

## WW Newsletter #84: January 18, 2017

### Headlines

👤 **SWI Workshops coming soon -- and filling up.**  
*Book [workshop in Bay Area soon!](#)*

👤 **Honouring and Safeguarding Etymonline**

👤 **New on Real Spellers**

- New WordWorks *Special Publication* on Real Spellers: My response to the common question “How do I Integrate SWI with my other literacy instruction practices?”
- New on SWI “Investigations”: A lesson using scientific investigations of words and concepts related to civil rights in honour of Martin Luther King Day
- New on SWI “Investigations”: Inquiry-led learning about <detrimment> from a tutoring session (See evidence of a twin base and new Real Spelling Film of this family!)

👤 **Important articles from wider SWI community**

- Dyslexia Training Institute
- LEX (Gina Cooke): Two excellent articles sharing stories from learning in her tutoring sessions
- Mary Beth Steven’s Grade 5 Blog

**SWI Workshops coming soon, and filling up!**

(Note that The July WW Summer Course is on.)

See the workshops at right. The workshops in Alberta and California are imminent, so sign up soon. If you have friends in the area, please share the information.

### Upcoming Public SWI workshops with Pete Bowers

- 👤 **Jan. 23-24:** Public SWI workshop hosted by [Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium](#). Information & Register [HERE](#).
- 👤 **Feb 11 (Part 1) & 18 (Part 2): Palo Alto, CA** hosted by [Athena Academy](#). For details see flyer [HERE](#) and registration form [HERE](#).
- 👤 **April 28-29:** Public workshop with Pete Bowers & Lyn Anderson ([Beyond the Word](#)) hosted by [Wesley College](#), Melbourne, Australia. [Email Lyn for details](#).
- 👤 **June 26-30: SWI Nueva Institute** near San Francisco. Information and registration [HERE](#).
- 👤 **July 18-21:** First 4-day WW SWI Summer Course on Wolfe Island. This year to be hosted at Pete and Sus’ home. Limit 10 people. [Email Pete](#) for details.

### And also don’t miss!

- 👤 **Etymology V, March 25-26, Greater Chicago:** Click [HERE](#) for more about this brilliant annual event with [Gina Cooke \(LEX\)](#) and [Douglas Harper \(Etymonline\)](#)
- 👤 **Dyslexia Training Institute’s 1st Annual on-line “Virtual Dyslexia Conference” April 24 - May 5, 2017:** Click [HERE](#) for more about this exciting new conference with presenters including familiar to our community (Gina Cooke, Mary Beth Steven, myself) but also many others.

Note that there is now enough interest to confirm July WW Summer Course on Wolfe Island. This is our first 4-day session. The limit for the course this year 10 people. [Contact Pete](#) soon if you are interested.

## Honouring and Safeguarding Etymonline

The other day I was doing a video conference workshop with a school. The word <villain> came up and I was not sure how to spell it. This was great opportunity for inquiry-led learning. Clearly I didn't know enough about the meaning and history of this word, so off to Etymonline I went. But when I pressed search, I got no hits! Could it be that that Douglas did not have an entry for this word?! That seemed so unlikely. I tried a super common word and got no hits again. Uh oh. Etymonline was down!

Ayto's Etymological dictionary helped me make sense of the spelling. It is a loan word from Latin *villa* (double <ll>) and that it had travelled through French. (I believe the <ai> digraph is common to words of French origin.)

Ayto's great, but it is not Etymonline. I thought about the panic in our community if we somehow lost access to Etymonline even for a short time. Indeed, I got a number of emails from teachers asking me what was up. I'll admit I was pleased that such messages from teachers I had not heard from in years confirmed they were going strong. But I really hoped the problem was not serious. Later I saw the message many of you have probably already seen on the Etymonline homepage from Doug:

**\*\* Jan. 16, 2017 \*\*** The etymonline search engine has been crashing on a daily basis since January 12, for reasons yet to be discovered. When that happens, every search inquiry then returns a result: "No matching terms found." When it comes to my attention that the search has stopped working, I have to contact the person who knows how to reboot the site, and when he is available, he will reboot it..

I encourage everyone reading this Newsletter to consider how often you depend on Doug's hard work. The brilliance, reliability and usability of this free reference cannot be over-stated. Simply put, without Etymonline, our community would be shadow of what it has become. I'm sure it is going to be a significant cost to repair Doug's website. He works at it tirelessly, keeps it free, and uses the bare minimum of advertising. Why not use this hiccup in our access to his reference as a provocation to send a donation (large or small) through the "Donate" button on his homepage. You might even "*get yer Etym on*" and buy yourself or a friend some cool [Etymonline](#) goodies at "[Ye Olde Swag Shoppe](#)".

If a portion of the users of Etymonline donated even a small amount, it would make an enormous difference.

### **New Posts on [Real Spellers](#) -- and a new milestone!**

In my [last Newsletter](#) I highlighted the exciting role of a growing [SWI Facebook Group](#) started by Lisa Barnett.

In this newsletter I'd like to highlight another long-established hub for sharing thinking and resources for SWI. I just received news from Matt Berman, the creator of [Real Spellers](#), that the registered users on his site just passed the 1000 mark! This number does not even reflect the use of non-registered users who regularly visit, but have not registered to post articles and comments.

Our community in general -- and I in particular -- owe Matt an enormous thank you for his countless hours of work maintaining this massive and growing archive of scientific

word investigations. Matt, a master Grade 4 teacher at the Nueva School, is also the reason SWI started at his school -- which has become a leading light in this work.

As evidence of my indebtedness to Matt, it was new documents I've just posted on Real Spellers that were the main drivers of this Newsletter.

- **New WordWorks' Special Publication:** Pete's response to the common question "*How do I Integrate SWI with my other literacy instruction practices?*"

This is a question that I address in workshops all the time. With the growing SWI community, it was time to compose a piece on this topic. Addressing this question gave me a rich frame through which to analyze what SWI *is* and what it *is not*.

I would love to see critical responses to this piece on the Real Spellers forum.

Click [HERE](#) for the document -- and add your two cents!

- **New on Real Spellers' SWI "Investigations":** [\*A lesson using investigations of words and concepts related to civil rights in honour of Martin Luther King Day\*](#)

I have to apologize for not getting this Newsletter in time for this important day. However, any day is a good one to study the concepts that underly the need for civil rights.

I actually created this lesson for MLK day last year at Nueva. Beyond its specific context, I hope it helps readers see that learning through SWI is not restricted to

literacy gains. When learn to study how the structures and histories of words convey their meanings, we are better prepared for understanding and communicating about our world.

**Reflecting on Martin Luther King Day**  
with  
**Student-Inspired Words and Word Families**

Our January 15 Lower School Community meeting honored Martin Luther King. The matrices below were inspired by words students used to discuss what Martin Luther King Day is all about.

I shared these matrices with my Grade 5 SWI class and invited them to use them as a jumping off point for writing a few sentences about this remarkable man and the societal changes he put in motion.

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| hand | <b>over</b> | all   |
| take |             | arm   |
|      |             | come  |
|      |             | due   |
|      |             | ran   |
|      |             | reach |
|      |             | ride  |
|      |             | run   |
|      |             | take  |
|      |             | crowd |
|      |             | joy   |
|      |             | rule  |
|      |             | whelm |
|      |             | work  |
|      |             | ly    |

|    |            |      |
|----|------------|------|
| en | <b>act</b> | ed   |
| re |            | ion  |
|    |            | ive  |
|    |            | ism  |
|    |            | list |
|    |            | u    |
|    |            | al   |

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|-----|--------------|------|
| ag  | <b>grege</b> | ate  |
| con |              | ed   |
| e   |              | ing  |
|     |              | ion  |
| de  |              | ious |
| se  |              |      |
|     |              |      |

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|-----|-------------|------|
| in  | <b>viol</b> | able |
| non |             | ence |
|     |             | ed   |
|     |             | ing  |
|     |             | ion  |
|     |             | or   |
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|    |            |     |
|----|------------|-----|
| in | <b>civ</b> | ic  |
| un |            | ian |
|    |            | ity |
|    |            | ll  |
|    |            | ate |
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|    |            | ize |
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The screen shot of the matrices on the first page of this document shows all sorts of possible jumping off points for studying civil rights. The starkest discovery for me was the link between the words <segregation>, <egregious> and the bound base <grege> with its underlying denotation of "herd, flock". The fact that <segregation> has a sense and meaning associated with how we treat animals just highlights how egregious it is.

Find the 3-page document [HERE](#).

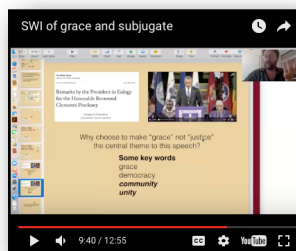
Sharing this document to highlight SWI as a means of making better sense of our world provoked me to share some favourite examples of this process over the years. The following examples (and many more) can be found on the “Investigations” page on [Real Spellers](#).

[HERE](#) is a video of a Grade 7 student from [Ann Whiting’s Humanities class](#) from years ago.

See him share his political philosophy through orthographic analysis of the word <dissident> and some of its relatives. It would be hard not to be moved by his wisdom and eloquence.



[HERE](#) is a post with a video of me describing a study of the words <grace> and <subjugation>. This investigation grew from a high school class at Nueva that was studying President Obama’s eulogy<sup>1</sup> for the Reverend Reverend Pinckney. When I showed Etymonline’s entry for <subjugate>, the whole class gasped. Go to [THIS POST](#) to find out why.



[HERE](#) is a document that grew from a Grade 1 math class that was interested in understanding the connection between <multiply> and <multiplication>. It’s a great one! (Explore [this pdf](#) from the [Investigations](#) page with more words to explore.)

**New on SWI “Investigations” <detriment>: Inquiry-led learning in a tutoring session uncovers a twin base** (See a new Real Spelling Film on this same family.)

Click [HERE](#) for a document that grew from a post describing a discovery of a twin base I made with a mother-daughter team in Melbourne during an on-line tutoring session. Follow the links to see an elegant Real Spelling film on this same word family.

**Important articles from the wider SWI community**

- *Dyslexia Training Institute (DTI)* -- See website [HERE](#).

Dr. Kelli Sandman-Hurley of DTI recently published an article titled, “Mindful Teaching of Reading and Spelling: Four Facts and One Educated Opinion” that I can highly recommend. Click [HERE](#).

*Some background on Kelli’s work and DTI:*

Dr. Kelli Sandman-Hurley had a booth for DTI at an IDA conference next to Gina Cooke’s LEX booth some years ago. After hearing Gina and I talking with various people all day, she skeptically asked about our work. I made a matrix with the word <sign> on a napkin, and she has not looked back since. Over years of study, she and her staff have radically altered their practice. See her own account of this story [HERE](#).

Also see Kelli’s recently published her book “[Dyslexia Advocate! How to advocate for a child with dyslexia within the public education system](#)”.

<sup>1</sup> Note that the structure <eu + log +y> reveals the sense of “good, beautiful, well” from the <eu-> prefix and “word” from the <log> base.

- Two wonderful articles from [LEX](#) (Gina Cooke)

1) [I'm Ready for my Closeup](#): In this article, Gina describes learning from recent tutoring sessions. Study how she works with students to understand the interrelation of morphology, etymology and phonology with the aid of the “oval and square diagram” and see a video of part of one of these sessions. So great!

Above: Screen shot of “oval and square” diagram in tutoring session with Gina Cooke. Below: Video from a tutoring session. Both are from [this LEX blog post](#).

2) [Wait -- Is This REAL?](#): The title of this post grows from the excited reaction of a student being introduced to etymological explanations of spellings that are usually presented as “irregular”.

From Gina’s article,

As we thought of examples, Cupcake looked at me with a grin-crinkled nose and interrupted delightedly: “Wait—” she asked me, “is this stuff *REAL?*”

I love this spontaneous joyful reaction that comes with starting to see that spelling *actually makes sense!* She understands the evidence right there in front of her that spelling *really* does make sense. But this discovery is in such stark contrast to her previous experiences that she can hardly believe it.

I also particularly recommend reading the discussion that follows in the comments section on this post.

- [Mary Beth Steven’s Grade 5 Blog](#) “Please don’t judge me on my looks!”

Mary Beth Steven is a spectacular educator who one day happened across [Dan Allen’s amazing blog](#) from the Zurich International School - and has not been the same since! I frequently point to Mary Beth’s posts. This latest one addresses the contrast between the common practice of trying to rely on visual memory of the surface spelling of a word rather than studying the underlying meaningful structures that link families of words. It’s wonderful.