Between the Keys

A Publication of the JALT Materials Writers SIG ©2008

Working Together

Jim Smiley
MW-SIG Coordinator

Materials writers are, by definition, producers, and the MW-SIG continues to grow. Growing, though, does not necessarily equate with benefit and our group's organisers need to be careful not to simply grow without care about members' needs. If you are reading this missile online, you will be able to read the content of our new web site. Over there, rationales, definitions and categorisations of activities are listed well enough. I'd encourage you to browse those pages and invite you to aid in developing them. In particular, the forums are a ripe avenue for our creative energies.

Growth, it was decided, should be online. Until last year, we were spending virtually all of our budget printing and posting our newsletter. When we sponsored speakers at conferences, either they were co-sponsored with a richer SIG or they offered their services freely. Now with a few issues delivered online, our financial state is healthy.

The first major announcement is that Miles Craven will be our featured speaker at the Pan-SIG Conference in Kyoto in May. Miles is a very highly respected and prolific author known worldwide. He will be working hard for us appearing in three events: a featured speaker presentation; a materials development workshop in which you, dear reader, can bring your own work along for evaluation and inspiration; and a panel session with the other featured speakers and plenary speakers. The topic is to be announced on this latter event, but you can read Miles' abstracts in this newsletter. As I write, there's been no word about a banquet at the Pan-SIG. If one doesn't materialise, the MW-SIG will put one on with Miles as our Guest of Honour.

Another speaker announcement is for our JALT National Conference programme. We are delighted to tell you that the influential and often downright hilarious Dorothy Zemach will represent our SIG in conjunction with Macmillan.

Also at the National, our Programmes Chair, Greg Goodmacher, has secured a wonderful line-up of names for a panel session on the theme of "How successful authors did it". Dorothy will be there, as will Marc Helgesen, Junko Yamanaka, Steve Gershon and Brian Cullen. It is hoped that the event will be in the early evening and can be followed by a social follow-up.

The new website has Moodle functionality. Moodle is a course management system that allows teachers to design interactive educational sites simply. Creating courses, setting and collecting homework, delivering class handouts and so on has never been easier.

(see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moodle)

In contrast to maintaining a Moodle, setting one up is not that easy. I've been to two presentations where I've been beguiled with the functionality of Moodle only to find out that neither presenter knew how to set one up on a university server. Both left that up to their university server administrator.

If any member would like to use the MW-SIG Moodle as an administrator for their own courses, please contact me to set your access rights. Never having offered this before, no one is exactly sure how things will pan out. If many members use this and many students subsequently use the bandwidth, we may need to re-think this policy. For the moment, though, please use our Moodle.

From the Editor

Kris Bayne
Publications Chair

Goodness, time flies. My kids, however, dispute this claim after we sat down and watched Kubrick/Clarke's 2001: A Space Odyssey the other night. Great movie still but, wow, it makes the fast-forward finger itch. But, anyway, here we are already into spring and the beginning of a new school year. I am sure everyone is busy getting their heads around their new 2008 teaching odyssey. Don't you sometimes wish you could drop a big, black slab at the front of the room to do the work? Well, such devices are a bit of a way off, but in the meantime, we have quite a full issue of 'Between The Keys' to give us ideas and stimulation.

We welcome back Part Two of Jamar Miller's perspective on models of lesson planning. This will take the total up to thirteen points of view on how to approach our planning! Allan Murphy introduces a pair work exercise, 'Expressions', to help learner get out of the one-answer-fits-all habit. Textbook (and, it seems, genetically wired) writer, Kevin Cleary, is interviewed by Jim Smiley. Planning for the PAN-SIG in May is in its final stages and again the Materials Writers SIG features heavily. We will have a look at the abstracts and summaries of several materials-related presentations. As the second of its kind, we have coaxed John Daly to introduce himself and reflect on some points of materials in 'Toot Your Own Horn'. We also get a reminder about the 2nd Annual Writer's Conference, and our tireless and, I think, sleepless Coordinator, Jim Smiley, will fill us in on important SIG issues in 'Working Together'.

Finally, as a precusor to his featured speaker and workshop events at the upcoming Pan-SIG conference, Miles Craven has given some practical guidelines on points to consider when writing materials.

All in all, a packed issue of 'Between The Keys'. As usual, I would like to encourage all our members to consider how they could contribute to the next issue in summer (details to come). We will, of course, have enjoyed the PAN-SIG conference at Doshisha University in Kyoto in the interim. For those presenting in Kyoto there is the opportunity to submit to the conference proceedings, however, if for some reason you do not, BTK would welcome short articles on your topic. Also, reports, commentaries or whatever on the conference are also worthy. And the usual call for items related to materials writing stands.

Have a good beginning to the school year and hope you can make it to Kyoto in May.

Direct Instructional Model Lesson Plans

Jamar A. Miller
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Part 2 of 2

(The first six Lesson Plans were presented in the last issue (Between the Keys Vol.15[3] 2007).

A vital part of teaching and curriculum planning is creating lesson plans that utilize several models of teaching and knowing how to correctly label them so you can use the appropriate methods later on as situations call for it. Within "Direct Instructional Model Lesson Plans", there are 12 major models of lesson planning: Mastery Learning Model, Direct Instruction Model, Positive Self-Concepts Model, Memory Model, Self Training Model, Advance Organizer Model, Role Play Model, Non-Directive Teaching Model, Group Investigation Model, Inductive Model Lesson Plan, Synectics Model, and Jurisprudential Inquiry Model.

Each Lesson Plan begins with an overview of the Model. They are structured as a 'My Share' and show the procedure, practice, discussion and evaluation stages within the lesson plan as well as indicate the target learner type and materials required. The Lesson Plan end with a short summary of the lesson's purpose and objective. Each utilizes the target Model Lesson Plan and serves as an both a valuable lesson plan that can be used in the classroom but also serves as an example of the method for teachers who want to diversify their knowledge of lesson planning.

Explorer Learning Principles

Quick Guide
Key Words: Explorer Learning Principles, Oral communications, culture, Celebrate Learning, Meaningful Learning
Learner English Level: University
Learner Maturity Level: University
Preparation time: 30 minutes
Materials: paper, pencil, blackboard

There are several "Explorer Learning Principles" the following only focuses on two of them and takes 1 class. For more info on Explorer Learning Principles see Freeman and Freeman (2001). [Freeman, David E. and Freeman, Yvonne S. (2001). Between Worlds: Access to Second Language Acquisition (2nd ed.). Portsmouth: Heinemann.]

Procedure:
Part 1
Step 1: Celebrate Students' First Language and Culture by asking the students to bring in a story from their own culture to class, make sure its one that relates to the factors that they believe make their culture significant. The stories can be personal, historical, socially significant or relate to traditional values within the culture.

Step 2: Students may elect to simply tell their stories, or create a presentation using cultural materials that will support their stories. Items such as hats, religious emblems, articles of clothing, historical reference materials or

photographs are all possible items that may be used for supporting materials. The purpose of the activity is to acknowledge the background of each student and clarify for the class that the cultural associations of all people are important to their learning and existence. Furthermore, the activity will also incorporate the principle of celebrating the student's learning and diversity.

Step 3: Discussion will follow each presentation, with questions and answers involving the presenter.

Part 2

Focus on the Learner

Note: An activity directed at the focus on the learner will serve to understand the background of the student from an educational, as well as a personal level. This will assist curriculum preparation that will enhance the student's capabilities to date.

Step 1: The activity will be accomplished in class, with the students completing a survey form that focuses directly on their personal and educational experiences, which they feel has impacted their learning. Each student will be allowed time in the classroom to complete the survey, taking care to discuss any and all issues that the learner believes are significant to his or her second language acquisition.

Step 2: The survey form will not be shared with the rest of the class, but will be used as a tool by the teacher to support instruction. The survey form will also provide the basis for an understanding of the realistic goals that can be set for the student, and as a guide to evaluate progress in academia.

Conclusion: This Lesson plan has been successfully executed for classes ranging in size from 10-50, but it also serves as a useful teachers aid, as it demonstrates, what a Explorer Learning Principle" based lesson plan exactly looks like and what one would entail. The ability to actually plan a lesson and be able to categorize it in the appropriate method/category is essential to our job as teachers. Knowing this,

we can more easily assess our students needs and how to strategically "TEACH" to them.

Jurisprudential Inquiry Model Lesson Plan

Quick Guide

Key Words: Jurisprudential Inquiry method model, Oral communications and culture

Learner English Level: University / High School (High-level 3rd year)

Learner Maturity Level: University

Preparation time: 120 minutes

Materials: paper,pencil

Procedure: The jurisprudential inquiry method of instruction will be used within the lesson. This method of instruction is intended to allow students to explore a case, develop ideas about the case and draw conclusions based on the case, as in a court of law. For the purposes of this lesson the case will be focused on the following scenario:

A student from Mexico enters the school system in the United States and has not had any English language instruction. That student has been capable of learning a few English slang words, as well as some curse words throughout his life in the English language. However, that student cannot communicate effectively in the education environment.

The teacher will ask, "What are that student's options at this point in time for surviving in society?".

* The students will develop ideas and the teacher will write them on the blackboard.

* For each idea the students will develop pros and cons for implementation of the idea through classroom discussion.

* Those pros and cons will be written on the blackboard throughout the discussion.

* The class, with teacher guidance, will then be asked to determine what the top

3 considerations for the student will be for survival in society, and ultimately what the final choice should be in relation to survival.

 * The teacher and the class will then also discuss any laws and policies that affect this decision and how they will impact the student's life.

Practice: The students will be placed into groups and asked to develop a policy in the United States that would assist immigrants from other countries the most, without infringing on the rights of Americans. The students will be asked to keep their policy simple, within a few sentences and be able to explain their policy and the reasoning behind it to the class.

Discussion: Discussion will occur between the students in the groups, through questions and answers, as well as general discussion between the students and the teacher.

Evaluation: Evaluation will occur in a check for understanding of the process of analysis and evaluation of the issue, as well as in the development of the policy by the students. The students will also be evaluated on their written and oral skills and their increasing skills within these areas.

Conclusion: This Lesson plan serves two purposes, one it's a lesson plan that can be used in classes and two it's a lesson plan that can be looked at as a good example of what actually constitutes a lesson plan that utilizes the Jurisprudential Inquiry Model Lesson approach. This lesson Plan has been successfully used for classes ranging in size from 5-50, and has been used in both (High-level 3rd year) high school classes and University Classes.

Synectics Model Lesson Plan

Quick Guide
Key Words: Synectics Model Lesson Plan, Oral communications and culture
Learner English Level: University / High School (High-level 3rd year)
Learner Maturity Level: University
Preparation time: 120 minutes
Materials: American classic children's story, blackboard, chalk

Procedure: The lesson will be presented based on the Synectics Model Lesson Plan, which is one based on the synectics in English writing or speaking.

 * The teacher will introduce a traditional English children's story that is often told to English native speaking youngsters. This should be a story that has uncommon phrases and that is in its original text version. Furthermore, it should display some aspect of a historical account of society that can be used within the lesson and if possible, have its origins in another country other than an English speaking country.

 * The teacher will read the story to the class.

 * A short discussion session will follow the reading of the story to check for understanding.

 * The teacher will then tell the students the history of the story, i.e., that it came from another country, the country name and how it began to be told in English

The teacher will then identify phrases, words or sentences that are uncommon to modern English and write them on the board.

 * Then the teacher will ask the class to begin to brainstorm and decifer what the phrases, words or sentences mean. During this process the teacher will only write and call on students for suggestions. If the students have difficulty during this process the teacher can provide clues, but cannot divulge the answers.

* When all phrases, words and sentences have been identified correctly, the teacher will either confirm or discuss the meaning of these elements of the story, providing a societal basis for their existence.

Practice: Students will be asked to think of a children's story that was popular within their own culture and return to class the next day to tell it. This will allow for a broader understanding of language, storytelling and the evolution of society.

Discussion: Discussion will occur through independent practice as the students work together to determine the appropriate meaning of words. Discussion will also take place through questions and answers with the teacher.

Evaluation: The students will be evaluated based on their ability to conceptualize different aspects of society, storytelling and language throughout the years.

Conclusion: This Lesson plan serves two purposes, one it's a lesson plan that can be used in classes and two it's a lesson plan that can be looked at as a good example of what actually constitutes a lesson plan that utilizes the Synectics Model Lesson approach. It has been successfully used for classes ranging in size from 5-50, and has been used in both (High-level 3rd year) high school classes and University Classes.

Inductive Model Lesson Plan

Quick Guide

Key Words: Inductive Model Lesson Plan, Oral communications and culture

Learner English Level: University / High School (High-level 3rd year)

Learner Maturity Level: University

Preparation time: 120 minutes

Materials: a pre-written situation that proposes a problem

Procedure:

Phase 1: The lesson will be presented based on the Group Inductive Model Lesson Plan, which is one where the purpose of the lesson is to develop word identification skills. This will be an important aspect of learning a new language and may be a different concept in English than found in other cultures. Therefore, using example pictures and the blackboard, the students will work to learn about double vowel sounds, what they look like, the different sounds of double vowels in different cultures and the identification of them in sentences constructed by the teacher.

Phase 2: The Open-Ended Phase

In learning about double vowel identification and pronunciation it is important to remember one specific rule, double vowels always sound like the letter that they represent.

Phase 3: Presentation

 * Teacher will provide pictures that demonstrate words with double vowel sounds. Teacher will ask each student of a different culture to say the word using his or her language of origin as an example of how double vowel sounds can be interpreted in different ways.

* Teacher will then go through the pictures with the students and have them repeat double vowel sounds of words in English.

 * Teacher will then provide pictures of similar appearing words without double vowel sounds and discuss with the class.

 * Students will then be asked to identify the words with the double vowel sounds from an array of pictures.

Phase 4: Convergent Phase

Finally, students will be divided into groups and given a short paragraph to work on together and identify all of the words with double vowel sounds and their meaning.

Phase 5: Closure and Continued Application. Through discussion students will be asked to talk about their results and problems/ accomplishments that they made. This will be

accomplished with open ended questions in which the students have the opportunity to analyze the work that they have completed, as well as the work of others. Students will then be given a homework assignment in which they can individually accomplish the identification of vowels and be prepared to discuss their meaning in the next class session.

Conclusion: This Lesson plan serves two purposes, one it's a lesson plan that can be used in classes and two it's a lesson plan that can be looked at as a good example of what actually constitutes a lesson plan that utilizes the Inductive Model Lesson approach. It has been successfully used for classes ranging in size from 5-50, and has been used in both (High-level 3rd year) high school classes and University Classes.

Group Investigation Model

Quick Guide
Key Words: Group Investigation Model, Oral communications and culture
Learner English Level: University / High School (High-level 3rd year)
Learner Maturity Level: University
Preparation time: 120 minutes
Materials: a pre-written situation that proposes a problem

Procedure: The lesson will be presented based on the Group Investigation Model, which is one where the group inquires into social and academic issues. The lesson will assist students with English language communication.

-The teacher will begin by dividing the class into small groups. -Each group will be given a situation that could take place in society or at school. The situations should be simple. Examples might be:

 * Another student cannot go to class because she cannot read the schedule, but you can help her although you have not

mastered the language either. Yet, no one was there to assist you…What should you do?

 * An old woman becomes a member of the class. Should you treat her like any other student?

 * You are going to vote for the first time, how do you go about finding out who to vote for?

 * You need to get from point "A" to point "B" on a map, how do you go about that?

 * Students will be asked to select their situation from a hat and meet in their groups.

 * In the groups the students should come up with approximately 5-10 solutions to the issue, identifying the most effective solution and the reason why.

 * The students will then discuss their situation and the solutions that they developed in the group, identifying their brainstorming processes.

Practice: Students will work through both independent and guided practice throughout the lesson. For homework students will be asked to identify a situation that occurred within their community that has a solution which was accepted in society, but that they did not agree with. They will be asked to explain that situation and the original solution the next day in class.

Discussion: Discussion will occur in groups, as well as through questions and answers with the teacher.

Evaluation: Evaluation of the group project will occur through discussion on all class members related to the project.

Conclusion: This Lesson plan serves two purposes, one it's a lesson plan that can be used in classes and two it's a lesson plan that can be looked at as a good example of what actually constitutes a lesson plan that utilizes the Group Investigation Model approach. It has been successfully used for classes ranging in size from 5-50, and has been used in both (High-level 3rd

year) high school classes and University Classes.

Non-Directive Teaching Model

Quick Guide

Key Words: Non-Directive Teaching Model, Oral communications and culture

Learner English Level: University / High School (High-level 3rd year)

Learner Maturity Level: University

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Materials: homework, worksheets, books, study materials, classroom materials, pen, paper, etc

Procedure: The lesson will be presented based on the Non-Directive Teaching Model, which is one where the teacher will act as a guide to promote learning of the students in connection with language learning.

* Teacher will explain to the students that in this lesson the students will be allowed to work on class materials in which they are having difficulty, that they are behind in or that they need assistance in to further their language skills.

 * Students my select the material that they will work on, with that material being related to their educational experience either in this classroom or in other subject areas that focus on language, reading or writing.

 * Students will begin working.

 * Teacher will be available for guidance and assistance when needed, as the students work independently on their chosen assignments.

 The teacher will work with students on an individual basis and assist them in a clearer understanding of their subject matter.

 Practice: Students will use primarily independent practice working on their class assignments, homework assignments, reading, writing or language work. Guided practice will be provided by the teacher when necessary, at the student's request.

 Discussion: Discussion will occur between teacher and student on an individual basis, as needed.

 Evaluation: Students will be evaluated in the progress with the lesson through their completion of assignments, through questions and answers that demonstrate understanding and through their success at overcoming obstacles related to the material.

 Conclusion: This Lesson plan serves two purposes, one it's a lesson plan that can be used in classes and two it's a lesson plan that can be looked at as a good example of what actually constitutes a lesson plan that utilizes the Non-Directive Teaching Model approach. It has been successfully used for classes ranging in size from 5-50, and has been used in both (High-level 3rd year) high school classes and University Classes.

Role Playing Model

Quick Guide

 Key Words: Role Playing Model, Oral communications and culture

 Learner English Level: University / High School (High-level 3rd year)

 Learner Maturity Level: University

 Preparation time: 30 minutes

 Materials: short segments from stories selected by the teacher, pen, paper

Procedure: The lesson will be presented based on the Role Playing Model, which is one that is allows students to place themselves in different situations and understand differing viewpoints within society. The presentation will consist of:

* Teacher will present short segments of different stories that identify an individual in a certain part of society and in a certain situation.

* The segments will be read and discussed in class.

* Each student will receive a copy of the story segment and asked to write a one page account of their feelings on the day that the story takes place.

* The students will then be asked to read their one page paper in class.

* Presentations will be followed be discussions related to choices, meaning and how that person felt and why.

Practice: Independent practice will occur with the students reading and then writing their own account of the character's feelings, as a means of role playing and understanding the world from another's perspective. Guided practice will occur with teacher guiding the discussion and exploring new areas of consideration, as needed, in relation to each story.

Discussion: Discussion will occur through questions and answers, as well as through general discussion will all students and the teacher participating in the dialogue.

Evaluation: Evaluation will be based on the student's understanding of the issues and concerns that affected the character and the student's ability to view the world from the character's perspective. Evaluation will also be concentrated on the student's written and oral communication and the ability to understand the process of role playing as it applies to life and studies in general.

Conclusion: This Lesson plan serves two purposes, one it's a lesson plan that can be used in classes and two it's a lesson plan that can be looked at as a good example of what actually constitutes a lesson plan that utilizes the Role Playing Model approach. It has been successfully used for classes ranging in size from 5-50, and has been used in both (High-level 3rd year) high school classes and University Classes. ∎

Japan Writers Conference

November 29 and 30, 2008
Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan

Thanks to all presenters and attendees of the 1st Annual Japan Writers Conference. Those interested in offering suggestions, being a sponsor, or volunteering for 2008 Japan Writers Conference staff positions may join the following e-list:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/2008JWCvolunteer/

Further details about the 2008 conference will be available later. Please visit our site:

http://japanwritersconference.org/

Thank you!

2008 Conference Call for Proposals

Following on from the success of the Japan Writers Conference held in autumn 2007 at Ochanomizu University, plans for the 2nd Annual Japan Writers Conference are now underway. The conference will be held this year at Nanzan University (Nagoya Campus), Nagoya, Japan on Saturday, November 29th and Sunday, November 30, 2008. This is a call for presentation proposals. All published writers who would like to present are invited to submit a proposal. Those who presented at the first conference are (of course) welcome to submit new proposals. But we especially encourage proposals from new submitters. One of the strengths of the first conference was its variety. One of the best ways to have that variety continue is to have fresh faces making presentations. Detailed information follows, but briefly, a proposal needs to include information about yourself (especially as a writer, including publication credits), the type of presentation you

Expressions
Allan Murphy

I write materials based on a classroom need. Too many of my students have a "house of cards" vocabulary - by this, I mean that they are soon in difficulty if the conversation with a native speaker strays even slightly from memorized dialogs learned in high school and that were mostly taught by non-native speakers of English.

Often, students tend to have only one way of expressing themselves in given social settings e.g. greeting situations / parting situations / expressing congratulations and so on. This could be because Japanese seems to rely a good deal on fixed "knee-jerk" expressions with little variation (ただいま/ お帰りなさい） [tadaimi/ okaerinasai). On many occasions, I have individually greeted a number of students and every one has parroted "I'm fine, thank you. And, you?" No one, but me, seems to feel this echoing both boring and, especially, unnatural.

It hadn't occurred to me until these experiences that native speakers have a built in aversion to replying in the same way as the person previous: "pretty good," "not bad," "can't complain," and so on. Even "not so good" is perfectly acceptable. I once had a student give me the ritual "Fine, thank you. And You?" Followed instantly by "But, I have a terrible headache." I explained that it wasn't necessary to always be "fine" especially if one was unwell. This was a revelation to the student who had been taught that there was only one response.

The purpose of this exercise is to increase naturalness and allow students to feel comfortable in a variety of unscripted, yet mostly daily, situations. In many cases, there are no right answers, only appropriate ones. It is important for students to participate more when they travel overseas, are home stay guests and so on.

They need the confidence to take more communication chances or risk being overlooked when they ultimately enter the workplace. Americans of Asian decent often encounter the "bamboo ceiling" a result of vague communication, lack of participation in meetings, impassiveness and so on.

This is a pair work exercise.
i. Student A reads the expression #1 to student B.
ii. Student B says 1) what the situation is (greeting / parting, etc.); then 2) what an appropriate response would be.
iii. Student B reads the expression #2 to Student A.
iv. Student A says 1) what the situation is (greeting / parting, etc.); then 2) what an appropriate response would be.
v. And so on.
vi. At the end of the exercise, the teacher selects expressions at random and the students respond appropriately, in theory.
vii. Follow up in future classes.

I have used this exercise a dozen times and have fine-tuned some of the expressions. In many cases, students have encountered the expressions e.g. "Say 'when'." and have always wanted to know the meaning and how to respond. Students felt these expressions were useful, interesting and that it was kind of cool to know some "real" English. Whenever possible (and when appropriate), I follow up in subsequent lessons and the students usually reply "correctly".

Expressions: Class Handout

Question	Answer	Question
Formal <--> Informal	*Good <--> Bad*	
How are you?	Great! (reason) Wonderful! Couldn't be better! (information)	How about you?
How are you doing?		How are things with you?
How are things (with you)?		What's new with you?
	Fine (thank you.) Pretty good. (I'm) Fine.	
How's things?	Not bad.	What's up with you?
How's it going?	As usual. So-so.	And you?
Howzit?	(I) Can't complain. (information)	

An interview with Kevin Cleary
Gentle Inspiration
Jim Smiley, Tohoku Bunka Gakuen University

Kevin Cleary is the author of 7 ELT textbooks including *"Homestay Adventures"* (Macmillan LanguageHouse), "*Presenting Science*" (MLH) and "*Science Speaks*" (Kinseido).

Jim Smiley interviews prolific materials writer Kevin Cleary and finds out how a passion for the written word shows itself in ETL materials.

Kevin Cleary is a tall, unassuming and quietly cheerful character. His volunteer efforts for JALT have seen him in various treasury positions over the past 10 years. Bespectacled and bookish, it's no surprise to find out that there's a librarian in the Cleary family. And behind this gentle persona is a fervent writer, passionate about creating unique and readable texts that not only help students engage in English but teach them as well. Let's find out more about Kevin and his materials.

JS How did you get into materials writing?
KC Being a writer and editor has always been a fundamental aim. I grew up in a family of readers and writers. My mother and a sister are published authors of fiction, local history and women's history. Another sister is a librarian.

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MW's *Between the Keys*

I suppose that it was only natural that when I began teaching, I would want to write original materials for my students.

JS Whom do you teach?

KC Technically-oriented university kids mainly: future scientists, engineers, chemists and the like. My materials reflect this and are usually factually-based general science texts although I do have a couple of more general textbooks.

JS Do you have a background in sciences?

KC No. I studied accounting at university. My father was a research chemist and I have always found science fascinating.

JS Can you describe the process of generating materials for subjects in which you're not a specialist?

KC I have found that there are two major concerns. The first is about creating genuinely original materials, and the second is about usefulness. First of all, I read three newspapers a day and browse a lot of different websites. Over the years, I've built up a collection of miscellaneous facts, or really trivia, on a lot of topics. When it comes to writing a new book, say of 15 units, we (I like working as a team member) select 20 or so themes. I look for a hook, an interesting centring fact or incident that becomes the core for an essay. For example, there is a collection of observatories on Mauna Kea in Hawaii, the tallest mountain in the Pacific. Since it is on the Big Island, one of the most light-pollution free areas in the world, it is ideal for observatories. So, if something to do with of astronomy is my theme, setting the essay in Hawaii with the centring theme of Mauna Kea allows me to include a lot of cultural and scientific information that can make the essay both interesting and educational to Japanese students. Anyway, once I am comfortable with the theme I'll re-read widely around the topic to find some more related facts. I

try not to inject my voice into the theme too much. Having to read a strongly opinionated essay can be a chore for students. Also, I choose facts that are generally known in the scientific community. There's no copyright on facts. Of course, our editors check and double check that we haven't mistakenly included anything that could be copyrighted. Sales managers must also be secure in the knowledge that they are promoting original works and ones that are accurate. They don't want someone telling them that the textbook has a big mistake in it. Finally, I want to have an original work and avoid even the appearance of plagiarism, so after writing I check to see if anything is close to my essay.

JS Can you give me a concrete example?

KC Sure. The topic of how the brain works is interesting. As language teachers we're pretty much aware of short-term, long-term and working memories. I'll put those well-known concepts into my own words, hopefully remember some examples of how they are applied or abused, and bring the information into the text. When it is synthesized like that, it is original.

JS Is there anything you're careful about in during this?

KC Yes. If I find a 'fact' that only has one source, I'll generally not use it, or will put a footnote about it in the finished textbook. I don't want to use anything that is not corroborated.

JS To maintain integrity in your text?

KS Yes, and to ensure more longevity of the text. A textbook needs to be reasonably interesting in its reporting of cutting edge technology but also can't contain things that are likely to be disproven or obsoleted soon or which are too controversial. For example, for how long could an essay about flash memory sticks be interesting? They were hugely interesting for a short time as they obviated the need to use a CD or floppy disk and the complications that can crop up between operating systems. But now they

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are so normal they are in the background. If a student were to read about how great they are the textbook would be dated. As for accuracy, I'm not a specialist, so I need to have all texts read by specialists. I could research, say, the history of the recorder, produce a plausible article that would seem fine to another non-expert, but which would make anyone who actually plays the recorder howl with laughter, perhaps even derisive laughter! (I'm using the recorder example just for today because the interviewer is an ardent player. I wouldn't ever actually write about the recorder.) The same holds true for any specialist topic.

JS So specialist feedback is important?
KC Very much so, and not just at that level; Feedback at the student or teacher level is critical. Small localised trialling is imperative. Getting feedback from your target audience is exactly what you want otherwise you'll get it from your editor if you're lucky or from disappointing sales if you're not. Through the processes of feedback and re-writing, you can get some confidence that your essay is going to be useful to learners. Two major factors in feedback are if passages in your text are interesting or not and if they are readable or not.

JS Returning to the concept of usefulness, how do you ensure that Japanese students can enjoy your work?
KC As I've just mentioned, trialling is essential, but also I fill each essay with information which is tied together with an interesting nugget that, hopefully, grabs the attention of the Japanese student reader. Aside from that, I make sure that the level of the text is appropriate for students up to mid-intermediate levels.

JS How do you do that?
KC Mainly through experience of teaching and knowing what students can and can't easily understand. Also, I'm careful to avoid unusual or challenging vocabulary items or conceptually difficult themes. I use a concordance software program to test if my writing uses lexical items mainly in the top 1000 or 2000 frequency lists. If not, I adjust the items.

JS What about grammar structures?
KC I try to keep my writing as natural as possible. Writing a text with pre-planned structures in mind produces artificial articles, at least in my case. Usually, I'll provide language support activities based on language derived from the language already present.

JS There is the impression that working with Japanese editors is very different from working with those from overseas companies. How does this accord with your experience?
KC I haven't worked with overseas companies, but I don't think that it's much different.

JS For example, it is said that a writer needs to complete an entire text and the Japanese publisher will tidy it up and print the whole thing.
KC I'm sure that happens, but it hasn't been my experience. Typically, we write a sample unit or three and table of contents and send that in as a proposal. It can take a long time to get a sample accepted. Also, publishers have submission guidelines. Authors should get them from the publisher's website before they do anything else.

JS Kevin, many thanks for letting me grill you. To finish, is there any advice you'd give to aspiring authors?
KC Thank you, too. I'd say that authors need to keep an open mind, fill up texts with information that is relevant to their audience, accept feedback and write and rewrite and rewrite. Let me close by saying "Good Luck!" to the SIG members in your efforts to make materials for students and teachers!

Toot your own horn
John Daly

Hello. My name is John Daly. I'm from Philadelphia, on the East Coast of the United States. I spent two years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Tunisia, 3 years as a lasagna cook and grad student in Arizona, and soon it will be 28 years in Japan, seven of them within sight of Mt. Fuji in Shizuoka, and the rest in Tochigi Prefecture, which I think ranks number two in a list of prefectures which people know nothing about. Since 1990 I have been responsible for conversation classes at a junior college which we have decided to simply call Sano College. We are north of Tokyo, where the Kanto Plain is just beginning to rise into hills; a bit further north are the mountains around Nikko, Tochigi's most famous spot.

I think I joined Materials Writers in 1997 or 8. I had run out of textbooks to try with my classes, having found none that fit just right, and had begun thinking about writing my own materials. I joined the sig hoping to find direction and inspiration. A materials writer wannabe, that was me. And today, these many years later, that, basically, is what I still am. I haven't written a book, haven't come very close, actually. I have created handouts for my classes, as ideas came to me, but without any grand overall scheme in mind.

And with senior citizen movie discounts not too far off for me, chances are that I never will actually hold a book of my creation. If I do, though, it is likely to be a book that includes Japanese to English word lists, in addition to activities (tasks) for conversation practice. In the past few years I have been thinking more about "teaching" conversation, as colleagues teach history or teach math. When I think back on my own experience of learning Japanese, I recall that I am always glad when someone tells me that x in English is y in Japanese. For me, it seems to be the natural way to learn a language: you start with an idea, which you have in your own language, and then you try to find its equivalent in the other person's language. The person who can supply that equivalent is a teacher. The past few years, looking out at my students from the front of the classroom, I sense that that is what they want me to be, a supplier of the x's and y's of English and Japanese. There is just so much that they can learn from each other in pair work.

If you look in the Conversation section of publishers' catalogs, you can find materials that provide opportunities for speaking practice, but, in my opinion, they don't set out to teach much. The writer, it seems to me, generally assumes that the students using the materials already have in their heads words and phrases enough to engage in the tasks presented. Many of my students don't, really. They are asking me to put those words and phrases into their heads.

So, recently I've been thinking, wouldn't it be nice to have a book that starts off each lesson with a bunch of Japanese to English words and phrases. Not just the one-to-one equivalents that are easy enough to find in your dictionary, but also groups of words that are not so easy to find. For example, if the topic of the unit is "Movies", things like "字幕" [jimaku] is "subtitles" could be useful, but also "字幕を見ないようにする" [jimaku o minai you ni suru] is "I try not to look at the subtitles", and "〜ないようにする" [~nai you ni suru] is "try not to ~" would be even more useful. Grammatical pieces such as "try not to" would be introduced not as

pieces of grammar, but as pieces of conversation. Thinking in this way, I think, makes the idea of "teaching" conversation reasonable and doable.

I'm not advocating a complete return to the *agricola agricolae* means *farmer* word lists in your Latin I grammar-translation text. The usefulness of tasks for developing conversational fluency is obvious. But I would like to see a book that gives the students up front, bilingually, material with which they can work while performing the tasks. Ideas developed in the UK and US for facilitating students' acquisition of English may be inefficient, if not ineffective, in Japan, where class time is limited, and English outside of class is not so readily available. Why not accept the fact that all of our students speak Japanese, and draw up a list of the expressions that they use in Japanese conversation, and provide them with, teach them, English equivalents. I was approaching a theater one time with a bunch of students, and as we got close one of the students said "並んでいる"[narande iru]. There's no way that my students are going to know that, in that situation, in English, a person would have said "There' s a line". Unless I tell them. Teach them.

This is the kind of conversational teaching that I've been thinking about recently. It seems to me that this may be the most efficient and beneficial way to enable students with limited "conversational vocabulary" to begin to express themselves in English. I don't remember having seen a book like the one I have in mind, a book with lots of words in lists, as well as good tasks for practice. So I guess it's up to me to write it. Sure could use some help, though. If any of this gives any of you any ideas at all, I would be very happy to hear about them. Please feel free to drop me a line. ⬛

wish to make, a title, a summary of 50 words, a longer abstract (150 words) and any special requests you might have. Standard sessions are fifty minutes long, but if you have something special in mind, please let us know and we will accommodate it if possible. Presentations on all genre and all aspects of writing and publishing are welcome. The deadline for presentation proposals is May 1, 2008 This year we have more classrooms available and therefore can have more presentations. There are also plans for an event on Saturday night under discussion. So plan to be in Nagoya on November 29th and 30th either as a presenter or participant in the 2nd Annual Japan Writers Conference. And please forward this to any friend or colleague who would be interested.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2nd Annual Japan Writers Conference
Nanzan University (Nagoya Campus), Nagoya, Japan
Saturday and Sunday, November 29-30, 2008

The Japan Writers Conference seeks proposals from published authors who wish to lead workshops or moderate discussions. The conference will be open to the public and free of charge for attendees. No honoraria can be provided for speakers/workshop leaders. The conference is not-for-profit and will be staffed by volunteers. Sessions covering any genre, style, or aspect of writing including poetry, fiction, essay, memoir, creative non-fiction, academic/textbook writing, literary translation, cross-genre work, text production, traditional and non-traditional publishing, and/or literary performance are sought. Fifty minute session formats may include workshops, guided discussions, short lectures followed by question and answer, or oral readings plus discussion. Sessions can focus on theory and/or practice, e.g.,

Pan-SIG Conference 2008
MW-SIG Presenter Abstracts

The 2008 PAN-SIG Conference at Doshisha University, Kyoto, promises to be one of the most diverse and exciting to date. The Material Writers Special Interest Group is very active in both the organization of the conference and actual presentations. For your interest we have included five materials related abstracts and summaries. And don't forget to check out the conference web-site to read up on our featured speaker, Miles Craven. Hope you can get to Kyoto!

About Miles Craven

The Møller Centre, Churchill College, University of Cambridge

Miles Craven has worked in English language education for nearly twenty years. He has a wide range of experience as a teacher, teacher-trainer, examiner and materials writer. He has taught students of all ages, abilities and nationalities, working in Italy, Portugal, Spain, Hong Kong, Japan and the UK. Miles has worked as a trainer and/or examiner for UCLES, IELTS and TOEFL and is on the ESOL panel for the Trinity College examinations. He is author or co-author of many language learning publications for Asian and international markets, including: *Get Real!* (Macmillan), *Reading Keys* (Macmillan), *English Grammar in Use CDROM* (C.U.P), *CCC Listening Skills* (C.U.P), *CCC Quizzes, Questionnaires & Puzzles* (C.U.P), *World interviews* (Seibido), *Messages 3* (C.U.P), *Breakthrough* (Macmillan) and *Real Listening & Speaking* (C.U.P; levels 1, 3 and 4). His research interest is the link between educational experience and achievement among language learners. Miles is also Business English Programme Manager at the Moller Centre, Churchill College, University of Cambridge, where he helps in the design and delivery of tailor-made training programmes for business.

Featured Speech

Insights into ELT publishing

Why do so many textbooks look alike? Are all publishers the same? How can I get published? The presenter will give a humorous and practical overview into the world of ELT publishing, covering issues relevant to materials writers, and also of general interest to anyone in English language teaching.

The presenter will begin by tackling some common misperceptions of ELT publishers and go on to outline some of the pressures and pitfalls publishers face. He will explain how these affect textbook design and content. The presenter will then go on to look at the issue from an author viewpoint, beginning with the fundamental question of motivation, and the need to set realistic goals. He will aim to dispel some common misconceptions about authoring, drawing attention to the high level of sacrifice, risk, and often luck, involved. The presenter will then give some guidance on choosing the right publisher, and highlight some of the differences between local and international publishers. Finally, he will list some key points giving advice for those wishing to develop their career as authors.

Materials writing workshop

This practical workshop will look at examples of different language learning activities, and encourage analysis of why certain activities are more likely to succeed in Japan than others. Participants will then create their own activities, following the guidance and principles covered. There will also be chance for participants to exchange and evaluate each other's materials*.

* Participants are encouraged to bring along some of their own materials for evaluation.

The presenter will begin by showing various activities from ELT textbooks, taken from international courses as well as courses designed specifically for students in Japan. Participants will be put into groups to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each activity. They will be encouraged to identify general principles that activities should adhere to, in order to achieve successful learning among Japanese students. Groups will reform to create one or two activities of their own, following the principles they have identified, which they will then share and assess together. Finally, participants who have brought along their own materials will be encouraged to offer them for evaluation by the group.

Other MW-SIG Presentations

Authenticating the input: Creating Pre-Essay Materials from Pedagogically Relevant Corpora

Richard John Walker (Meiji Gakuin University)

Obstacles placed in the path of Japanese freshmen second language writing students (L2) when writing essays are well-known to be legion; less acknowledged perhaps are obstructions impeding their second language writing instructors in providing contextually relevant pre-essay material input. To optimise exposure to meaningful input instructors are advised to utilise the corpus-creation process. In this paper two corpora were used for a class of freshmen writing students preparing for a persuasive essay on 'modern conveniences': a news text corpus used to detect frequently-used topic-specific lexis from The Japan Times, and a learner corpus used to discover cohesive relation usage within a previous persuasive essay. The resulting corpora-informed materials resulted in improvements in two measures: a comparison with same-level students the previous year (with improvements in lexical cohesion and cohesive relations noted), and a comparison of scores from the class's previous persuasive essay using the automated online writing evaluation system (Criterion). Improvement is attributed to the use of authentic corpus-informed material being utilised within a task-based framework that sequenced tasks to prioritize targeted vocabulary. Results lead the author to question the present state of writing textbooks for L2 students, and offer suggestions for instructors frustrated with the drawbacks of automated writing evaluation systems.

Finding that balance: issues in textbook adaptation

Jim Smiley (Tohoku Bunka Gakuen University)

Published textbooks cannot match the precise requirements for any individual class group, and teachers select approximately-levelled textbooks which they adapt to the needs of their target class. Various checklists exist to help teachers analyse textbooks. These may be utilised to highlight gaps between teacher belief, class need and textbook content, making them ideal tools to aid textbook supplementation and adaptation. Some will be shown and analysed, and the presenter

will add another. Two case studies will be shown: the first takes published materials as a basis for the principled creation of class-specific materials; and the second describes how the presenter developed his own self-made materials into a more cohesive and comprehensive set utilising the checklist. Attendees will understand more about the usefulness of textbook-analysis checklists in relation to how they might improve the content of their own materials.

Changing textbooks changing practice? Analysing the potential effects of a change in textbooks.

Simon Humphries (Kinki University Technical College)

This presentation examines diversity and convergences between three textbooks in relation to teaching practice and government aims. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) has called for the promotion of innovation in textbooks and teaching materials that focus on language use in "actual language situations and functions" (MEXT, 2003). However, this presentation demonstrates that the latest edition of a MEXT-approved textbook offers only limited opportunities for reaching the Ministry's communicative targets. The presenter works at a technical college that changed, in April 2006, to using two textbooks that were not MEXT-approved. Using an adaptation of Littlejohn's (1998) analytical framework, the presenter examines the potential effects of the three textbooks on teaching practice.

How to write English self-study books for engineers

Michihiro Hirai (Kanagawa University)

Compared with the plethora of English self-study books for business purposes, relatively few are available on engineering. In writing two self-study books for Japanese engineers on technical meetings and presentations, the presenter used an engineering viewpoint by taking a 'product development' approach to writing. The two processes have "differentiation" in common, one of the key criteria in defining value to the market. He first analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of existing self-study books, thereby identifying the possible areas of differentiation. For both self-study books, the areas of differentiation included authenticity, usefulness, and ease of use. The presenter's decades-long experience as a technical coordinator in an export project brought a real-life flavour into the model skits and presentation. Usefulness and ease of use were enhanced by tables summarizing key words and phrases sorted by engineering-specific situations, quick-access indexes, and glossaries.

Learning from the Children

Brian Cullen (Nagoya Institute of Technology) & Sarah Mulvey (Nanzan University)

With the gradual introduction of English classes into elementary school, interest in children's EFL has been growing. The Language Teacher and other forums have published an increasing number of articles on this field exploring optimal ways to encourage very young learners. The presenters have experience in making materials for both children's EFL and university EFL classes and are beginning to explore ways that these two very different teaching situations can be mutually informative. While there are clear age-dependent cognitive differences in learning styles, the use of chants, gestures, songs, and graphics is not limited to kids and the presenters will attempt to show how they can be adapted to promote learning in university EFL. ¡█

Considerations in materials design and development textbook

Miles Craven

"This book is rubbish! It doesn't work at all!" How many times have you either said that, thought it, or heard another teacher say it? Probably a lot! That might even be your inspiration for becoming a materials writer. I know it was mine, back in 1997, when I found myself struggling class after class with inappropriate textbooks.

But, as we all know, it's one thing to criticize someone else's work, and it's quite another to create something worthwhile yourself from scratch. Here are a few guidelines that often help me as I write.

Do your homework

A little time and effort spent in researching what's out there, and examining it closely, is certainly worthwhile. There's nothing worse than finding that a great, new, original idea you've just had… has already been done! So, as a starting point, always check what's out there and try to make sure that what you have is different, and preferably better!

Put yourself second

You need to match the textbook to the abilities and learning style of the students your writing for, not to your own personal taste. When you start to write any materials, think about the students in the class that will be using it. Imagine them sitting there at the start of the lesson. You may like what you write, but will they? I've written more than a few books which are completely against my teaching style, but which have proved successful for the students they are intended for. So, always consider your audience, not yourself.

Consider the requirements

Think about the language and skills you need to cover in the course you're writing. Ask yourself how you can introduce and practice the target language. Make sure skills are explained in sufficient detail, and are developed coherently. There must be plenty of opportunities for meaningful communication, and personalization.

Check suitability

Make sure the activities are actually achievable for the students you have in mind. Think about their age, level, and their learning style. How confident are they? Do they like to jump in and try things out, or do they prefer a step-by-step approach? Is it culturally suitable? Students must be comfortable with the tasks they are given, and they must be able to succeed in them.

Make it interesting!

Nobody wants to spend time on things that don't interest them… and this is as true for our students as it is for us. Are the topics you've chosen varied and up-to-date? How authentic is the material? Can students relate to the people, themes and situations? A good textbook shouldn't just attract students' interest, but also maintain it. It's worth remembering that the layout and design should also be attractive. Visually-appealing material will help to keep students' interest, so really push the publisher for some effort in this department.

Don't compromise integrity

The course has to be coherent and well-structured. It mustn't simply look good. It must stand up to scrutiny. Is the syllabus robust? Be

sure to introduce and practice grammar and vocabulary systematically. Don't just practice the skills, but teach and try to develop them as well. Integrate lots of recycling and add useful revision sections when necessary. If you're writing more than one level, really think about how the levels complement each other. Whatever you do, don't patch together half a dozen of your favorite lessons into a loose format, and then fill in the gaps in between!

Make sure the material is accessible

Teachers and students using your material need to understand every task more or less immediately – or this will lead to confusion. At the very least, teachers will end up explaining instructions repeatedly! At worst, they'll have to rework every unit… Check to see how clear the rubric is for each exercise, and consider always providing models. Your materials must be easy to learn and teach from. Teachers are busy, so minimize on the time they need to prepare for each class by creating a course that can basically 'teach itself'.

Check timings

How does the length and unit structure fit the class situation you're writing for? Will teachers be able to cover all the units in the time available? Some students complain if they don't cover most, or all, of the textbook in class. Are there any sections that teachers might be able to set for homework if necessary? How can you flag these? Try to make the course flexible, to fit different teaching situations, but don't let it be so flexible it's a patchwork quilt!

Don't compromise on the audio

If your materials need audio, realize that the quality of recordings is vital. Really pressurize the publisher to do a good job here, and hire decent, experienced voice actors. For your part, make sure all dialogs are authentic and natural. Read them aloud and record yourself. Listen afterwards. If they are hard to read aloud, or

sound odd when you listen back to them, then they need changing. Offer a range of accents. Check for target vocabulary and grammar, and make sure there are no words and phrases that may confuse students.

Extra resources and support – quality and quantity

Some courses have a Teacher's Guide, web site, workbooks, CDRom, DVD… . Remember that publishers generally supply many of these components for free, and often they are simply flung together in the final stages. It's up to you to make sure the quality is there. Don't just rattle off a few Teacher's notes as an afterthought. These notes may prove critical to the success of your course. Make them as practical and useful as possible. Similarly, make sure any tests, photocopiables or other components you write are as thorough as possible, covering and recycling the target language.

Finally, you have to be your own worst critic. Sure, show the material to colleagues and friends. Be ready to accept their suggestions. But, at the end of the day, it's up to you to decide what works and what doesn't. You need to listen to that little voice inside your head – the one that says 'Hmm. I'm not sure about this'. Don't ignore it! The writer's inner voice is invaluable. If you worry something isn't working when you write it, then the chances are it won't work in the classroom. Be ready to scrap exercises, units, even an entire approach. Don't be afraid to start over. The more self-editing you can do, the sharper and more successful your materials will be.

That's about all I can say right now. Typically, this article is already late and I'm still not completely happy with it. A feeling you all, as fellow materials writers, will sympathize with, I'm sure.. i

matters of craft, stylistic concerns, publishing tips, editing strategies, performance techniques, literary trends/history, issues associated with translation, etc.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

A. Please submit the information below, numbered (1-9) as follows, as the text of an email message:

1. Your full name
2. Your email addresses
3. Professional (employment or academic) affiliation and job title, if relevant
4. Preferred 50 minute session type (choose from below):

   1st choice: a, b, c, d, e, or f
   2nd choice: a, b, c, d, e, or f

a. Poster session b. Workshop (practical focus with audience participation) c. Oral reading plus discussion. d. Short lecture followed by discussion / Q&A e. Guided discussion (leader moderates a discussion among the attendees) f. Panel (group of authors; in this case each panelist's name, work or school affiliation and title, and biography will be required -- maximum 3 persons -- please include bio data for each participant if you choose this format)

5. Presenter biography - including a summary of major recent relevant publications -- 150 words maximum. Please limit the content of this biography to credentials relevant to the session you plan to do (if a panel, please include biographical data for each panelist).

6. Session title - 20 words maximum
7. Session summary - 50 words or less
8. Session abstract (fuller description) - 150 words maximum
9. Optional-- Your comment or special request (requests for equipment will be met only if the requested equipment can be made available)

B. The subject line of your emailed proposal should be: JWC plus your full name and the date of your submission (example: JWC Susan Yamanaka April 5, 2008)

C. No attachment files will be accepted or read. Please do not send website URLs. Materials other than the information requested above will not be read or responded to. Proposals that do not conform to the guidelines above will receive no reply.

D. Deadline for receipt of proposals: May 1, 2008.

E. Send your proposal (only one proposal initially, please) to both email addresses below simultaneously:

japan_writers_conference@yahoo.com
&
gribblej@gol.com

F. PLEASE NOTE:

1. Proposals will be selected on the basis of the submitter's background and experience, the proposal theme and format, and the constraints of the schedule. We wish to provide a program as varied and balanced as possible in terms of genres, themes, and format.

2. Please allow several months response time. A conference volunteer will attempt to contact all submitters who reply to this first call for proposals. (A 2nd call for proposals in summer 2008 may occur only if space remains available in the program.)

3. The conference can provide no financial assistance or funding (honoraria, transportation cost reimbursement etc.) for any participant nor provide any legal documents of any kind for any overseas visitor. Transportation, lodging, meals, sightseeing activities, etc. if needed, must be arranged and paid for by attendees.

4. Although it is expected that participants may wish to bring articles to share such as books, journals, flyers, and so on, the conference cannot be responsible for any such articles or for the loss or sale of personal items.

CALENDAR

Proposal deadline: May 1, 2008

Contact submitters: Early Summer, 2008

Preliminary conference schedule: Available online in late summer, 2008

Conference dates: November 29-30, 2008

Thank you for your interest in the 2nd Annual Japan Writers Conference. The committee looks forward to receiving your proposal.

Japan Writers Conference Organizing Committee

MW-SIG Committee

Executive Officer Positions

Jim Smiley	Coordinator	coordinator@materialswriters.org
Greg Goodmacher	Programmes	ggoodmacher@hotmail.com
Scott Petersen	Treasurer	petersen@ma.medias.ne.jp
Cameron Romney	Membership	cameron_romney@osakajalt.org
Kris Bayne	Publications	krisbayne@gmail.com
Suzy Conner	Records	suzy2121@hotmail.com

MW-SIG Resources

MW-SIG Web Site -- new!

> http://materialswriters.org/
> (old one) http://uk.geocities.com/materialwritersig/index.html

The site contains articles on topics ranging from copyright to desktop publishing techniques, an extensive list of publishers including contact information, tutorials and software recommendations, and information on submission requirements for *Between the Keys*.

MW-SIG Yahoo! Group   http://groups.yahoo.com/group/jaltmwsig/

The Yahoo! Groups site houses our discussion list, a database of members' publications, a file repository for sharing work and ideas, a space for photos, and the ability to conduct polls, create a calendar, and have a live chat session.

On the Inside

The Materials Writers SIG is dedicated to continually raising the standards in the creation of language teaching materials, in all languages and in all media, whether for general consumption or for individual classroom use. The editors encourage participation from colleagues using new media or teaching languages other than English.

Winter 2008   Volume XVI, Number 1