. When word walls are used in collaboration

*Continued on page 12*

Continued from page 11

with other effective teaching strategies, ELL's vocabulary can probably be enhanced (Scott & Nagy, 2004). At the end of the story, the participants worked in groups to synthesize and demonstrate understanding on the content of the story by creating interactive word-walls using their newly-learned vocabulary words on poster boards. There were five groups. Each group presented their word wall and story. Reutzell and Cooter (2007) advised that teachers can employ interactive word walls for student use in the classroom. Using content area word walls in and outside of the classroom can enhance the comprehension and retention of content area vocabulary for the ELLs (Cox, Jackson & Tripp, 2011). It was amazing to see the variety in creativity of the session's participants' presentations, but most importantly, the fact that each participant had grasped and could retell the story of Noah and the Ark in Swahili. They were able to explain the meaning of the Swahili vocabulary words in the story as well. Scott and Nagy (2004) analyzed that students need to participate in vocabulary instruction that provides multiple opportunities to engage them in comprehending numerous contexts. One group used Spanish to present their word wall. This goes hand in hand with including content vocabulary words in the language of the students. For example, the word *pyramid* on the word wall can be written in English, illustrated pictorially, and below the picture the word for pyramid in other languages that the students in the class speak. This is important for students to make connections with the words they are expected to know that they constantly see on the classroom wall.



Session participants using second language (Swahili) vocabulary to create interactive word walls

**Content Area Word Walls**

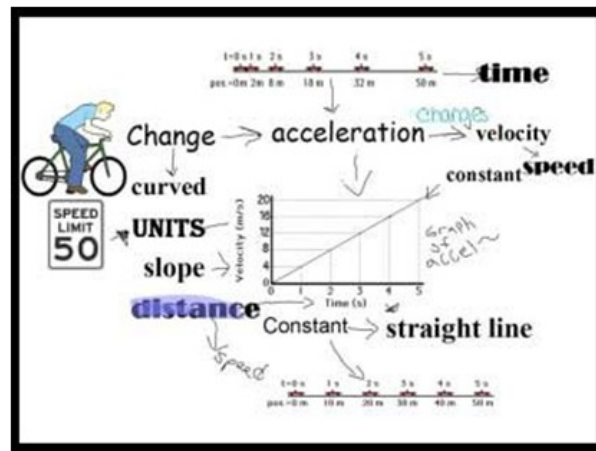
- Use of content related pictures and diagrams along with the words.
- Adding words in other languages helps ELLs make connections in their language.

**Tier 3 words**

Pyramids (English)  
 Pyramids (Nepali)  
 Piramide (Spanish)  
 Piramidi (Swahili)

I also discussed the importance of personalized word lists that ELLs can use to write in their new vocabulary words. These words can be those from the words walls, and as the word walls change, the students will still have their lists. These written word lists could use the Frayer model format. I provided a handout that had resources filled with research-proven strategies for improving content vocabulary for middle school learners.

<p><b>Time Word Wall</b></p> <p>Get a partner. Take turns timing your partner as he reads all the words on the word wall. Record your times.</p>	<p><b>Word Wall Storytelling</b></p> <p>Take 10 words off the word wall. Think about how to use the words to create a story. Write your story using all 10 words.</p>
<p><b>20 Questions</b></p> <p>Work with your teammates. First player silently chooses a word from the word wall and writes in on a sticky. Fold it up and put it in your pocket. Other teammates may ask 20 yes or no questions to guess the word. Play continues to the next player.</p>	<p><b>Words in a Flash</b></p> <p>Get out a flashlight and chant, "Flashlight, flashlight, oh so bright." Shine on a word with your light. Turn on the light and read a favorite word or two to your group. Have the group echo your word first normally, then fast, then slowly, then quietly, and then loudly.</p>
<p><b>Word Wall Memory</b></p> <p>Review all the words under one letter for one minute. Cover one word while others close their eyes. Students should write a guess on a piece of paper. After all guesses are made uncover the word. Play continues to the next player.</p>	<p><b>Poetry Word Wall</b></p> <p>Pick several words from the word wall or a word family. Work alone and use your list of words to create a poem. Read it to a friend.</p>



I truly appreciated attending TNTESOL, and as a first time presenter, I hope to have numerous more opportunities to attend, participate and present in future TNTESOL conferences. My participants seemed confident, content and thrilled based on conversations that occurred after the session. That is what I had hoped for.



**2014 TNTESOL Conference Awards and Recognition**

**Charles Gillon Professional Service Award**

TNTESOL Board

Dr. Ming Wang is Nashville's premier LASIK eye surgeon. Aside from his long list of academic and professional successes, he is also well known for his humanitarian work. He has contributed **much** of his personal time and finances to bless and encourage others.



www.wangvisioninstitute.com/images/dr\_wang\_help.jpg

Dr. Wang is co-founder of the Tennessee Immigrant & Minority Business Group that helps immigrant and minority businesses across the state. Dr. Wang is also founder of the Wang Foundation for Sight, a charity that has helped patients from over 40 states and fifty-five countries with sight restoration surgeries performed free-of-charge. Many of these patients have been orphans – including Maria, a Williamson County Schools ELL student who presented the Charles Gillon Award to Dr. Wang at this year's Friday Night Event at the Governor's Mansion. Dr. Wang serves as a model of success for our ELLs, as he too was an ELL and knows very well the struggles that our students and their families face. With his compassion and tireless devotion to improving the lives of others in our ELL community and around the world, he is an example for all of us. As such, we are proud to announce that this year's Charles Gillon Professional Service Award was presented to Dr. Ming Wang. Thank you Dr. Wang!



**President's Award**  
Recipient  
Dan Schlafer



**Travel Grant Winners**

Keith Pruitt — Focus on Writing: The Importance of Asking Questions

Lee Ann Kelly, Jan Lanier, Leslie Parker — Relevant Issues and Effective Classroom Strategies of English as a Second Language Teachers

Dr. Abasi McKinzie — The Beatles were ESL Teachers??: Teaching ELs through Music (Overall Winner)

Andrea Bontempi & Dr. Johnna Paraiso — Collaboration and Co-Teaching with English Language Learners: New Strategies for Collaborative Teaching and Learning (Overall Winners)



## Wrapping a “SCARF” around your ELL Parents

Nina Jones Morel, Ed.D.  
Director of M.Ed. Programs  
Lipscomb University

It was the fifth day of spring in middle Tennessee. Most of the school systems in the area were out for spring break after a long, cold, snowy winter. But instead of warmth and sunshine, I watched a flurry of snow blanket the yard outside my window and regretted not having brought my heavy winter coat and scarf. The unseasonable weather reminded me that physical warmth brings comfort to our ELL children and parents, but emotional warmth is even more important.

Rock (2008) discusses an emotional “scarf” that we can wrap around others in a compelling article in the *NeuroLeadership Journal*. While the article is about leadership, it also applies to our relationships with our ELL parents. When parents and teachers interact, our brains are looking for rewards in the area of **Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness and Fairness**. “Status” is how we **think** others value us, and it is one of the most important needs of our brains. If we perceive that people are attacking our status, we may become distant, aloof, or antagonistic. All of us want to believe that the person we are interacting with respects us and we are very adept at identifying whether they have that respect. ELL parents have often lost a great deal of status by becoming an immigrant to a new country. They may be unsure of their place in society, their finances, the language, and an unfamiliar educational system. Teachers and administrators have the opportunity to show parents that we value them as partners in their child’s learning by listening respectfully to them and by taking time to understand their words and their feelings.

Parents also need **certainty** about what to expect. Many of them live most of their lives with uncertainty about systems, procedures, processes, and unspoken social norms. As teachers, we can take the time to explain exactly what they should expect at various crucial times: the first day of school, a field trip, a parent meeting, and so on. When my school was taking a group of elementary students to a baseball game, we discovered some ELL parents were very nervous about their young children travelling on a school bus to a city 35 miles away. Showing a video clip of the trip from the year before, an agenda of the day’s planned activities, a map of the route, and inviting parents to participate in the field trip went a long way to boosting support for experiential learning.

Everyone likes to feel they have **autonomy**. Many EL parents may feel they have few choices in a system that has more “rules and regulations” than the educational systems they are familiar with. They may not realize which things are requirements (attendance) and which are options (after school tutoring, clubs or sports), and sometimes teachers avoid providing choices to EL parents because of the difficulty in communicating them. Explicit instruction to parents around their options and choices using photos, simple language, and interpreters are worth the work of communicating. People who have made a choice tend to support that choice more vigorously than people who have been compelled to make a decision.

All people thrive when they have a feeling of **relatedness** or belonging, and a sense that we are being treated with **fairness**. Getting to know parents in a comfortable social setting can go a long way to forging a true partnership with their child’s best interest at heart. Many teachers schedule home visits at the beginning of each year. Others schedule early morning neighborhood visits to the communities where their children live, bringing doughnuts or other snacks. Community centers, libraries, and other non-school locations offer a non-threatening environment to begin a relationship. Leaving the school setting where teachers are the authority figures and going to the places parents feel most comfortable can help equalize status and forge bonds of relationship.

*Continued on page 15*

*Continued from page 14*

As you reflect on the past cold weather and look forward to summer, don't forget to plan the SCARF that you will wrap around your students' parents in the upcoming school year!

#### Reference

Rock, D. (2008) SCARF: A brain-based model for collaborating with and influencing others. *Neuro-Leadership Journal*. Available: [www.Neuroleadership.org](http://www.Neuroleadership.org)

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## 36<sup>TH</sup> TNTESOL STATE CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL MEETING

Cary McPherson and Jason Groppe  
Conference Co-Chairs

We want to extend a big thank you to the over 600 participants who gathered March 19-22, 2014 for our 36<sup>th</sup> TNTESOL State Conference and Annual Meeting. We had envisioned this to be one of the best conferences to date, and our Conference Planning Committee worked tirelessly to ensure that your time in Nashville was unforgettably rewarding.

This four-day conference brought together nationally renowned guest speakers and keynotes, along with English language professionals from across our very own state. We offered a variety of workshops, sessions, and mini-institutes to satisfy every attendee's facet of interest.

We also want to thank our wonderful sponsors and exhibitors for their presence and support at this conference. To our fantastic volunteers, please know that we appreciate everything you did to help make this conference an overwhelming success!

Finally, thanks to the Board of Directors for entrusting us with this arduous, yet rewarding task. It was an honor to serve you as Conference Co-Chairs.



### In Memory of Linda Hurst Locke

(1956-2014)

Johnna Paraiso  
TNTESOL Board

The TNTESOL Board was saddened to learn of the recent passing of Mrs. Linda Locke, wife of longtime TNTESOL member and former TNTESOL Board member Joe Reeves Locke. Linda passed away suddenly on Tuesday, April 8, 2014.

Joe Reeves and Linda had been the Hospitality Coordinators for the 2012 TNTESOL Conference at the Nashville Airport Marriott. Their gracious welcoming manner helped ease the minds of attendees, vendors and invited guests. Hospitality was a hallmark of Linda's life. Joe Reeves and Linda hosted many TNTESOL Board meetings at their home over the years, making sure the food was hot, the tea was cold and the fellowship was warm and sweet. Our Board members will remain grateful for Linda's kind, gentle spirit and her support of our mission—to help Tennessee's English learners access greater educational opportunities.

Linda Locke is survived by her husband of 23 years, Joe Reeves Locke. The family has requested that memorials be sent to Asbury University, 1 Macklem Drive, Wilmore, KY 40390 or Asbury Theological Seminary, 204 N. Lexington Avenue, Wilmore, KY 40390.

Our hearts and our sympathies go out to Joe Reeves Locke and all of Linda's family and friends.

## An Old Fashioned Idea with a Place in the Modern Classroom

Becky Young  
ESL Teacher/Coordinator  
Dayton City School

When I was in graduate school, a professor told us, “When you teach, read to your students. Whether you teach young children or adults, reading aloud to the students is something you should always do.” With increased concern for rigor in our ESL classrooms, it is easy to let extended teacher read-alouds go by the wayside. I would like to make an argument for continuing to use this practice with our students.

I have observed a number of benefits of reading aloud to my own students. First, many students come from a low literacy background. Engaging them in a story and helping them to love it builds an interest in reading. Carefully chosen books with a multicultural component can also help. I once had a seventh grader who talked about how much she hated reading. After I read *Crossing the Wire* by Will Hobbs, she suddenly developed an interest in books. Her family had gone through significant challenges “crossing the wire” (border) themselves, and now she saw that books could relate to her!

Reading aloud is engaging. I have seen students who were usually quite disruptive become captivated by a story. Reading a book aloud gives opportunities to develop vocabulary. In addition, ESL students can often understand books well above their own reading levels. Books can be chosen with the text complexity appropriate for the students’ grade levels, helping them to close this gap. It is important that books be chosen to fit with the grade level, English proficiency, and interests of each class. I have generally used fiction for reading aloud, but with the increased emphasis on nonfiction text, I intend to add some well written biographies and other nonfiction to my reading.

The Comprehension and Collaboration skills of the Common Core Speaking and Listening standards can be taught through reading aloud and discussing books, as can a number of reading comprehension skills. For example, when I read, I regularly stop and ask the students to predict what will come next. I take a number of predictions, asking the students to give reasons for their predictions. I model how to use illustrations, knowledge of the characters, and their own experiences to make good predictions. When we reach the next section, often several days later, they remember their predictions and get excited to talk about how they worked out. I also have the students do a lot of retelling, when we come back to the story each day. This gives me a chance to assess their understanding, and scaffold as necessary. Most of my assessment of student learning is done by observing and noting the discussions as we go through the book. I sometimes use an AR test as a summative assessment of their overall comprehension.

One of the challenges of using regular teacher read-aloud in an ESL class is fitting it into the schedule. I have chosen to make it a supplementary part of each class, with separate objectives, rather than part of my daily lesson plan. It usually takes 10 to 15 minutes of my hour. The students and I often refer back to our favorite read-alouds in other parts of the lesson, making text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections.

When I read aloud, I try to involve myself deeply in the story. I use voices for characters and sound effects for events. It is enjoyable for all of us! I have found this practice to be well worth the time I give it.



***Reading aloud to the students is something you should always do.***



## Maximize Your Classroom Funds With Donors Choose

Jennifer Navarre  
1<sup>st</sup> Grade EL Teacher  
Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS)

As teachers, we seem to 1) never have enough money; and 2) always have one more item that would be so helpful to have in our classrooms. There comes a point where you need outside help to fund needed items for your classroom. That's where Donors Choose comes in.

Donors Choose is an online, nonprofit organization whose sole purpose is to help teachers create projects with self-selected items that can be funded by the public. This may or may not include friends, family, community members, local businesses, and strangers who are compelled to donate. The site is available to all K-12 teachers in public schools. Everything from books and manipulatives to classroom rugs and iPads can be requested in a teacher's project. Vendors affiliated with Donors Choose include Lakeshore, AKJ Books, Amazon.com, Scholastic Classroom Magazines, and Time for Kids.

In order to create a project, you must first create an account on the site ([www.donorschoose.org](http://www.donorschoose.org)). Once that is complete, you are ready to create your first project. The site takes you through each step of the process. If you have any questions, you can utilize their Help page or contact customer service. In my experience, they have always returned my emails promptly.

As you create a project, use your word count to sell your class and your project—make sure potential donors realize why this project is so important. Start with a smaller project (less than \$400), as these are more likely to be funded. As you get projects funded, be prompt with your thank-you packet. This helps build your reputation on the site and will help you when future donors decide whether or not to contribute to your projects.

Some donors may contribute to multiple projects. Businesses also contribute to projects. Some businesses will match each dollar donated, while others will make a flat-rate donation. Both are always welcome and make it that much easier to get your project funded. Also, if you have a project to be funded at the end of the year, you may benefit from individuals and businesses that are looking to contribute money for the tax write-off. I had over \$500 donated in one day to one of my projects...at the end of December.

Teachers like the site because they control the items that are being purchased; they can choose things that their students really need. Donors like that the money is going directly to a specific classroom. They also enjoy receiving the thank-you packet from the teacher and students.

In my own experience, I have had six projects funded in less than two years, with a total of over \$2,000 in materials purchased for my students. This has included books, word and number games, chart paper, a pencil sharpener, and a subscription to BrainPop Jr. These are things that I would not have been able to afford on my own. My students have greatly benefited from having these items in our classroom.

If you are hesitant to join, you can still look at projects currently underway across the country at [www.donorschoose.org](http://www.donorschoose.org). Once you see the variety of projects looking for funding, you may decide to create an account and a project of your own.

*My students have greatly benefited from having these items in our classroom.*

# Save the Date

## SETESOL 2014 OCTOBER 8-11, 2014

Mark your calendars and plan to attend SETESOL 2014, in the heart of The Ozarks, at the John Q. Hammons Center in Rogers, Arkansas.

Hear from experts in our field, attend engaging sessions, and connect with colleagues.



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# RACE TO THE TOP

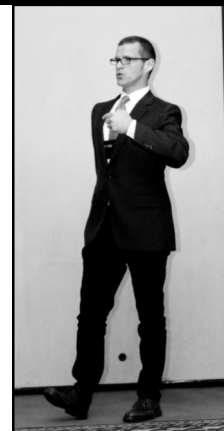
English Language Learners  
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# Conference Photos



## TNTESOL Dinner at the Governor's Mansion



**See More Conference Photos on the Website**





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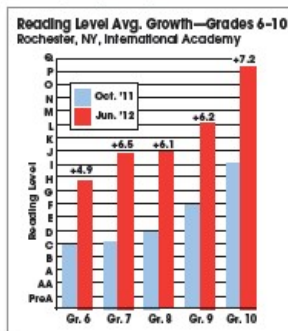


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For a product sampler please email [info@benchmarkeducation.com](mailto:info@benchmarkeducation.com)



# Call for Papers

The Editorial Board of the TNTESOL Journal seeks articles of general interest on any aspect of the teaching of English as a second or foreign language in elementary, middle, high school, college/university, or adult/immigrant education. The topics can be varied and wide-ranging.

*The submission deadline for the annual Journal is June 1st.*

*Please see [www.tntesol.org](http://www.tntesol.org) and click on the publications tab for the **Journal Submission Guidelines**.*



## Don't be shy!

The Editor of the TNTESOL Newsletter requests your articles, anecdotes, book reviews, photos, etc. for inclusion in the next issue of this newsletter.

Send your attachment in an email to [newsletter@tntesol.org](mailto:newsletter@tntesol.org)

The deadline for submission is August 1, 2014.

*Please see [www.tntesol.org](http://www.tntesol.org) and click on the publications tab for the **Newsletter Submission Guidelines**.*

TNTESOL Newsletter  
c/o ESL Instructional Facilitator  
Instruction Department  
Rutherford County Schools  
2240 Southpark Blvd.  
Murfreesboro, TN 37128