

Volume 3, Issue 1

September 2020

Editor: Celia Logan

TESL Canada Connects

You're never
going to kill
storytelling
because it's
built in the
human plan.

We come with
it.

Margaret Atwood



Welcome to the September issue of the TESL Canada Connects newsletter which focuses on the importance of telling our stories. Please consider submitting your own story for our next issue.

The Stories of Us

The Stories of Us project is focused on building an ESL library of newcomer stories, online and offline, written by newcomers themselves.

Our goal is to create ESL resources that are reflective of the diverse range of newcomer experiences across Canada. To this end, we work with newcomers through a series of scaffolded storytelling / storywriting workshops to unpack the stories that they feel compelled to share. Published stories are available to download for free on our website, and are ranked by CLB level for ease of use. The English text of each story is intentionally displayed side-by-side with the author's home language text to maintain accessibility and honor both languages.

Throughout this project, we have consulted with LINC teachers through interviews and design labs, to capture their unique challenges and co-create resources that enable newcomers to engage in storytelling to support language acquisition, build confidence, cultivate a sense of community, and facilitate the natural grieving and healing processes that accompany immigration. These resources - including a curriculum that helps facilitate story collection among LINC students, as well as supplementary PBLA activities and assessments - will be available for free on our website in September 2020. Please sign up to our mailing list to receive a notification about the launch.

The Stories of Us is a project by the Department of Imaginary Affairs, a national nonprofit that aims to seek, collect, and share stories of new and developing Canadians from coast to coast to coast.

TESL Newfoundland
and Labrador:

June Event:
Anti-Black Racism
Panel Discussion

[Link to Recording](#)

Upcoming Conferences

[ATESL](#): Oct 16, 17, 2020

[TESL NL](#): Nov 13-15, 2020

TESL Canada 'Stories of Us' Winners

Congratulations to our draw prize winners of \$100 each.

Prabhjot Bhamra (ON), Rhonda Collis (BC), and Heidi Schlack (AB).

Thank you to all the story-writing participants. We received submissions from the following provinces; BC, AB, SK, MB and ON and collected a total of 60 stories to be shared both on the Stories of Us website and through TESL Canada.



News from Jane Ali, Recipient of TCEF Professional Learning Grant

Who would have thought a pandemic would hit us in 2020! I for sure wasn't aware as I had plans in place for career and education. And all of it was halted dramatically. A month into my quarantine I was going stir crazy and wanted to be productive with my brain. I was fortunate enough to be able to work from home and am currently in the same situation. However, my education plans were severely affected. I was going into my application stages for chosen doctoral programs then the pandemic changed all intakes and start dates for what I was planning. So, I now had to pivot my thinking and planning.

I decided to seek info of what types of learning I needed and especially with everything going online. I was already teaching a group of learners online, but I felt this platform needed more stimulus as I felt my teaching presence was at 50% and I wanted 200%. Out of the blue I received an alumni email about a summer program. And as I began reading my brain and eyes were checking off a list. This was piquing my interest.

I chose to take Trinity Western University's Graduate Certificate in Coaching and Facilitation for Adult learners (online). By choosing this program, I ended up deciding my field of study to complete a doctoral program Distance Education in the near future.

The program began in April 2020 and will be ending in December 2020. The first two semesters were heavy in theory in adult learning, learning communities, learner engagement and technology with a final practicum semester. I learned so much! I was impressed with the variety of education and experience within my class cohorts. Learning from them was an experience on its own.

What has **inspired me** through this learning: understanding learner communities and learner engagement as well as the online platform strategies/tools. It is in this learning I have applied my Tesol practice. At the same time how can online platforms be user friendly and accessible to learners. All of this is going to be my goals in my own learning now and in the future.

My intention is to further my studies, however, while I teach learners and work in educational institutions, I want to apply what I am learning. Tesol programs are usually for educators teaching adults coming from other countries. My learning in learner communities and engagement shows the importance of knowing who your learners are and their cultural backgrounds. It truly helps educators understand Tesol components in learners.

A big thank you to TESL Canada for granting me one of four TESL Canada Educational Foundation (TCEF) Professional Learning Grants for 2020! It is my turn to pay it forward and inspire learners to reach for the sky!



Two more \$250 bursaries have been approved for Fall 2020! Visit [TESL.ca](https://www.tesl.ca) for more information on how to apply.