

The Language People

December 2006

I'm working on a blessing for ESL teachers...
May your best students attend when you're doing assessment. May the photocopier service man come as soon as he's called (I think that's the best we can hope for there). May your students laugh at your jokes, make measurable progress, thank you at the end of the course and not give you any more shiny pink vases. And just sometimes may your students not notice that it's time to go home. May your boss thank you at the end of each day and may you believe she is sincere. May HR work efficiently and otherwise leave you alone. May you find chocolate in the fridge at 4 o'clock. May you not have to spend more than two days of your "holidays" attempting to find your desk under the unsorted and unfiled pieces of paper.....Please add some specific to your workplace and share them with your friends.

Thanks to those who've contacted me about changing over from getting this in an envelope to getting it by email. If you possibly can use email, please let me know, as it's much easier and cheaper for me.

Please come and visit! Honestly, there's so much new stuff I can't keep up with it. As soon as I reduce the pile of things to be reviewed, it's a foot high again. (It's a bit like the ironing) And don't forget, we have lots of stuff suitable for Christmas presents and stocking fillers, eg. John le Carre's The mission song \$32.95 and Pam Ayres' Surgically enhanced \$29.95. This is her first new collection for 10 years and her piquancy has improved with age. A lovely slim hardback, full of wry joy. Also consider Nikki Gemmill's new book (author of The bride stripped bare), Pleasure: an almanac for the heart \$28.

Our local author for this issue is Kim Edwards. Her autobiography is called The onion lady \$25, illustrated with some of her own photography. This is one of the most honest life stories I've ever read. Only in her mid 40s now, Kim has achieved more so far (or had it happen to her) than most of us will in our whole life times, and I found her story quite compelling. She is a Christian driven by a love of Muslims, and there's probably room for more of that in the world just now! This has taken her to several of the world's disaster zones and flash points in recent years.

The latest topics in the Issues in society series, each \$19.95:

- ADHD
- Cancer awareness
- Homelessness

- Impacts of the internet
- Nuclear power
- Child care

There is a new edition of the Cambridge English pronouncing dictionary by Daniel Jones (I doubt he's still alive as it's the 17th edition, but there are three reputable editors.) It's \$75 and includes a CD-ROM with all the words pronounced in both British and American accents, and also pronunciation exercises.

Samantha: a soap opera and vocabulary book for students of ESL \$44.95 This is the kind of ESL book that I'd like to write, but I'd like more pictures. And I'm not sure I'd make my soap opera *quite* so soapie as this one, but I do like the idea of an episodic story that runs the length of the book and has a variety of exercises based on it. This one is intermediate level.

At a slightly lower level is Far from home \$47.95, which uses several episodic stories. The characters come from different backgrounds and each set of characters gets about three short chapters based on them. The stories are affectionately told and the exercises are good and varied. Though they all live in America I really like it.

Tips for IELTS A little book full of good ideas for \$14.95

Alternatively, what about Focusing on IELTS: Test taking tips a 26-minute DVD for \$10. Don't we move with the times!

IELTS practice tests 1 \$35, includes both academic and general training. 2 CDs cost \$21. This is a UK one so your students may not have seen it yet.

Academic culture: a student's guide to studying at university \$29.95, from NCELTR. Aimed at both local and overseas students, and even those returning to study whose first go was "pre-technology". Amongst many other useful topics, it deals with downloading and integrating information, and plagiarism.

At the other end of the learning curve:

Maths words \$29.95 for workbook and CD-ROM.

From NSW AMES, for very basic numeracy - telling the time, dates, taking medicine, handling money, etc. Very good.

So is Thematic picture dictionary for ESL beginners \$19.50, and \$22 for the workbook. Suitable for kids and adults, and totally Aussie.

More local authors to support:

Duncan Richardson has brought out Revenge, an exciting kids' reader for \$8, with a workbook suitable for an upper primary/junior secondary narrative unit for \$12. Good value.

Folk tales from my homeland by Malekeh Sanjarizadeh, an Iranian woman now living and working in Brisbane. \$12. It's a lovely, varied little collection of stories, suitable for children and adults.

As is Hidden tales from Eastern Europe \$17.95, which

has stories from countries we don't hear a lot from - Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia and others. Nicely illustrated.

And The waters of life: stories from North America, India & China \$11.95 Level 3 in the Penguin Young Readers series.

Noah and the devil: a legend of Noah's Ark from Romania \$14.95. An amusing retelling with rich, jewel-coloured illustrations

Unimpressed as I was with Jack Richards when we had him as a speaker at a QATESOL Conference years ago, I feel obliged to tell you that there is a split version of the third edition of the introductory level of Interchange (almost poetic, all those phrases), which means you can get Book A plus self-study CD and Book B ditto for \$31.95 each, which makes it an affordable option for a learner wanting to work alone or re-inforce or supplement what he's doing in class. I'm rather fond of that sentence but I've decided to leave it now and start a new one, to tell you it's a bit American, and his idea of introductory is not everybody's, but it's a competent and attractive course book.

I've been looking for a course book for primary beginners which is not heavily dependant on prohibitively expensive audio material. Macmillan have brought out an updated version of Way ahead which I think may fit the bill, and the books are reasonably priced too. These I have in stock: Pupil's book 1 \$21.95, Workbook 1 \$17.95, Story tape \$25.95, Teacher's Resource Book 1 \$19.95, Pupil's book 2 \$21.95, Workbook 2 \$17.95 and TRB 2 \$19.95. They are very traditional and a bit predictable, and they could be used by volunteer tutors either in schools or homes. They are basically reading based but communicative.

On the other hand, Longman's Fun English 1 \$19.95 would be absolutely useless without the \$39.95 CD. That said, it really is cute and fun and very appealing. It even has stickers.

Another course book from David Nunan, called Go for it! SB 1 is \$43.95 with 2 CDs for \$32. Again, the book is highly dependant on the CDs. The people in the illustrations are pre-teens and early teens and the topics are appropriate for that age. It's a 4-level series, and being by Nunan, pedagogically sound.

For the same age group, Sky, by Brian Abbs & Ingrid Freebairn, whose work is also well respected. It's also a 4-level series which, as well as all the usual components, has CD-ROMs and videos at each level, if your pockets are bottomless. The student books are \$25.95 each, and I have the Starter and Book 3.

Tempo is a three-level course for young teenagers from beginner to pre-int. I have Workbook 1 \$21.95 and Workbook 2 \$22.95, both of which include a CD-ROM. I think they're great.

This one is for adults: In detail 1: English for global communication \$45.95 high intermediate. It's good, but again, you'd need the audio to get the most out of it. There are two CDs and they cost \$111.95. Are you on your way in?

Here's something different: Just listening & speaking by Jeremy Harmer. \$32 for book and CD. We're used to Jeremy being all methodological, but now you can see him practising what he preaches. Intermediate.

Extempore speaking practice \$39.95 To quote the back of the book: "...focuses on establishing the modified patterns in creative speech utilizing extemporaneous practice within the framework of a continuing and supportive instructional situation that provides opportunities for monitoring." Now THAT's a sentence! Actually what's inside the book is quite comprehensible and useful. American but not obtrusively so.

Creative English activities for middle secondary students \$59.95 with photocopiable worksheets. Some really interesting activities to develop a variety of skills.

Shakespeare unplugged: Macbeth. A big book for only \$14.95. It doesn't contain the text of the play, except for some excerpts it suggests acting out, but it's a workbook full of activity-based learning within the study of Macbeth. I liked the section on many of the different versions of the play there have been, from Japanese to Zulu, and one with Sean Bean. I'd like to see that! I also have Romeo & Juliet in the same series.

The formal \$14.95 a very contemporary play script that would be a lot of fun for young people to do. Excellent discussion fodder about this increasingly (and ridiculously, if anyone wants my opinion) important feature of our "culture".

Telephone English \$29.95 for book and CD. General as well as business. Good.

Nelson business education: homework & in-class activity book \$19.95 I think this is a mainstream secondary text but it's written in Queensland and I can see it being used as a source of information and activities by teachers of adult migrants. It has loads of useful lifeskills stuff.

Great Aussie jokes \$9.95 How I've used these in the past is to rewrite the ones that aren't filthy as C-texts. Don't know what C-texts are? Ask me. Very motivating activity.

Great Aussie slang \$9.95 Alphabetically arranged with entertaining illustrations.

Australian slang dictionary \$9 for a little flip-top spiral book that would fit in a pocket. Very useful. Gives examples of use as well as definitions.

Eats, shoots & leaves: Why, commas really do make a difference! \$24.95 A children's version of Lynn Truss's famous book, with Bonnie Timmons'

drawings illustrating the different meanings that can be caused by different punctuation.

I've got some things called "Desk Mates" for \$5.45 each. The idea is that the kid puts it on his desk and works on it or on top of it. I have two different ones. They both have borders of common words. Then one has alphabet, days, dates, left/right hands, clock, map, flag, seasons, shapes on one side and blends, digraphs, times tables, colours, dominoes, dice on the other, while the second has Advance Australia Fair, 2 maps, harder shapes, fractions, decimals and game templates on one side, and 40 cm, snakes and ladders, measurement vocab and lots of *hard stuff* on the other. I think they'd be very motivating.

Spell bound: the improbable story of English spelling \$25 A well-written, informative and entertaining book that would make a lovely gift for someone who, like you, is fascinated by language.

Ditto Words of a feather: a humorous puzzlement of etymological pairs \$22.95

The experience of language teaching \$62, by Rose Senior in the Cambridge Language Teaching Library series. More than 100 experienced teachers have contributed to this book, and it helps to explain how and why they do the things they do. It's full of excellent stuff that could really guide teacher trainers or inexperienced teachers, and revitalize and affirm practicing teachers. If only we had time to read it! Christmas holidays project? (Fran is sure to have it in the library.)

This one in the same series is equally fascinating:

Conversation: from description to pedagogy by Scott Thornbury and Diana Slade, \$58. Don't be put off by the big words in the title. We all know speaking is perhaps the hardest skill to teach, and this book will help us understand and teach it better.

Using the web to support language learning by Denise Murray and Pam McPherson, \$16.50. This one's been coming for a long time and it's finally here. Has lots of actual lesson plans, though not for the very lowest levels, of course.

ICT and literacy: ideas and resources is for middle school and comes with a CD-ROM of the texts, is inspirational, and all for \$29.95

Want some **phonics**?

These are all designed for mainstream primary so they use some (for us) not-high-priority words, but that aside, some of them are worth a look for our adults who are learning to write our script for the first time.

Phonics charts: a complete phonics curriculum on 98 charts \$33.45

Sounds easy, Sounds fun, Sounds like more fun: worksheet originals for teaching basic/additional/advanced sounds \$24.45 each, they have those little boxes to write letters in with heads going up and tails going down.

Diagraph sounds and comprehension stories Bks 1, 2 & 3 \$25.45 each. In the stories, these have some contextualized language as well as work on words.

Now, some **reading** books:

For teenagers, Macmillan Topics \$9.95 each, magazine-type format, copiously illustrated, with puzzles and projects at the back. 16 pages. There are 5 levels and I got two at the beginner level: People and Places.

English reading and comprehension Three levels \$14.95 each, and teacher's book \$17.95. This series has some nice features. A lot of the texts used have intrinsic educational value. They are from a good variety of fictional and factual genres, and each unit has two different texts on the same topic, allowing readers to distinguish stylistic features. All three books are within the intermediate range, and while probably aimed at middle school, they would also be good for adults.

Reading keys \$45.65 also has three levels and I got the one called "Introducing". American, attractive, for adolescents and adults. Explicitly teaches the reading skills - cohesion, reference, differentiating fact and opinion, scanning, skimming, the usual suspects.

And some **writing** books:

Writing and grammar: crash course \$19.95 in the Schaum's Easy outlines series. Better for native speakers, and preferably ones who know all the vocabulary of traditional grammar. But reliable and compact.

Basic composition for ESL: an expository workbook \$55 Not new but still popular. It's one of those American books where you're paying a lot of money for lines ruled on the page for activities they could have written on their own paper, but the activities are good.

Composition practice Bks 1 & 2 \$65.50 each (Yes!) Beginning and high beginning level. Lots of pre-reading, visual support and post-reading activities. Picture stories for captioning. Book 2 is more SFL-influenced.

Functional writing: writing tasks for middle school students \$34.95 Australian, good, sensible.

Here are two books which are virtually the same:

Writing in paragraphs \$34.95

Paragraph writing: from sentence to paragraph \$38

The main difference I can see is that the *cheaper* one has an answer key and some photocopyable pages that the other does not. It's obviously meant for the British market and the other for America, and there are little lexical differences eg university / college. The content is useful.

Academic writing: a handbook for international students \$48 A second edition of this helpful book by Stephen Bailey.

Oldie but goodie: Techniques in teaching writing by

Ann Raimes \$52.95

Children's picture books

Grandad \$12.95 About a little girl and her grandad who is just a bit unconventional and very nice.

What I like about me! \$19.95 Kids being positive about their "distinguishing features" (braces on their teeth, single eyebrow, etc). An interactive book, and I'm not talking about computers.

The Boy. The Bear. The Baron. The Bard. \$27.95 and worth every cent of it. One of those marvellous picture books that has not a single word, *and* so topical!

Pudding & Chips \$14.95 Pudding is a goose and Chips is a sheepdog on Annie's farm, and it's a lovely story, beautifully illustrated, suitable for under-10s and 60 year olds.

Here's an Australian classic that will take you *way* back – Snugglypot and Cuddlepie in a very readable little paperback for \$14.95

The fire children: a West African folktale \$14.95 a creation myth, colourfully illustrated

Josephine wants to dance \$24.95 Jackie French and Bruce Whatley (Diary of a wombat) have teamed up again. Josephine is a kangaroo, so getting ballet slippers to fit is a bit of a challenge!

For littlies

Two little "shape" books - Tom's truck and Ted's tractor each \$8.95. You can "drive" them around and I think they'll be very robust.

Learn music with interactive CD-ROM Just \$14.95 for a big hardback. Ages 2 – 6, helps with computer literacy while introducing fun musical activities. All mouse-operated.

We're going on a bear hunt \$14.95 Lovely.

Mary Engelbreit's Mother Goose: one hundred best-loved verses A really nice hardback with all the traditional nursery rhymes for \$20

For older children

Secret World of Adventure Team (SWAT) Easy reading stories with international settings. I have Thailand, Africa, Tokyo, India and Sydney so far. \$10 each.

The midnight fox by Betsy Byars \$14.95. One of my favourite children's books.

Two books by Meme McDonald and Boori Monty Pryor: The Binna Binna man and My Girragundji, each \$13.95, about an Aboriginal boy growing up between two worlds. The books are very nicely produced with the black and white illustrations being an integral part of the text. Good for "visual literacy".

Young adult fiction

Purple hibiscus \$22.95 This one could equally well go under general books. It's the best book I've read for a long time, and the most appalling. Set in Nigeria against a backdrop of civil unrest, it's about a 15 year old girl whose cruelly controlling father has kept her

innocent and ignorant of normal life. He himself is a complex character, devoutly religious, genuinely charitable and violently abusive of his family, who are contrasted with his sister's unrepressedly joyful family. Universal themes are dealt with in a distinctively Nigerian way, in understated, bejewelled prose that reminded me of Arundati Roy.

Peeling the onion \$16.95 is equally confronting. A 17 year old girl, used to being "normal" and a top athlete, breaks her neck in a car accident. Written with humour and honesty.

Two novels by Randa Abdel-Fattah: Does my head look big in this? And Ten things i hate about me, each \$16.95, both about growing up in the usual inter-generational tension compounded by being Muslim in Australia.

Culture Corner

Gezani and the tricky baboon \$24.95 A folktale from "somewhere in the middle of Africa". Very colourfully illustrated.

Nabeel's song: the story of the poet of Baghdad \$35 The author, Jo Tatchell, is a journalist who has spent many years in the Middle East. This is the true story of one Iraqi family, covering over 50 years from the early 50s through Saddam Hussein's regime to the present. So far I'm only up to the revolution of 1958 in which Nabeel's older brothers are involved. The depiction of his innocent childhood and loving family life is beautiful. I wouldn't be surprised if this book is an award winner.

One people - many journeys \$24.95 A beautiful hardback from Lonely Planet. Good gift.

Two books by or about young people but suitable for readers of all ages: Jumping to heaven: stories about refugee children \$11.95 and No place like home: Australian stories by young writers aged 8-21 \$19.95

General Books

Shedding skin \$24.95 A novel set in Auckland about an ESL teacher. At first I felt he was trying to hard to be funny in a blokey sort of way, but I was seduced by his genuine compassion and respect for his students, whose past stories form part of the novel. And it's certainly interesting to see needs analysis, IPA, IELTS, and even Murphy as part of the subject matter of a book meant for the general public!

The 10 minute brain workout \$14.95 Word and number puzzles at two levels. The majority are number puzzles, which would be good in your numeracy classes.

101 things you need to know and some you don't A tough little book for \$14.95. Aimed at kids but I bet it has some things you don't know in it.

Baby hands flash cards \$14.95 The idea is that you can teach your baby to communicate with you before he can talk. I like the idea that the baby can actually

learn to use these signs, whereas the beagle just despairs of my lack of comprehension of her needs. Then baby can upgrade to The body language phrasebook: 500 ways to read the signs \$32.95 It certainly has some interesting insights. If you've missed any episodes of Friends, lovers, chocolate on Radio National, I'll sell you the book for \$29.95

A worthwhile book: The 'Why are you here?' café \$17.95

Odd couple \$14.95 Gorgeous photographs of unlikely pairs of animals, matched with appropriate quotes. My favourite was one from Steve Martin: "You know that look women get when they want sex? Me neither."

The big sleep \$14.95 A small hardback of photographs of sleeping animals, large and small, cute and pug-ugly, each one enhanced by a quote about sleep.

Cheeky little dogs \$15 cute cute cute

If dogs could talk: exploring the canine mind \$22 No-one can buy this book till Boopy's finished reading it.

Insights of the Psalms and Insights of Jesus each \$14.95. Nice little devotional books with good photographs.

Anguished English: an anthology of accidental assaults upon the English language \$16.95 The explanations for accidents from insurance claims are the best.

Lines of life: 101 poems by 101 women edited by Germaine Greer, \$22.95. You're going to want this book and you're going to want to give it to each other. Hanoi, Adieu \$24.95 Written by a Brisbane woman, Mandaley Perkins, about her French step-father's time in Vietnam before and after the Second World War. The sub-title sums it up very well: a bittersweet memoir of French Indochina.

Even after all this time: a story of love, revolution and leaving Iran \$24.95 A very readable story. Her father had been a colonel under the Shah and was executed by Khomeini's soldiers, leaving a strong wife and four young children. The two girls were sent abroad, first to Austria and then to America, where they stayed with relatives who clearly didn't want them and were quite cruel. Eventually the mother was able to get visas for herself and the two young boys, and the family were re-united and "made good" in America. Strong people. Lots of interesting photographs.

LOTE Corner

(As much general as LOTE:) Say Hello: greetings from all around the world \$9.95 It includes 50 languages, and 10 of them you can actually hear by pushing a little button. It has a little bit of information about each of the countries included. Primary level. It's just great! I wonder where I got it?

Some of you will know the Collins easy learning series of bilingual dictionaries. Now I've got in the Easy learning words and Easy learning conversation in French, German and Spanish, each \$18.95 (Annoyingly, the publisher has sneaked in a new price of \$18.99, but I'll give you the four cents). Very useful books.

G! Senior Lehrerhandbuch \$200 Completes the excellent Genau secondary German course.

You already know Italian \$19.95 Not a lot of grammar. Concentrates on cognates and faux amis. Good on pronunciation.

Correct your Italian blunders \$19.95 Clear and useful (if not very politely entitled).

Spanish among amigos \$24.95 Realistic casual conversations. Hints on avoiding blunders.

World's wackiest Spanish/French joke book each \$14.95. Full of dreadful puns to help learners remember the vocab of the target language eg What is a makeover for a French queen called? Wait for it - a reine-ovation.

Obento supreme SB \$41.95 Combines the best features of Obento 2 & 3. Includes a CD-ROM and kanji cards for revision. Looks like fun.

I've included on the back page a little story I've written. Feel free to use it if you would like to. Here's your joke:

The barman had just closed the door for the night when he heard a knock on it. Puzzled, he opened it again. Looking down, he saw a little snail on the doorstep. He said, "You can't come in. We're closed. And anyway, we don't serve snails here." He closed the door firmly. Knock! Knock! Knock!. He was pretty tired and he still had a lot of cleaning up to do inside so he opened the door, picked up the little snail and tossed it into some bushes.

A year went by and one night, just after closing time, he heard a knocking on the door. He opened the door, looked down, and there was the little snail, who said, "What did you do that for?"

Wishing you a restful, peaceful and joyful Christmas holiday.

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