

WW Newsletter #91 Dec. 4, 2017

Evolving WordWorks SWI Workshops

"What I love about Pete's workshops is that he takes a room full of teachers and turns them into learners."

Jonathan Twigg

Primary School Assistant Principal – PYP Coordinator
International School of Lausanne

Hello all,

I've just returned from an inspiring trip to the [International School of Lausanne](#) in Switzerland, and a pilgrimage of sorts to the tiny medieval town of Cluis, France. There I got to study with the real spelling Old Grouch -- along with Douglas Harper ([Etymonline](#)) and Gina Cooke ([LEX](#)) and a band of about 14 fellow orthographic explorers.

As detailed in my last [WW Newsletter](#), it is rather astonishing to consider the nature of today's community of orthographic scholars/educators in contrast to where it was 16 years ago when I first encountered it in Bangkok, and 15 years ago when I first visited Old Grouch at his previous French home. I hope to reflect on lessons from this trip in my next Newsletter, but for now there are too many time-sensitive news items to share with everyone before the holiday.



1) New Blog "[Caught in the Spell of Words](#)" by Lyn Anderson and Ann Whiting!

Firstly, I had to highlight this brilliant new orthographic resource for educators by two leading lights of our community. Lyn and I began our orthographic journey together in Indonesia in 2001.

Of Cycles, Circles and Flight

Posted on November 16, 2017 by anefc

Cycles, Circles and Flight: Word investigations based on Jeannie Baker's 'Circle'

written by Lyn Anderson and Ann Whiting

"Cycles are everywhere in nature...The life cycles of migratory birds are also driven by the earth's changing seasons and daylight hours, the latter being a primary cue that impels them to begin their migrations." (Pete Maral)



Upcoming Public SWI workshops

- 🕒 **Jan 19 - 20 Downtown Toronto & Mississauga**
Saturday Jan 20: Click [HERE](#) for a poster with information on this full-day SWI workshop in downtown Toronto.
Friday Jan 19: 10 spots available to attend 3 in-class lessons with students (Gr. 1, Gr. 4/5, Gr. 7/8) and debriefings with teachers at Al Huda Elementary in Mississauga.
- 🕒 **Jan 24, 25, 26 Edmonton** Hosted by the Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium ([ERLC](#)). Click [HERE](#) for a poster with information and links to register for this special opportunity.
Fri. Jan 26 Click [HERE](#) for this a full day workshop for teachers.
Add a day of in-class sessions at local schools (limited availability)
Wed. Jan 24 (Gr. 5 - 9) Click [HERE](#)
Thurs. Jan 25 (Gr. 2 - 4) Click [HERE](#)
- 🕒 **Jan 17 - 18 Tasmania, Australia:** 3-day Course "Caught in the Spell of Words" with **Lyn Anderson & Ann Whiting!** Click [HERE](#) for information on this exceptional opportunity to study with two of the leading experts in SWI, Lyn Anderson ([Beyond the Word](#)) and Ann Whiting ([Word Nerderly](#)).
- 🕒 **March 16-17: Bay Area:** Potential Public Workshop [Contact Pete](#) if your school might be interested in a Workshop 19th - 23rd in this region.
- 🕒 **Etymology VI, March 24-25, Portland Oregon:** Click [HERE](#) for more about this brilliant annual event with **Gina Cooke** ([LEX](#)) and **Douglas Harper** ([Etymonline](#))
- 🕒 **April 27-28: Melbourne** Pete Bowers, Lyn Anderson & Ann Whiting! We will co-lead a workshop hosted by Wesley College. Details to come. [Email Pete](#) if you are interested in a school visit in the Melbourne area around this time, or if you want to book a visit as a stop on this trip (South East Asia? Europe?)

At that time, Ann Whiting was already blazing the Real Spelling trail from her school in Kuala Lumpur. Their inaugural post “*Of Cycles, Circles and Flight*” is an orthographic and educational tour de force for teachers of any grade. Always launching from rich literature, their stories and images of SWI investigations are accessible to SWI novices while offering in-depth orthographic analysis for all. Click [HERE](#). Do not hesitate.

2) **New orthographic 2018 Calendar from LEX and bilingual “Days of the Week Posters” from Scott Mills**

Click [HERE](#) for a wonderful post from LEX and to order your copies of these new resources. Gina describes how her student “cupcake” inspired this project, and the good cause your purchase of these great resources will support.

(For orders outside of the US, [email Gina](#) with your address so she can calculate postage. If you want one by Christmas priority post will cost more.)

3) **Evolving model of WordWorks Workshops - Toronto, Edmonton, Lausanne sessions mark new opportunities**

- **Combining “lab school” model lessons with teacher workshops**
- **Combining on-line introductory sessions before on-sight visits, and follow-up sessions on-line**

The upcoming public SWI workshops in [Toronto](#) and [Edmonton](#) build on recent innovations to improve the learning opportunities in my workshops.

In October I conducted my second workshop hosted by the [Al Huda Elementary School](#) in Mississauga. Their director, Cheryl Urbanczyk, has been studying SWI intensively for some time. To reduce costs, I offered a minimal fee for a full-day visit with her school if she opened the Friday session to a maximum of 10 teachers to join her teachers in observing/participating in model lessons and debriefing sessions. I taught three lessons (Gr. 1, 4/5, 7/8) with Al Huda staff and visiting teachers observing. Since there is limited space for in-school visitors, these spaces were only made available to those who also attended the Saturday session as well. In this way, the richest learning opportunities go to those who are most motivated, and the learning in full day session was enriched by teachers who could bring that learning to the group on Saturday.

This model worked so well that we have arranged another visit in January. This time Cheryl is offering her school as the “lab school” on Friday, Jan 19, but the Saturday workshop is hosted by the [Beaches Reading Clinic](#) in Downtown Toronto.

Similarly, the **Edmonton Regional Learning Consortium (ERLC)** has taken on this model for my next visit Jan 24, 25, 26 (Click [HERE](#) for a poster).

Once again, anyone can take the full-day workshop for teachers, tutors, parents, but a limited number of spaces are available for those who want to *also* attend in-school model lessons and debriefings (Jan 24 (Gr. 5 - 9) Click [HERE](#) Jan 25 (Gr. 2 - 4) Click [HERE](#)).

I love the symbiotic nature of this this arrangement. Public schools and small private schools get affordable training for their teachers, while participants in my workshops get to see this instruction in action in real classrooms as a part of their learning about SWI.

On-line and on-site workshops

More and more schools have been taking advantage of my on-line workshops. The [Leonardo Da Vinci Health Sciences Charter School](#) in Chula Vista (near San Diego) has had me present a number of on-line sessions and we are hoping to build on this with an on-site workshop on my next trip to California. Recently, the [Sangudo Community School](#) near Edmonton had me present an introductory 3-hour workshop based on interest from a teacher who had attended an earlier ERLC workshop. The teachers have already started to dive in, so we have planned my first ever full-day on-line workshop next week.

Typically I think of the 3-hour workshop as the limit of time appropriate for the on-line mode. However, in talking with their principal, Jo-Ann McLaren, we came up with a plan in which I will lead classes in some model lessons that teachers can

observe. In addition, throughout the day I will meet with teachers from grade level groups. We will work at planning lessons based on their subject area and get into orthographic questions relevant to their own interests and learn how to make use of on-line tools to help them become more independent in this work.

And since I’ll be coming to Edmonton in January, that on-line session will be followed up with a 2-day on-site visit.

I encourage schools to take advantage of this model of PD. The on-site sessions are extremely valuable, but they are so much richer if we are able to take on some of the introductory issues in an on-line session beforehand. When I’m there, teachers will know more what their questions and needs are rather than trying to do it all at once. Adding follow-up on-line session after the visit is ideal.

4. Hosting a public SWI workshop to subsidize teacher training - building local and extended community

I have a number of goals when I work with a school. The first is to build the capacity for on-going learning of the staff at the school that has hired me. But as we have seen in the San Francisco Bay Area, Melbourne, Edmonton, Bangkok, Chicago and other areas (see [WW Newsletter #90](#)), working with one school offers the opportunity to build the capacity of a region. When a school offers to host a workshop that invites others to attend, I can reduce the cost of PD for that host school, and give them a richer learning experience. My recent workshop with the International School of Lausanne (ISL) is an excellent example of this dynamic.

They hosted a 2-day workshop and helped with registration and logistics. As a result they did not have to pay for my travel to their school and received a much reduced fee for any of their teachers who attended the Friday-Saturday workshop. That also meant that they could get a 2-day workshop directly

with their staff and students for just my daily fee without having to pay to get me to Switzerland.

In fact I offered this arrangement to a number of European schools. Because they took up the offer first to host the workshop, ISL didn't need to pay to fly teachers to a different European school and hotel and standard workshop fees. Sending 10 teachers to another European school would not have been possible, and realistically that many teachers would not have volunteered to go if it involved that travel.

I was most impressed, however, with what Jonathan Twigg, the Assistant Principal and PYP co-ordinator commented on as the best part of hosting the workshop. He emphasized the learning benefit his teachers gained *because of the participation of teachers from other schools*. The collaborations and conversations that occurred between teachers of different schools in different parts of their journey with SWI were an enormous value to the learning -- and the building of the community of educators and schools working with SWI in the European region. Discussions have already begun for the next visit to Europe and now 30 teachers from the region, as well as the 10 from ISL are looking to revisit this learning. On top of that, ISL got to show off it's amazing facilities and location to other educators who will no doubt be looking to move schools at some point. This is the way our community keeps growing. We grow together.

I also have to recommend the model Jonathan set up for my 2-days with his staff and students. On the first day, I taught three class lessons during the day that teachers observed. The rest of the time was debriefing with grade level groups as we did at Al Huda. On the second day, however, I was impressed that the teachers didn't ask for any more model lessons. Instead my time was booked all day working with grade level groups answering their questions, helping them look at ways to plan

lessons based on their current areas of study etc. I also met with their SWI committee to plan ways to support the the staff.

This kind of extended time devoted to teacher learning is so valuable. This was not my first trip to ISL. They already have a number of teachers doing a great job with SWI. They don't need me to teach lessons to make it clear that students can engage with this content. What they needed was time to deepen teachers' understanding. For schools considering an on-site workshop, I highly recommend this model.

Teachers from ISL and wider region dive into investigations during the 2-day SWI workshop hosted by ISL.



