

Website review by AMY ASH- ED4562- Dr. Paula Kristmanson- Jan. 28, 2010

EverythingESL.net is a website dedicated to providing ESL teachers with useful teaching resources. It is a website maintained by an American ESL teacher, Judy Hayes, who has had 30 years of experience. Because it is a teacher-run site, the information is relevant and authentically helpful.

EverythingESL.net offers a plethora of “lesson plans”¹ (most geared towards younger grade levels), “teaching tips”² (ranging from “comprehensible input and output”³ to “Bloom’s Taxonomy and English Language Learners”⁴), and an active message board, among other features. In addition to the articles and aids located directly on everythingesl.net, there are links to many other resources on the web, as well as related articles.

The ‘teaching tips’ and message board (“ask Judy”⁵) sections of the site are particularly impressive, and useful for an ESL teacher. The ‘teaching tips’ page offers essays and articles on almost every topic. I found the article on “Activities for Newcomers”⁶ exceptionally useful for teachers. Another nice feature with reference to the ‘teaching tips’ portion of the site is connection between articles. For example, if one article references a topic which is discussed in more depth in another article, the link to the other article is provided. In “Activities for Newcomers”⁷ article, ‘parent volunteers’, ‘newcomer programs’, ‘buddies’, and ‘silent period’ are all highlighted so that, if more information on these topic is required, all one has to do is click on the word and a corresponding article pops up. It is a very convenient outline, rich in information.

Beyond maintaining everythingesl.net, Judy Hayes, has also authored several ESL-based resource books. With this in mind, it is no wonder that the site is so extensive and so up to date with the information provided. Unfortunately, I noticed that in some instances, on the message board, Judy relied heavily on ‘plugging’ her books rather than fully answering the questions asked. Often, in this situation, another individual from the ESL teaching community would write in with suggested solutions to the inquiry.

The less inviting aspects of everythingESL.net are that the site is run and maintained primarily by one individual, so there will be some unavoidable biases. As mentioned before, many of the answers will be found in Judy’s books. The bias of nationality is also a major downfall of the site. The vast majority of lesson plans are catered towards American culture, holidays and curriculum. That being said, with a little creativity—something every teacher requires--- the lessons can easily be altered to fit you own and your students’ interests and needs. Lastly, most of the information and lessons are geared more towards the younger grade levels (k-8), but again, with a little creativity, could easily be modified for more mature students.

All in all, I think the everythingESL.net is a great resource for language teachers. It addresses many questions (such as students changing their names⁸ and how to hold

¹ <http://www.everythingesl.net>

² <http://www.everythingesl.net>

³ http://www.everythingesl.net/inservices/comprehensible_input_output_70140.php

⁴ http://www.everythingesl.net/inservices/blooms_taxonomy_language_learn_16902.php

⁵ <http://www.everythingesl.net/askjudie/>

⁶ <http://www.everythingesl.net/inservices/september.php>

⁷ <http://www.everythingesl.net/inservices/september.php>

⁸ http://www.everythingesl.net/lessons/name_lesson.php

parent teacher with parents of ESL learners⁹) and allows teachers to open dialogue on the message board, which is very active with replies everyday. Most importantly, the information is completely current and constantly changing, with new articles and new message board posts almost daily.

⁹ http://www.everythingsl.net/in-services/holding_effective_parent_meeti_68636.php