

In Appreciation

by TOM GLASS

Teachers of English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) have boundless dedication and ingenuity.

It would be reasonable to think that at some point during the last 60 years, the supply of innovative and useful ideas for *English Teaching Forum* articles would have finally run dry. Or that English educators would have all the teaching techniques they need, and there would be no need to come up with new ones. Or that every successful teaching idea had finally been created, adapted, and perfected, and that now English teachers just needed to match the right idea to the right purpose, and their job would be done.

Of course, that hasn't happened. Instead, English teachers keep creating new ways to teach, new twists on established ideas. Critical thinking and intercultural communication are dovetailed with grammar instruction and vocabulary practice. Peer review leads to authentic communication, which leads to empowerment. Methods of assessment arise to meet ever-changing needs. Every technology tool that is developed seems to be an opportunity for teachers to strike again, finding more and better ways to use it. As the world keeps changing, English teachers adapt—and they innovate.

To continue this year's celebration of *Forum*'s 60th anniversary, we want to express our appreciation for the many teachers who share their innovative ideas by submitting articles to *Forum* and for the countless teachers who read it.

Consider some of the recent topics that have been covered in *Forum*. Figure 1 presents the topics that have appeared in the Articles section of *Forum*, just since the beginning of 2021—the eight most recent issues.



What kinds of content will appear in future issues?

NOTE This is the fourth of four articles commemorating the 60th anniversary of *English Teaching Forum*. Each 2022 issue has featured one of the articles.

Accommodating Learning Disabilities
 Visualization Techniques with Reading Texts
 Movie Dubbing for Pronunciation Practice
 Task-Based Reading Activities with Authentic Materials
 Finding Heterogeneity in Cultural Homogeneity
 Implementing Humor Instruction
 Story Retelling Wheels for Young Learners
 Using Nonprofit Commercials to Teach English
 Assessing Productive Vocabulary Knowledge
 Multimodal Materials and Modes of Communication
 Digital Multimodal Composition
 Open Educational Resources
 Teaching in Emergencies
 Motivating Student Reading through Post-Reading Book Creation
 Utilizing Podcasts in Virtual EFL Instruction
 Getting Students to Speak Up: Classroom Atmosphere Is Key
 Questionnaires as a Tool for Teaching English through Learner-Created Knowledge
 Language Teacher Associations: Volunteering and Advocacy

Figure 1. Topics in *Forum's* Articles section in 2021 and 2022

Perhaps the first thing that jumps out about these topics is the variety they represent. Just as important, though, is that the authors of these articles came up with the ideas on their own. In none of these cases did we at *Forum* request an article on one of these topics; in every case, the authors—English teachers at various places around the world—developed the teaching ideas, wrote the articles, and submitted them of their own volition. And the list in Figure 1 does not even include topics of articles published in the other sections of the journal.

As the editor of *Forum*, I read well over 100 original manuscript submissions each year, and I continue to marvel at the creativity and resourcefulness of English teachers. I have often been asked what topics we would like to see covered in new submissions, and it is a harder question to answer than you might think. For one thing, *Forum* publishes articles on a multitude of topics related to English teaching; if the idea presented is new, effective, and applicable in a range of contexts, we will at least be interested.

Another reason that question is hard to answer is that English teachers who submit articles already do an excellent job of identifying useful topics, without any input from me. I wouldn't have thought to suggest, "You should write an article with specific tips for giving instructions effectively in the EFL classroom," but Jimalee Sowell did just that, in a 2017 article (Volume 55, Number 3). I wouldn't have thought, either, to say, "We'd like to see an article on an easy-to-apply technique for making multiple-choice questions more interesting and effective," and yet Matthew Miklas wrote just such an article, published in 2021 (Volume 59, Number 1). These are just two of the many, many ideas that make perfect sense as article topics and that have been published in *Forum*—again, though, the authors came up with the ideas on their own.

While this is an article in appreciation of teachers who write articles to share successful practices with other teachers, it is also an article in appreciation of *Forum* readers. By reading, you are participating in the network of shared information that we hope makes

ENGLISH TEACHING FORUM

"Mix It Up! Mingle Away!"

Laura Loder Buechel presents innovative twists on the familiar technique of "mingling," suggesting creative ways that you can use mingles to have students tell and listen to jokes, find partners, give compliments, and more—with additional tips for getting the most out of the mingles you use.



Find the Reader's Guide here!




Graphics like this one highlight *Forum* content and appear regularly on the American English for Educators Facebook page.

English teaching stronger and builds the community of English educators worldwide. Every message needs someone to receive it, and in this case, readers are the receivers of the messages found in every *Forum* article.

One recent development is that readers now have more opportunities than ever to engage with *Forum* and participate in the network of shared information mentioned above. In the early years of *Forum*, the only way readers could respond to articles was to write a letter on paper, mail it in, and wait for a reply. In *Forum*'s 60th year, however, here are just some of the ways that *Forum* content is amplified throughout the world and that readers can interact with *Forum* authors and other English language teaching professionals:

- Earlier this year, American English Live presented a series of webinars featuring *Forum* authors; each webinar had a reach of more than 100,000 viewers (recordings are available on the American English website and the American English YouTube channel).



Forum Fact

practical articles that




Advice for all aspiring authors is to read the journal carefully before submitting, become familiar with the types of content that appear in each section, and craft your article as well as you can to fit in the appropriate section.

Authors may submit articles for possible publication in *English Teaching Forum* at any time. There are no deadlines for submission. Please submit articles to etforum@state.gov. Articles published in *Forum* are peer-reviewed. Submission guidelines are available at americanenglish.state.gov/submission-guidelines. *Forum* readers expect to find ideas they can use in their teaching and, in general, prefer provide guidance, clear description, and specific examples.



Quiz: How Well Do You Know *English Teaching Forum*?

1. True or false? You can read and download *Forum* articles for free on the American English website.
2. True or false? Only professional writers can submit articles to *Forum*.
3. How many articles have been published in *Forum* in its 60-year history?
A. Almost 3,500 B. Around 2,000 C. Exactly 1,242
4. All of the following are sections in *Forum* except _____.
A. Try This B. Teachers' Lounge C. The Lighter Side D. Reader's Guide
5. In the early decades, issues of *Forum* sometimes included inserts. Can you give two examples of the kinds of inserts in those issues?

6. Which of the following was never a nameplate (logo) of *Forum*?
A.  B.  C. 
7. On the American English website, you can find all issues going back to which year?
A. 1962 B. 1983 C. 1990 D. 2001 E. 2010
8. In what year were *Forum*'s current design and format first used?
A. 2022 B. 2018 C. 2015 D. 2010 E. 2000
9. *Forum* replaced the *English Teaching Newsletter*. For how many years was the *Newsletter* published?
A. 100 B. 50 C. 10 D. 1

Answers: 1. True; 2. False (Anyone can submit an article to be reviewed for possible publication in *Forum*.)
 3. A; 4. B; 5. Possible answers are records, posters, maps, and calendars. 6. A; 7. D; 8. C; 9. D.
 Scoring: 0 to 9 correct: Excellent! We're just glad you're reading *Forum*, and we hope you find it helpful in your teaching.

- The American English for Educators Facebook page regularly highlights *Forum* articles and gives readers a chance to comment and discuss. and about the publishing process. When it is safe to gather in person, we hold a Meet the Authors session at the conference.
- Each month in 2022, *Forum* authors have explored article topics and led discussions as Teachers' Corner Experts on the American English for Educators Facebook page. Finally, in addition to recognizing *Forum*'s authors and readers, I want to take this opportunity to appreciate another essential group: the learners. Although *Forum* articles are written with teachers in mind as the readers, we hope that learners will be the eventual beneficiaries of the ideas passed along. If you want an exercise in futility, try to find a *Forum* article that doesn't mention students or learners.
- We have given virtual presentations during recent TESOL International conferences to help teachers learn more about *Forum* content



At the TESOL 2022 International Convention & English Language Expo in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, *Forum* authors hold copies of the issues containing articles they wrote; shown from left to right are John Silver (Volume 51, Number 1; 2013), Dawn Rogier (Volume 52, Number 3; 2014), and Nicholas Gordon (Volume 59, Number 1; 2021).

The opportunity to work with learners and improve their lives is a key reason many people become teachers in the first place, and almost every My Classroom article we publish includes comments by the featured teacher about the inspiration they draw from the learners they work with.

I can think of no better way to wind up this series of Reflections articles than to send a hearty “thank you” to all the teachers and learners—and teacher/learners—who have contributed to *Forum* over the years. As we move ahead, I look forward to reading and hearing about even more innovative ways that English language—and all that goes with it—is being taught and learned around the world.

On to Year 61!

Tom Glass is the editor in chief of *English Teaching Forum*. His publications include *Dust in Our Veins*, a work of fiction set in rural Thailand.

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I would like to thank Regional English Language Officer Dawn Rogier for her help with this year’s series of Reflections articles. She has conducted background research, tracked down old issues, provided images, and offered feedback and insight on the articles themselves. Thank you, Dawn!