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Happy Second Anniversary EWB Network!

During these two years, the EWB team has been building a community of English teachers and students both face-to-face and virtually. We created a website and mobile application as a free platform with teaching resources, forums, news, and a calendar; we actively maintain our social networks, and we regularly hold in-person events.

We thank all our partners and active members for their continued support and contribution to the development of the project. It is only through joint efforts that we have been able to achieve such success and become the largest network of English language teachers and learners in Central Asia.

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2 YEARS OF BUILDING THE EWB NETWORK

On March 1st, 2023, EWB Network celebrated its **second** birthday.

As EWB moves forward, the number of its members also grows which inspires us to expand the horizons together!

During these two years, the EWB team has been building a community of English teachers and students both face-to-face and virtually. We created a **website** and **mobile application** as a free platform with teaching resources, forums, news, and a calendar; we actively maintain our **social networks**, and we regularly hold **in-person events**. EWB team has organized over **300** activities including online and in-person information sessions, cultural events, PDs for EL teachers, training for pre-service and in-service teachers, discussion clubs, joint events, as well as over **100** Thursday webinars for teachers.

The total number of EWB members today is over **2,700**.



In addition, **40** active Network members-teacher-trainers received small grants to conduct EWB Master Workshops in different regions of Tajikistan and reached remote districts such as Murghab, Roshtkala in GBAO, Isfara in Sughd, and Levakant in Khatlon. More than **500** rural teachers participated in these master workshops.

Two **international conferences** were organized. EWB conferences became a unique platform for English teachers in Tajikistan and abroad to share best practices, professional experiences, and ideas and expand networking and partnerships in the country and beyond.



This year EWB Network will continue providing new opportunities for professional and personal growth for English teachers and learners of Tajikistan including **regional conferences, leadership camps, and cultural events**.

We are grateful to all EWB members and partners in the country and beyond for their ongoing support and extend our warm congratulations to all.

Together we are making a huge contribution to the development of English language teaching in Tajikistan.

EWB Regional Representatives

We thank our **regional representatives** for their hard work and commitment to the project goals. Thanks to them, we are able to reach teachers in all regions of Tajikistan and stay in touch with them.



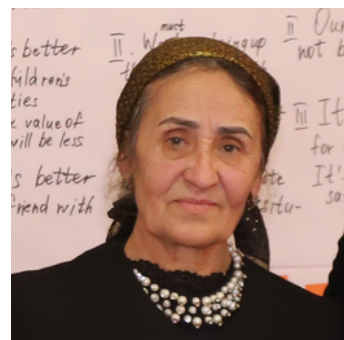
Alisher Aliqulov,
Khatlon Region



Bakhtiyor Davlatmurodov,
Dushanbe and DRS



Mavluda Zulfova,
GBAO



Munavar Zaripova,
Sughd Region



EWB ESSAY CONTEST (WINTER 2023)

We have all had teachers who have impacted our lives in one way or another. Some teachers inspire students to develop their talents, pursue their dreams, and prepare for the future. Others discourage them from succeeding. In EWB, we not only provide PD training for teachers but cultivate the idea that every teacher has to positively impact their students' lives.

In January, we announced a call for applications for the EWB Essay Contest 2023 for schoolchildren and students (age range 14-22) across Tajikistan. The theme of the contest was "**More Than Just a Teacher: Teachers Who Make a Difference**". The goal of the contest was to get students thinking about the role of teachers in their lives so that they could appreciate this often underappreciated profession more, as well as learn about the wonderful teachers of our country and tell others about them through our Network.

The contest resulted in **59** stories about teachers from different regions of Tajikistan who have changed (or are changing) their students' lives for the better.



EWB Essay Contest Winners

From the essays we received, it was tough for us to choose a winner. For this work, we developed grading rubrics and formed a committee of our regional representatives and the core team. After two rounds of grading, four winners were identified:

- 3rd place - **Mavzuna Odinaeva** from Kulob, Khatlon region, and **Shahnozajon Yusupova** from B.Gafurov, Sughd region
- 2nd place - **Shogayosi Mamadrizokhonov** from Khorog, GBAO
- 1st place - **Parvinakhon Sultonova** from Khujand, Sughd

Shortly, we will collect all the essays received into a separate collection and publish it on our website, where everyone can download it and read about the inspirational teachers of our country.

EWB SOCIAL MEDIA: NEW RUBRICS

EWB Social Media Pages

Every day we put effort to build a network of English teachers and learners not only face-to-face but also in social networks. Today, the total number of EWB followers on Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram is about **7,000** people.

To always stay in touch with you, and to help you develop personally and professionally, we continuously publish five types of content in various digital formats:

1. Educational Materials
2. Highlights, News & Opportunities
3. Posts for Inspiration
4. Entertaining Materials
5. Posts in Collaborations

We hope you like the materials we post and that they are useful to you and your students. We would be glad if you would contact us on Facebook, Instagram, or Telegram and leave your feedback or wishes for us.



EWB Short Videos for Teachers and Learners

Today we want to tell you more about our new video columns. EWB short videos are a compilation of useful information about the English language and teaching methods.

Below is a summary of these columns. And you can watch the videos themselves on our pages on Facebook and Instagram.



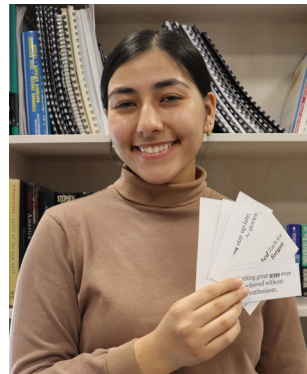
How to Teach...

Short videos about modern methods of teaching English with John



Eng. Pronunciation

American pronunciation rules and simple tips with Mina



Eng. Grammar

Grammar we need in daily English to sound like a native with Mona



American Culture

Concepts of American English and culture important in a life of a Tajik teenager with Anora

EWB, U.S. EMBASSY, AND "JSENG": COLLABORATION WITH VLOGGERS

As a network of English teachers and learners, EWB is constantly looking for ways to develop creative content that keeps our followers (both teachers and learners) engaged.

As people increasingly turn to online resources available on social media to develop themselves professionally, thought leaders are ever more visible predicting the direction that English learning will take in the future and sharing their advice on how to be more effective. To follow new trends and reach more people interested in English teaching and learning, EWB and the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan started collaborating with well-known Instagram bloggers, Takhmina Saidova and Olimjon Juraev – creators of the "JSEng" page.

As a result of this collaboration, a series of short videos called **"The English Tour"** was created.

Olimjon and Tahmina made 16 interesting video tutorials on the English grammar and vocabulary everyone needs to communicate in English in some very common everyday situations. EWB followers liked this series of videos, and we got a lot of positive feedback. As all the videos were very short, but interesting and informative, they became very widespread on social networks.

We'll keep coming up with more interesting collaborations for you, so that teaching and learning English will never seem like an outdated boring task.



About "JSEng" Blog

"JSEng" family from Dushanbe is an educational English blog on Instagram. "JSEng" stands for Juraev, Saidova, English. Currently, the blog has **67,300** followers. The idea of opening the blog came to Olimjon Juraev and Takhmina Saidova, husband and wife, during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown period. First, they started blogging on YouTube, but time by time they mentioned that it was not growing. Then they began to build visibility on Instagram as well. Fortunately, the Instagram blog started to grow quickly and Takhmina and Olimjon decided to make it their main platform. The main purpose of the blog is to help people from Tajikistan to learn English easily. Therefore they create different types of content, use simple and creative explanations of grammar, and promote easy ways for remembering words.

In October 2022, JSEng started working with EWB and the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan and became a part of a great team.

"We think every teacher can become a blogger because he/she explains the same things every year and he/she only needs to record his/her lessons" – Takhmina Saidova. The collaboration helped to grow the audience of all 3 partners, the JSEng audience grow from 35,000 followers to 60,000 followers in 3 months. "With EWB we have changed the format of our videos, we changed our rubrics and we have learned to be disciplined. With this collaboration, we met many famous and talented people. "English tour" which put us on an interesting journey now is the reason for us not to stop our tour" – Olimjon Juraev.

EWB TRAINING IN THE TAJIK STATE PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY



Training sessions for English Language Teachers of TSPU

EWB provided PD sessions on **Lesson Planning Strategies** for 8 professors of the English language at the Faculty of English and Eastern Languages of TSPU named after S. Ayni.

During the first three days, the trainees got familiarized with the Present, Practice, Produce (PPP) lesson format, the rationale behind the PPP approach, and the educational purpose of each of its phases.

On the fourth day, the participants were working in groups to make the first draft of their lesson plan using the knowledge and skills gained from the training.

On day 5, the groups presented their final lesson plan, got feedback and comments from the trainers and peers, and discussed the questions they had with each other.

All 8 participants successfully completed the course and were awarded a certificate from EWB.



Training sessions for the pre-service teachers of TSPU

A four-day training course on **Developing Effective Objectives** for EFL Instruction was organized for 18 pre-service teachers/students of TSPU.

During the first three days, the trainees learned about developing effective objectives including useful activities such as ice-breakers, warm-ups, and lead-ins.

On the fourth day, the participants worked in groups to make their lesson plan using the knowledge and skills gained from the training and presented their work, getting feedback and comments from the trainers and peers.

EWB PD TRAINING FOR ACCESS TEACHERS



Teacher's Manual

A Teacher's Companion Book to American Headway Textbook

As the result of a collaborative professional development training series for teachers of the English Access Microscholarship Program (Access) organized by EWB, the **Teacher's Companion Book to American Headway Textbook** was created.

The Manual includes creative and simple ideas for English classes and can be used for classes on reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, vocabulary, and integrated skills. The activities contained in the book have been designed to fit all levels depending on the complexity the teachers will use. Additionally, the Manual includes ready-made lesson plans for some units with TBL (task-based learning) activities, critical thinking, and project-based tasks.

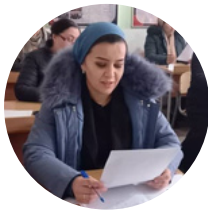
EWB TOEFL PREPEPARATORY COURSE GRADUATION



The first EWB TOEFL Preparatory Course prepared in-service and pre-service English teachers for the official TOEFL test. It included three phases each consisting of 72 hours. The first phase was Academic Grammar and Vocabulary. The second phase was the Introduction to TOEFL. The third phase was TOEFL Practice. The main goal of the course was to prepare English teachers to successfully pass the TOEFL to participate in the U.S. exchange programs and receive quality professional development in the U.S.A.

25 participants were selected out of more than 100 applicants to participate in the course, and most of them successfully finished all three phases of the course.

EWB MASTER WORKSHOP WINTER 2023



EWB MASTER WORKSHOP

WINTER 2023

We congratulate the EWB Master Workshop Winter 2023 finalists and thank them for their work. All of the finalists successfully conducted training in their regions. Many of them already have extensive teacher-trainer experience, but for some of them, our grant was the first step in that direction.

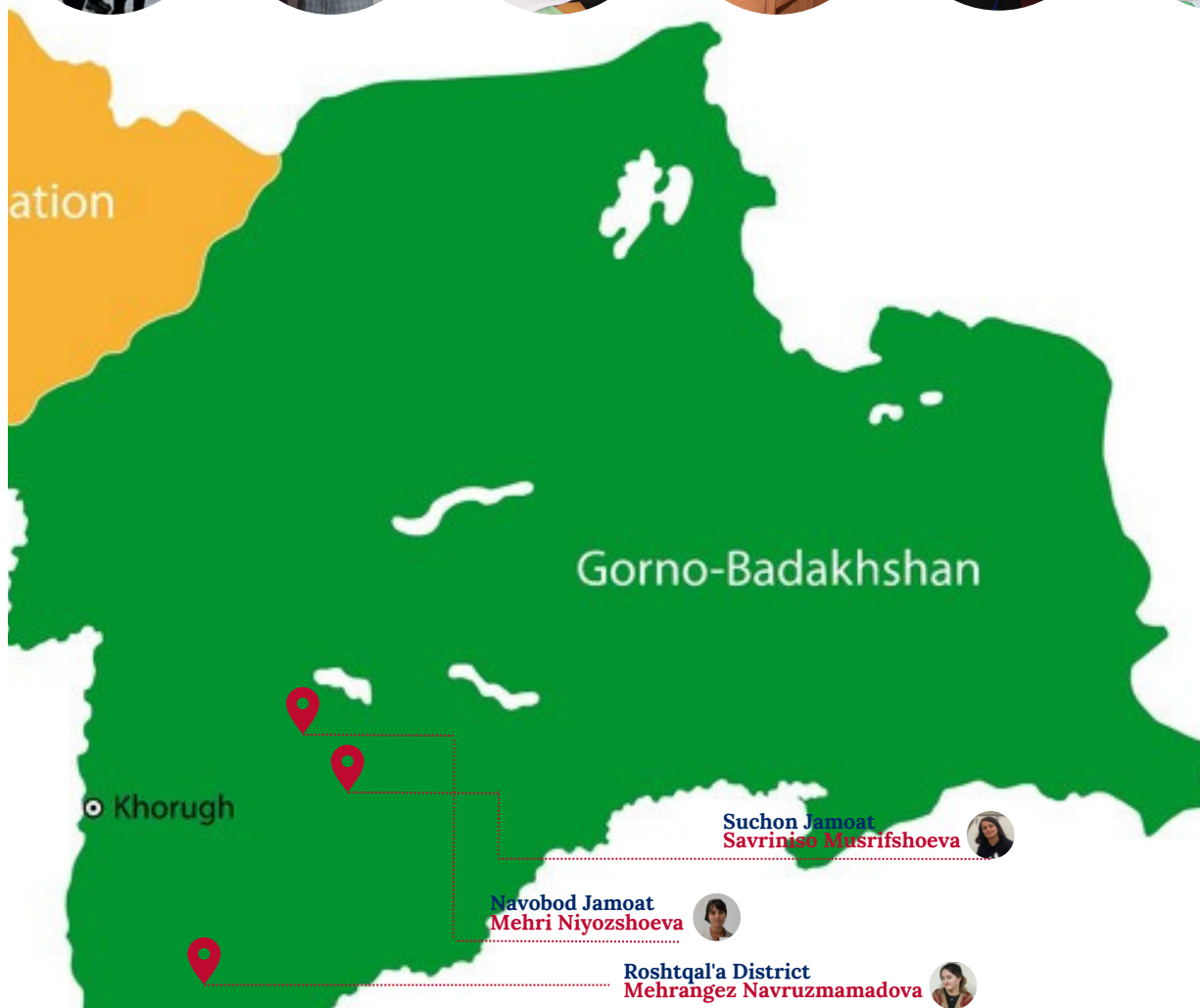
How to become **teacher trainers**?

The education sector has many pathways for teachers. When starting to move from teacher to trainer remember that **you don't need to be a "perfect" teacher** to become a teacher-trainer, it could also just be **sharing experiences**. We believe you can be a good trainer if you love and are passionate about teaching, are self-confident, and believe in your ability to help other teachers.

What do you need in order to **train, educate, or mentor** fellow teachers?

- Proper education and experience
- Good classroom skills and management skills
- A good understanding of the content you teach

In addition, if you normally teach children or teenagers, then the first step is to get some practice working with adults and get as much experience as possible with different class sizes, levels, types of students, types of courses, materials, teaching contexts, etc. Start training within your school/university/learning center helping teachers with lesson planning, observing teachers at work, and giving feedback on observed lessons.



EWB MASTER WORKSHOP WINTER 2023 PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

After each EWB Master Workshop, we receive a lot of thanks and kind words from the participants. Often our finalists hold their training in remote areas of the country, where the EWB Master Workshop becomes the only opportunity for English teachers to learn about new teaching methods, as well as to become part of a larger network of teachers, where many of their colleagues across Tajikistan share common concerns, and are always willing to help with advice and resources.

Below is the feedback from the participants of the EWB Master Workshop Winter 2023. We hope it will inspire you to apply for the EWB Master Workshop Summer 2023 in April.

Farzona Inoyatova

Hi! My name is Farzona Inoyatova, and I am an English teacher at the Pedagogical College of Mastchoh. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the EWB team and our wonderful teacher-trainer Davlatova Manizha for this efficient and engaging training.

It gives a feeling of joy and accomplishment to be trained by a person who has diverse skills and knowledge all around. The training was so insightful. Thank you for dispensing valuable knowledge to us. I thought I knew a lot in this field, but during the training, I was convinced I don't know much. I advise you to organize such valuable training more often in order to improve teachers' teaching skills and experience.



Sulhiya Valieva

I participated in three-day training for English teachers in Panjaket, Sughd region organized by the English Without Borders project. These three days of training were very useful for me. I have learned how to get students to speak through interactive activities, in particular through mind mapping and different kinds of information gap activities.

I was informed about writing persuasive essays, especially how to give support to students before writing through running group discussions with the use of the board and giving constructive feedback on this type of essay. I am very grateful for our trainer Mirato Komilov who taught us new methodologies of TESL. Through provided methodologies, I enhanced my capacity in delivering productive lessons and use all the provided materials in my daily lessons and increase my student's English knowledge.

Muhayyo Nazarshoeva

I am Nazarshoeva Muhayyo. I took part in one of the enjoyable, informative, communicative, and interesting sessions that were held by Musrifshoeva Savriniso from 11 to 13 February. I enjoyed the session a lot and learned many new things.

I understood new approaches, techniques, and methodologies. This training gave me a lot and the trainer shared with us her best methodologies that we can implement in our lessons. Apart from that, we were given some other materials that we can use in our lessons. I appreciate what she shared with us. The training focused on the role of teachers as leaders, mentors, and professionals. These opportunities give teachers a chance to believe in themselves and give them hope that there is support for them to get a better education.





Sanaubar Sharipova

I work as an English teacher at Lyceum "Nur" in the Shahrinav district. I wanted to mention that I am working as an English teacher for 12 years and this year I was lucky to participate in the training conducted by the English without Borders project. My impression of the Master workshop is very different in comparison to the previous seminars and workshops.

Thanks to the trainers, we learned how to teach the students practically by using means of innovative and interactive methods and approaches that promote communicative teaching methodology in English classes. We were taught how to make the classes more interesting and effective using the updated methods of teaching. The most interesting fact is that we shared the best techniques through practice on how to involve students' interests in learning English, encourage them, and particularly make them speak English since it is the biggest desire of each English learner to speak it. I can surely say that the training was very useful for each participant. As for me, I have found out the most up-to-date methods of teaching that were challenging for us rural teachers to get before.

About EWB Master Workshop Summer 2023

The EWB Master Workshops grant is an opportunity to receive up to **\$500** to conduct professional development workshops for diverse groups of English language teaching professionals in all regions of Tajikistan.

For many young English teachers participating in EWB Master Workshops, it is their first experience engaging with peers and collaborating through the EWB Network to support English teaching in their communities.

If you are interested in conducting EWB Master Workshops in summer 2023, please read the information below.

THEMES OF THE EWB MASTER WORKSHOPS:

- Innovative teaching in English
- Enhancing teaching skills
- Leadership in teaching English
- Capacity building of teachers: using technology and digital tools
- Student-centered or competency-based learning
- Interactive teaching in elementary schools
- Teaching English in vulnerable communities
- Activities related to improving teaching English at all levels

WHO'S ELIGIBLE?

- EWB members (if you did not register yet, please do it here: ewb.tj)
- English language teachers (at least 50% teaching workload) who are currently working in secondary school, university, or private educational institutions in Tajikistan
- Applicants must have prior teacher training experience
- Applicants must have a minimum of three (3) years of teaching experience. English language teachers from remote areas of Tajikistan are encouraged to apply



Read more on EWB.tj

BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

Public Speaking Contests



EWB organized two public speaking competitions for students and schoolchildren from Dushanbe. The theme for the contests was: **"I have a dream to live in a peaceful, free, and friendly world"** inspired by the famous Martin Luther King, Jr. speech. The contestants delivered five-minute prepared speeches. The judges selected the top three contestants in each competition who were awarded EWB certificates and prizes. Other participants received the EWB Certificates of Participation.

The audience liked the events, and we hope to have more competitions in the future.

Book Lovers Club



EWB Book Lovers cLub dedicated to Black History Month brought together around 20 participants from various schools, and universities including teachers and students as well as several emerging writers. During the club, the participants together with the club facilitator, Ilene Giamanco, read a short story, "Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad" and visualized it in comic to better understand key messages the writer shared through the story.

EWB and ASD Joint Events

To celebrate the massive contributions of Black and African-American people in the U.S. the EWB and ASD organized a series of joint events in February at the American Space Dushanbe. The events included **presentations, panel discussions, photo exhibitions, music jams, and quiz nights**. More than 50 participants took an active part in the events and enhanced their knowledge about Black History Month and American Culture.



BHM Celebrations in Other Regions

EWB regional representatives conducted events dedicated to Black History Month in Dushanbe in Gymnasium #74 and at American Space Bokhtar for the students of the English Access Microscholarship Program (Access).

The participants got information about the significance of Black History Month and the contributions and achievements of outstanding African-Americans in the USA and other countries of the world.



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

EWB, ASD, and USANT organized a joint celebration of Women's History Month 2023 which included

- a presentation about WHM,
- a panel discussion,
- and 3 master classes from female experts, **Lola Kasymova**, Media Manager, **Shoira Pulatova**, Influencer & Entrepreneur, and **Zevor Bordachyova**, IT Auditor.

During the panel discussion, the participants learned about the unique experiences of our invited experts, about the challenges they had, and how they overcame those challenges.

Later on, in three separate master classes, the participants got practical tips about

- **Social Media Management and Online Projects** (by Lola Kasymova),
- **Blogging and Influencer Marketing** (by Shoira Pulatova), and
- **Digital Literacy and Cybersecurity** (by Zevor Bordachyova).

This event was aimed at highlighting the achievement of women both past and present who have helped build and mold our country and empowered young girls and boys with courage, self-esteem, and willpower to achieve their dreams.



HAPPY NAVRUZ: BOOK LOVERS CLUB AND TAJIK TEA PARTY

Dedicated to the brightest and most beloved Tajik holiday, Navruz, EWB organized Book Lovers Club in the style of a real **Tajik Choilkhona**.

Together with participants of the event we read excerpts from great Tajik novels, short stories, and ruba'i, as well as shared our ideas and knowledge about Navruz while drinking tea.

As Navruz supports cultural diversity and contributes to building peace, which is transmitted from older to younger generations, we were very happy to see among participants English teachers and students, as well as other professionals, Tajiks, Iranians, Afghans, and representatives of other cultures.



30+ NIGHTS WITH CHAZ MARTIN, JOHN BARTON, MANIJEH SABI, AND PABLO TUTILLO MALDONADO

EWB and ASD continue to hold monthly **30+ Nights** events for people over 30, where mid-career professionals learn about the world of culture, business, finance, and other fields, as well as get the opportunity to meet new people and practice their English communication skills with each other and with guest speakers.

We thank our speakers for their interesting presentations! The following topics were discussed at our past events: **Strategic Communication Techniques, Professional Communication for Career Development, Academic Adventures on a Floating University: Semester At Sea (SAS), and Why Diversity And Inclusion are Important for Business And the Workplace.**



THE TAJIKISTAN SECONDARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (TSSET) PROGRAM

The **Tajikistan Secondary School English Teachers Professional Development (TSSET) Program** is an 18-month program that provides professional development opportunities for more than 4,000 secondary school English teachers. The program is sponsored by the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy and supported by the Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan. The program is implemented in three phases.



- During **Phase I**, 40 English teacher trainers will be selected to participate in a professional development program conducted by U.S. experts and Uzbekistan Core Teacher Trainers. This program will enable them to become **National Trainers**. They will attend a 60-hour Teaching English Through English (TETE) course and complete a 10-15 hour school practicum. They will also train and mentor 10-12 **Regional Peer Mentor-Teachers (RPMs)** using 60 hours of cascading training modules, and participate in the Training of Mentors (TOM) and Communities of Practice (CoP) workshops.
- During **Phase II**, each National Trainer will nominate and train 10-12 RPMs based on content learned at the 60-hour cascading course, TOM, and CoP professional development workshops.
- During **Phase III**, the RPMs will train and mentor 10-12 in-service teachers under the mentorship and guidance of National Trainers. The program aims to train 4,000 teachers by March 2024.

Successful candidates who complete the entire training course will earn a **National Trainer Certificate** and become part of **Tajikistan's National Trainers (NTs) Corps**. The strongest NTs may also be invited to participate in additional training and become **TSSET Master Trainers** to help deliver cascading trainings to their peers.

This is an excellent opportunity for English language teachers to apply and be nominated as National Trainers to contribute to the professional development of Tajikistan's secondary school teachers.



Gulizor Akramkhonova, English Teacher, EWB member

INSPIRATIONAL TEACHER GULIZOR AKRAMKHONOVA

After graduation, Gulizor got a job as an English teacher at secondary school #90 in Dushanbe. In those early days, she had primitive experience in teaching English.

At that time Gulizor signed up for teacher training workshops conducted for young English teachers by the English teaching programs of the Open Society Institute Soros Foundation. She would take part in different activities of the program and soon she gained teaching experience as well as improved her English. She was introduced to the basic Communicative Language Teaching approach, which attracted her. Later, by the trainers' recommendations, she was employed by the Technological University of Tajikistan (TUT). During her work at TUT, she attended CATEC-2004 in Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyz Republic. The following year, she traveled to the US to take part in a one-month professional development program in Houston, TX, USA. She had a strong intention to acquire interactive ways of teaching English. Having returned, our hero shared the experience with her colleagues.

Another important milestone in her teaching career was attending the Teaching English to the Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) certificate course. In 2005, she got a job with 'Master School', which ordered this course for its staff from World Learning Organization based in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA. The TESOL course was delivered by international trainers from the International House (IH). This certificate course advanced her teaching skills. In it, she learned to plan and deliver communicative lessons, likewise reflecting on her lesson, observing, and giving constructive feedback to a colleague.

In 2011, Gulizor applied for a part-time English Instructor position at the School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) of the University of Central Asia (UCA) and got a job.



When I first started learning English, I just got interested in the language and did not even imagine how much it will penetrate my life.

How it started

Gulizor Akramkhonova's first acquisition of English began when she was in fifth-grade secondary school in Vahdat (former Ordzhonikidzeabad district) in 1990. It was then that she found that she was good at learning languages. She considers herself to be lucky to have qualified and demanding teachers both at university and school. At school, she was supported by her teachers to take part in English contests and Olympiads at local, regional, and republican levels. After school, she entered the Tajik State University of Languages, in which her major was English Language Teaching. There qualified supervisors like, Panteleeva E., Astanova Kh., Gafurova M., Khasanova M., and others, gave her fundamental knowledge of English teaching.

Novice teacher

When I first entered a classroom, I was very nervous and insecure. It seemed to me I made a negative impression on students. So, I went up to Kholida Azizovna (my supervisor at the university) and told her my situation. Following her advice, I created a plan for the lesson and I got used to it.

I have worked in different educational institutions, but SPCE is something different. Here, various professional development activities are conducted and every teacher is given plenty of opportunities to accelerate in a career path. When someone gets a higher position, s/he will give a hand to new employees.

Teacher trainings

After joining SPCE, Gulizor continued working with other projects as well. She was hired by 'Multikid' to teach ACCESS students in Vahdat Youth Center. This US embassy sponsored project aimed teaching children from disadvantaged families English, therefore the English Language Fellows constantly would have a visit to classes to communicate with learners and have cultural events.



Once while observing my lesson, one of the ELFs, Corrie Wiens mentioned I had an immense experience that could be of much use to most English teachers.

Soon, Gulizor proposed to conduct teacher training for English Teachers at the Professional Development Institute of the Ministry of Education of Tajikistan. After a year, she applied for the Democratic Outreach Alumni grant, announced by the US embassy in Tajikistan, and won it. The grant was directed to conduct a 3-phase teacher training for 12 English teachers in Zong Jamoat of Ishkashim, GBAO, Tajikistan.

The main objectives of the training were to introduce teachers to the Communicative method of English teaching and to improve their English language proficiency. During the first stage, the participants learned about methods of teaching, and setting goals and aims for the lesson.

In the second stage, the trainers monitored and observed the participants' lessons and based on the trainees' strong and weak points built the last stage content. That included teaching skills and introducing critical thinking in the lessons. The teachers mainly got familiar with ways of presenting grammar and vocabulary, teaching reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills, and using games and songs in English classes. They found the material interesting and useful.

The long-term impact of the training was that those twelve teachers who were involved in the project each had at least 15 students who got a huge benefit from this project. To give a chance to improve life is the best result of the project.

During the session

One of the teachers, Ashambegim Boymamadova mentioned:

"I had attended several teacher training workshops; however, I have learned many things in this one. The trainers gave us different techniques and strategies to make the lessons interesting. For example, the KWL chart, ABC framework, Pictionary, Who Am I, etc. I am ready to organize and open class and share my knowledge with other teachers in my school and community."

The same year, Gulizor was employed as an ex-pat employee to teach General English and to do a teacher training course at the Teacher Training College of Ishkashim, Badakhshan, Afghanistan. It was an unforgettable experience for her. She enjoyed working in a new context and she found Afghan learners very motivated and demanding. Besides, teaching high levels, she conducted film and speaking clubs, observed local teachers, and conducted teacher training based on their needs.

Coming back to Dushanbe, she was employed as a Fulltime English Instructor in SPCE. She took Teacher Knowledge Test (TKT), which is an internationally recognized certificate. Currently, she has been teaching various levels at SPCE and doing teacher training with newly recruited teachers. She is one of the trainers of the English Teacher Mentor Program, the US embassy teacher training program. Besides, she is the coordinator of the English for Academic Purposes program at SPCE.

At my job, I resemble a waterfall, which gets pure water from the height and generously passes it to others.

INSPIRATIONAL TEACHER

GULCHEHRA HAMIDOVA

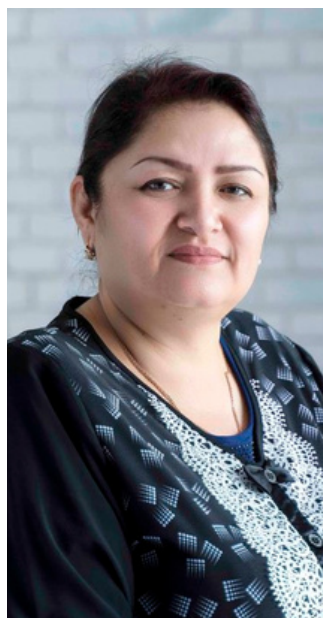
Gulchehra Hamidova has been working as a teacher of English at Gymnasium #4, Khujand since 1995. From the beginning of her work, she displayed herself as a hardworking and creative person. Gulchehra Hamidova is persistent and enthusiastic in her professional development. The secret of her success is in the constant

improvement of her professional skills. She enhances language development, gets acquainted with the latest learning/teaching styles, practices various techniques, and enriches teaching methods. She attends professional conferences and seminars organized by local and international institutions.

Gulchehra Hamidova is a member of the English Without Borders Network and an active participant in EWB events and webinars. In 2021 she was nominated as an **Inspirational Teacher** by the EWB network in recognition of her hard work and commitment to inspiring English teachers and learners in her community.

She is an alumna of the US-Tajikistan Teaching Awards for Excellence in Teaching (2005). As an alumna of this program, Gulchehra Hamidova designed and worked out several grant projects to improve teaching English. She organizes and conducts professional workshops for her colleagues from Sughd region where she shares her knowledge and experience from her teaching practice.

In 2021, in cooperation with the local public organization "Nasl", she conducted two 4-month Online Teacher Training Courses for teachers of English on "Teaching Grammar Communicatively" and "Distance Learning". This project was supported by the US Embassy in Tajikistan. Sixty-five teachers of English working in different educational institutions throughout Tajikistan have completed these courses.



Gulchehra Hamidova is a teacher of wide outlook. Caring for environmental protection, Gulchehra Hamidova designed an integrative course "English and Ecology" in the frame of her research project approved by the Soros Foundation. As a result of this work she has published the book "Learn English Protecting Our Planet". Interesting information from the book and activities that take a positive approach and focus on what individuals can do to help save the Earth provides students with an enjoyable and satisfying learning experience.

In 2015, Gulchehra Hamidova was assigned to the position of the Deputy Director of the Olympic Movement at her school. Her task is to manage out-of-school activities with advanced students. There are additional classes on different subject areas, preparation for Olympiads, or various projects. In 2022, her student worked out a project on developing an Android application as an offline dictionary of 400 frequently used words in Tajik, Russian, and English languages. This dictionary was released by the Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan. Thousands of teachers and students installed this application on their mobile devices to make learning languages effective and smart.



SUCCESS STORY: TAIIBAKHON OKHONOVA

Being an active member of the EWB Project is honorable for me as a simple village teacher and I never thought that one day I will be the winner of the EWB Master Workshop and conduct training for my colleagues and young teachers of Isfara.

My dream to be an English teacher became true in 2014 when I entered Khujand State University, the faculty of foreign languages after finishing secondary school #12 and graduating with honors. I started my teaching activity in 2018 in my local school as an English teacher.

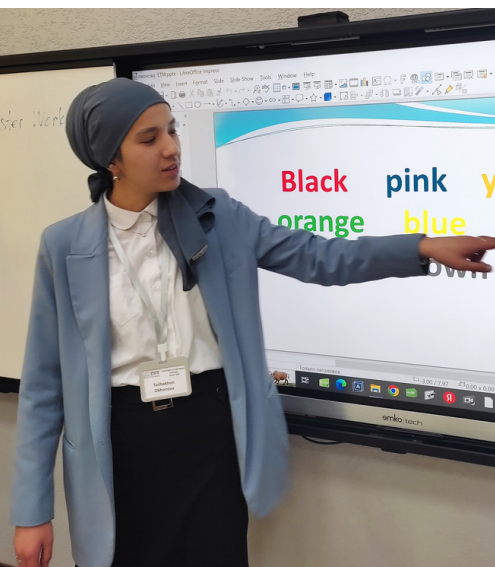
I always believed that as an English teacher, I had a great opportunity to improve my professional knowledge by participating in training conducted by experienced teachers. So, I participated in English Teaching Master Workshop which was presented on June 20-29 in 2018 by Munavar Zaripova in Isfara and that changed my life. Using new innovative teaching methods learned in the workshop helped me to make my lessons more interesting and effective for my students. Teaching English to Young Learners through the EWB Master Workshop in Isfara conducted by Abdurahim Vohidov in 2021 was another push in my teaching career. In 2021, I started to teach English at Kontakt International School which opened a new period in my life.



A chance to become the finalist of the ETM program in 2022 inspired me to learn more from experienced teachers, be an active participant in all the sessions, and get lots of friends across Tajikistan. After completing ETM in 2022, I conducted a training for English teachers of our Kontakt International School and cascaded the knowledge and materials which I got from the ETM program.

An Opportunity to share my gained knowledge from different teaching programs was given to me as a winner of the EWB Master Workshop of the winter session in 2023. "Teaching strategies for Multi-Level EFL classes" was the theme of my project and I had my master workshop at Kontakt International School in Isfara. For two days, 16 English secondary teachers from different parts of Isfara were taught new teaching methods and a lot of interactive games.

Today, I can proudly say that I made the right choice to be a teacher. I love teaching but never stop learning.



"Today, I can proudly say that I made the right choice to be a teacher. I love teaching but never stop learning." - Taiibakhon Okhonova

SUCCESS STORY:

DILFUZA LATIPOVA

Dilfuza Latipova started her teaching career as an English teacher at secondary school №30 in Gulakandoz village, Jabbor Rasulov in 2016 after graduating from Khujand State University from the faculty of Foreign Languages. Being a young teacher, she participated in the Teacher of the Year Competition and was

honored second place in her district. Currently, she is an English instructor and the head Methodologist of Ba Bolo Education.

During the pandemic, she was off from school and had the desire to develop her teaching skills and improve her English. So, she took one of the prominent online courses in the world by Arizona State University, the TESOL certificate. It is a well-organized course with engaging, meaningful content and a great presentation of the materials which are easy to understand, useful, and motivating.

After taking this course, her life as a teacher changed greatly and she has learned how to find valuable resources to give a better class as well as offer her students better practices of learning. These two online courses could help her to know the main skills of teaching, including the 80/20 rule, being myself, how to avoid teacher burnout, how to make the meaning of words clear, and teaching tips as well.

In 2022, she became an alumna of the ETM program which provided her with a lot of opportunities to enhance her experience in teaching new innovative methods and to broaden her knowledge and proficiency. It was an amazing journey to meet with other ESL teachers from around Tajikistan.



She is an awardee of the EWB Summer Master Workshop Grant in 2022 and it was a unique opportunity for her to conduct a professional development workshop, share her knowledge, deliver different instructional activities, to exchange teaching methods and experience with secondary school teachers of her district. The teachers were pleased with the resources, teaching materials, and webinars the EWB offers for them, and they collaborate through this EWB network as well.

Being a semi-finalist in EWB Innovative Teacher of the Year 2022 was another successful moment in her life because the steps of this contest taught her not to stop developing her professional capacity, to try new things, and realize that she should always strive to do her best teaching, and to practice and explore more opportunities through the English language.

One of the great events in her life in 2022 was being an attendee of the EWB National Conference and English Language Expo 2022 which enabled her to develop her teaching skills and techniques and be equipped with new, different tools, met with English language specialists from other countries.



SUCCESS STORY:

MOHIRAKHONI HUSNIDINZODA

Mohirakhoni Husnidinza is a young leader and an English teacher with more than 6 years of professional teaching experience to local and international students of different age groups and language proficiency. Due to her passion for teaching kids and young learners, first she worked at Arkon Education Group as a Head of the Young Learners Department and then at NGO TajRupt as an English Instructor of Civic Education and Critical Thinking where she prepared high-school students for successful admission into international undergraduate studies on the basis of full/partially funded scholarships and grants.

While leading teaching positions, she felt a need for constant pedagogical and methodological development, therefore, Mohirakhon took and completed an online TESOL course from Arizona State University in 2018.

However, the thirst to learn and grow didn't end there and it was OSCE Academy and MA degree in Politics and Security she obtained that defined the turning point in her professional and academic path. As part of the study program within this school, she conducted two months internship at one of the leading international human rights organizations namely the Norwegian Helsinki Committee in Oslo. This unique learning opportunity was an eye-opener for her to discover her long-term ambitions in life which were to serve the educational needs of people with disabilities in her country.

As a result of academic papers published about the topics of Inclusive Human Rights Education and Dissemination in Central Asia, the idea of not only academically, but also practically contributing to positively changing the problems of inclusive education for Tajik disabled school-children emerged, and due to her passion and project proposal written to participate in the US Department of State's sponsored Community Solution Program, 2022, she was privileged to be the only representative from her country and has undergone 4 months professional leadership program and simultaneously conducted on-site fellowship within NSITE an international NGO in Alexandria, Virginia where she widened her knowledge and understanding of effective ways of tackling employment and study issues affecting people with disabilities and blind people in particular in the context of the work and mission of this organization.

Thus, Mohirakhon is a young change-maker from Khujand, who was given trust and empowerment to put into practice her vision for improvement of the quality of education for kids with and without disabilities mainstreamed in schools of Sughd Region. Therefore, currently, she is conducting a series of teacher training on the peculiarities of teaching neurodiverse learners in general classroom settings as well as raising awareness about barriers and issues faced by people with disabilities in Tajikistan. She hopes that with her training and practical handbook for inclusive class teachers that she has developed while in the US, the quality and



access to truly inclusive study programs and environments becomes feasible for the kids of Sughd and further on for the whole country.

Mohirakhon says that human potential knows no limits. We all have unique things to offer in this world and we just need not miss defining moments in our life because opportunities are always present out there for everyone, what it takes for us to be closer to our dreams and become successful in life is that one needs to discover his/her passion, have always a learner's mindset, be perseverant and resilient while taking challenges in life as one's growing edge.

If I am asked to succinctly express the whole 4 months of enriching experience in the US with my host organization and fellows representing 69 countries around the globe, then I will confidently claim that CSP gives not only life-changing experience but also invaluable personal connections and long-lasting professional networks that make the journey of each selected fellow of this program unique and memorable. The richness of taught modules, multicultural representation, and impactful leadership journey that change-makers of this program will go through for many more years ahead after their participation in this program makes this opportunity stand uniquely out among many US programs.

MOHIRA SHONIZOROVA: ENGLISH TEACHING MENTOR PROGRAM

The English Teaching Mentor (ETM) Program is designed to develop the teaching skills of English teachers in secondary schools and universities by providing intensive, high-level instruction in teaching English as a foreign language. The program is designed for early- or mid-career teachers who have not had training abroad. Participants must develop a plan to train teachers in their schools and universities after their year as ETM fellows. The selected teachers will attend four intensive training seminars during the year in Dushanbe. The English Language Fellow from the United States and the English Language Specialist will deliver training sessions. The ETM alumni will be involved in observations of training sessions, development of activities for training, and delivery of training sessions through team teaching, coaching, mentoring, etc.

Age range:

- current teachers of English at the primary, secondary, or university level who have a strong desire to mentor and teach other teachers

Duration of the program:

- four intensive, multi-day training workshops in Dushanbe



A good education is a foundation for a better future.

Elizabeth Ann Warren, an American politician

As Elizabeth Warren once said: “A good education is a foundation for a better future.”

As far as I remember, education has always played a significant role in my life. I always try to participate in different courses or training to get new knowledge and experience. ETM was one of the best training on methodologies that I participated in and I got many fresh ideas and it taught practical skills. This was a great opportunity to improve my mentoring skills. The program introduced me and my colleagues to new methodologies and better approaches. It has been a journey that gave me the tools to be more open to networking with other teachers and sharing experiences. It indicated to us how to be an active teacher in a classroom, and use various strategies and techniques to make the class effective, engaging, and extraordinary. Moreover, we learned how to use different websites for finding teaching resources, while teaching language. This program opened the gate of new experience and knowledge. Also, it pushed me to a world where lifelong learning is required.

The program is excellent! All the knowledge I learned from my trainers and other mentees has been very helpful to reach my goal. We had a great time working together and we are still in touch. ETM is the program that changed my methods and pushed me to self-development as well. I highly recommend joining this program.

GULNORA ZULOBIEVA: MY JOURNEY WITH THE OPEN WORLD PROGRAM

Hello, dear reader. If you are reading this article I have great news for you – it is a sign that you are on the right path to change your life for the better by taking steps toward your dreams.

Let me share with you my story. I am Gulnora Zulobieva, an Alumna of one of the most interesting American Programs: Open World programs in 2022. I have 8 years of teaching experience at the University of Central Asia (UCA) School of Professional and Continuing Education in Dushanbe (SPCE). At the same time, I have worked part-time as a Regional Representative of the English Without Borders Network in Dushanbe and the District of Republican Subordination for two years. The year 2022 was a year of success for me. It was my long-time dream to visit the USA, since my childhood, and I was very happy to learn that I was nominated by English Without Borders for the Open World program. Finally, I was selected as an Open World finalist and embarked on my first trip to the USA, in December 2022, which is remembered by very pleasant and useful memories, and a great experience in this country.



The Open World program is a two-week program, it helped me to discover completely new horizons for me. This program allowed me to see a different world, different people, different environments, and different attitudes and it all inspired me. Although it was a short exchange program, during these 14 days, it was possible to learn a lot about the life of the country of great opportunities and the American people. Also, I was impressed with Educational technology when visiting different places where technology appeared to be at the highest level in various factories, colleges, and high schools, which is supportive and helpful in various ways in their life. In terms of using technology in the classroom, I updated my knowledge with lots of information presented in the session at Fox-Valley Technology College and Waupaca high school, Bridges Virtual Academy, and I had an opportunity to implement the acquired knowledge into practice



with my students since I returned to my home country and shared it with my colleagues as well.

Staying with a host family was a great cultural experience. Particularly, in my memory left a pleasant stay with the most wonderful host family, Shelli Olinger, and Mike Olinger, and the best experiences in my life where I felt at home and saw real American life which I saw only in movies before. I became familiar with American culture and shared my own culture by showing some pictures, videos, and most interestingly, every evening with my host family we watched on YouTube the sightseeing of our country, types of foods, traditional clothes, and which places to visit when they will come to Tajikistan. That was an amazing cultural exchange for me. It has also resulted in lasting friendships.

Sightseeing and leisure time in the U.S. was another exciting opportunity for me. Most of our time was spent in the wonderful Wisconsin Waupaca city with amazing nature, famous lakes, different winter sports games like curling, and wonderful people who have assisted us in teaching and playing curling. It has been life-changing and very fulfilling.

We were lucky to visit all the sights of this city like the historical Hutchinson house, Wheelhouse, and Air venture museum where behind each plane was an amazingly long history. The delegates from Tajikistan also were invited to one of the most popular radio stations called “Local Radio of Waupaca” where they officially welcomed and showed their hospitality. Participation in a City Council Meeting at City Hall tour was another pleasant experience for me.

This is the time to tell that I had the most enjoyable time in the U.S. I have ever imagined. Our trip successfully ended full of joy and a new experience. We spent a wonderful time getting to know the kindest people who gave us a warm welcoming place. Thanks to all those whom we happened to meet in a wonderful Waupaca. Thanks to all those who contributed to our amazing time in the U.S.

ENGLISH RESOURCE CENTER AS OPPORTUNITY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

On November 16, 2021, the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan and American Council for International Education officially opened the **English Resource Center** at the Faculty of English at Bokhtar State University. I am Safargul Kulmahmadova, and I am going to talk about the benefits of professional development for English teachers in our English Department.

I am an English teacher with 18 years of teaching experience in the EL teaching field. During these years of my teaching experience, I had 6 professional development trainings. Every university teacher, after three years, should take part in professional development training. The administration of faculty shortlists the teachers for professional development training. Usually, English teacher trainers or experts come from Tajik National University or Tajik-Russian (Slavonic) University in Dushanbe and conduct training. We are always looking forward to attending any professional development at our university. While taking part in my professional development training I expanded my skill set and built up my “teacher toolbox” so I have everything I need to start my career off strong.

It must be mentioned that attending any kind of professional development course or training will increase one’s expertise in the teaching field and, as a result, build confidence in the work you do. **Confidence is something teachers need.**

When we go back to our classroom, we need the confidence to share what we learned. Our students will feel excited when we try something new. **Students will show great respect to those teachers who are constantly learning**, and it will energize and motivate them to be prepared for the lesson. The more professional development teachers get, the more likely students are to succeed. In my mind, all new and experienced teachers should take part in any form of professional development whether it is a workshop, a conference, a meeting, or take part in some form of professional development if they want to be seen as successful teachers. For example, from our English faculty, ten faculty members benefited from the **English Mentor Program (ETM)**. This year two teachers will go. The alumni of the ETM program came with a wealth of new knowledge and confidence. I have observed how this program enabled their knowledge about how to effectively manage their classroom.

Most of them improved their teaching methods and one of the teachers said that **such kind of professional development gives you a chance to acknowledge your strength and weakness**. However, later, when you come back, you work on improving them so then you become better professionally. Thanks to the English Resource Center and the coordinator, five teachers got support and assistance on how to apply to this amazing program. I did not apply to this program yet.



We dreamt to have one little workspace where we could work, learn, and grow. And here came English Resource Center in 2021 at our faculty. We gave this idea to a former EL Fellow we had in our university that we teachers need something like little American Space in our faculty that is just only for English teachers. We believed that this place would give us more professional development opportunities. We will not stop thanking the American Councils and the U.S. Embassy for such a wonderful gift for our faculty. It is such a hospitable and welcoming supportive space. This space provides resources that support stronger language learning by improving the capacity of English language educators in our English Department.

Our ERC is equipped with four desktop computers, printers, books, and furniture for holding workshops for up to 20 participants. We, teachers, have access to high-speed internet and print materials which we find on the internet. We use this center as a workspace. And more importantly, this center has a Coordinator who serves as a resource person. **Zeboniso Murodova** is an alumna of this faculty. She assists us in searching for appropriate teaching materials on the internet and schedules different events and workshops at the Center. She encourages us to watch different webinars and free online courses. I learned what webinars are and how virtual professional development training looks. Our first professional development was called **“Methodology of Four Skills”** conducted by American Specialist Linda Marie Chu.

Teacher Professional Development changed during Covid-19. Professional learning activities around the world moved to online, hybrid, and blended environments. The first ERC activity was the **virtual Methodology Course "Four Skills"**. When the ERC coordinator enrolled us, we asked so many questions about this course. We were curious about what the trainer wanted to teach us and what online professional development looks like. Though, we feared being misunderstood or not understanding the content of the course, we 19 teachers took a risk, stepped out of our comfort zone, and joined our first virtual training. We were both excited and nervous. There were three groups. In each group, there were 6-7 teachers. I was in the Monday group. Our lessons started at 9 am. But for our trainer, Miss Linda, it was night. Linda Chu is an amazing teacher trainer; she is professional with her work. For each skill we studied, she shared useful worksheets and activities which were relevant to our context. We had so many takeaways. Our classes were through the Zoom platform. During the first lessons, we had some challenges listening to Linda's speech on the big TV screen because our ears were not used to listening to native speakers. Various sounds in an environment could interfere with hearing well. Other distractions to understanding a speaker's speech could be our internal thoughts, but we challenged ourselves.

I saw teachers coming to ERC to learn MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses). My colleague Mavjuda Saidova successfully finished a MOOC Professional Development for Teacher Trainers with Arizona State University. Two more teachers took this semester's MOOC courses. They came to the ERC in their free time to finish their assignments. Murodov Ismoil is one of the British Council courses "Teaching English Through Literature". Last year, three of my colleagues took EWB online course by Lisa Mann. Two faculty members got an EWB mini-grant last summer and became trainers and taught other teachers. It was their first step.

Then, the ERC coordinator put four teachers on a computer with headphones so they could listen well. The most interesting part was when the lesson finished, and we planned to apply the new activity we learned right away with our class. Most teachers liked **jigsaw listening and reading strategies** ideas such as *prediction, Bingo, Tic Tac Toe, listening to songs, and making up stories with pictures*. What a wonderful online course it was! I am very grateful to the U.S. Embassy and American Councils that provided this course for us. Many teachers still are teaching Linda's activity. We are reusing her legacy over and over.

After the course, on January 31, 2022, we 19 teachers successfully finished and were awarded the certificate at the graduation ceremony. The courses lasted for four months. It was my longest professional development training and an unforgettable one. Ongoing professional development keeps us up to date on new research on how students learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, and more. The best professional development is ongoing, experiential, collaborative, and connected to and derived from working with students.

Another interesting event for English teachers is the ERC teacher of the month. In January 2022 the Coordinator of the English Resource Center launched the ERC Teacher of the month award. Teachers must take one activity from a teacher training session offered by the ERC. The applicant records a video segment where he/she shows how they apply knowledge from an ERC training session. Applicants must also submit a description of what is happening in the video and their reflection on their learning. Then American Specialists can evaluate the video and reflection.

In this new academic year 2022-2023, our English Department has an English Language Fellow (ELF), Benjamin Bertrand, from Washington, USA. The ERC coordinator and ELF design and plan some activities at ERC for faculty members. Last semester Benjamin conducted a workshop for 12 teachers on **Methodology and Curriculum** on Tuesdays and Fridays, and we had a discussion club. Mr. Bertrand observed my demo lesson and evaluated my reflection as well. We already have had 10 ERC **teacher of the month** awardees. I took this award in December 2022 and I am thankful to the ERC coordinator for her support.

I took an activity from Linda Chu's training. I had never used songs in my lessons, but I liked a creative technique Linda used to teach songs. Most teachers used the songs we learned in Linda's training such as "What a Wonderful World" by Louis Armstrong and "Let it Be" by Dean Martin. To get the award, I used my song using Linda's techniques. My song was "I Am a Big Girl" by Emilia. This is an old but great song to teach. I liked the song when I listened to it at first. It was a girlish song, but I forgot about my boys. I highlighted some words from the text of the song and made pictures out of them and asked students to make up stories. Students made up good ones. They shared their stories. The next time I will think about a song that will not cause any uncomfortable situation. Another idea is for students I have some words and students can draw pictures themselves. Then, I can play the song and they all will listen and fill out the missing words. Students can perform actively. Next, I put on a karaoke version they checked their papers and sang a song together. Teachers should consider the audience, culture, background, individual differences, orientation, and sensitivity when choosing a song for a lesson.

I became December's Teacher of the Month awardee at our English Faculty. Competitions like this allow educators the opportunity to showcase the hard work and creativity we put into our classes. Getting such kinds of awards can build our personal CVs and enhance our reputation in the educational community. The English Resource center is the pearl of our faculty. We want this project to not finish and continue to provide us with many professional training programs.

By Safargul Kulmahmadova, English Language Department, Bokhtar State University

ENHANCING LEARNER AUTONOMY AND ENGAGEMENT IN **WRITING** THROUGH THE USE OF '**WRITE AND IMPROVE**' TOOL



Vu Thuy Huong, English
Teacher, Member of
VietTESOL

Promoting learner autonomy and engagement in the learning process has been considered one of the ultimate goals in education, especially writing skills. As can be seen, writing has been considered one of the most challenging competencies to master as it incorporates several integrated language skills. My recent study examined the effectiveness of the 'Write and Improve' tool in promoting learner autonomy and engagement in writing among English-major 11th graders. The study used a mixed-methods approach, including pre- and post-intervention writing assessments, surveys, and interviews with students and teachers, based on the theoretical frameworks of self-assessment, reflection, and learner autonomy.

The tool was implemented in writing classes, and the results were impressive. The data analysis revealed significant improvements in students' writing performance, motivation, and autonomy. The automated feedback and self-assessment features of the tool allowed students to identify their strengths and weaknesses, providing them with a sense of control over their learning. Teachers also found the tool's immediate and personalized feedback helpful, allowing for timely and targeted interventions. The study's findings suggest that the 'Write and Improve' tool is an invaluable resource for educators seeking to enhance their students' writing skills and foster learner autonomy and engagement. The use of technology enables teachers to provide targeted and timely interventions, while students become more active and reflective learners. The study highlights the potential of technology in promoting learner autonomy and engagement in the learning process.

In conclusion, the 'Write and Improve' tool has been found to be effective in promoting learner autonomy and engagement in writing. Educators can use this technology to enhance their students' writing skills, and encourage self-assessment, reflection, and learner autonomy. By leveraging the tool's automated feedback and self-assessment features, teachers can provide targeted and timely interventions, while students become more active and reflective learners. The study underscores the importance of embracing technology in education to promote effective teaching and learning.

WE'RE ALL TEACHERS. **WE'RE ALL LEARNERS**



Charles Hall, PhD, dr.h.c.
Alfaisal University Riyadh,
Saudi Arabia

Days of concentrated effort, evenings filled with honorable exhaustion, and moments of absolute joy, such is the life of the dedicated teacher. One of those times of joy for me was having the pleasure of leading a webinar sponsored by EWB for teachers from Tajikistan to Brazil on January 26, 2023.

The title "We're all teachers; we're all learners" served as the starting point for us to look inward, to be introspective as we explored the idea of the learning-centered classroom. In this model, students and instructors are both learners and teachers.

As participants shared their favorite simile for teaching – "a good teacher is like a ..." that included gardener, pilot, and film director, we saw the many different ways we can be effective teachers. Both quiet and extroverted teachers can be inspiring, challenging, and motivating.

That exercise allowed us to quickly move away from the "one size fits all" approach to education and turn to the premise that so-called general English doesn't exist. Indeed, every course, every class is unique and therefore an English for Specific Purpose class. By viewing all teaching as ESP, we can use needs analysis and the expert knowledge that the students bring which might range from computer skills to gardening experience to design a class that truly helps students reach their goals, the goals of all the stakeholders.

We ended the productive evening with the "doorway question" that helps us reflect on our own teaching. As teachers enter a classroom, they should stand for a minute in the doorway and ask themselves "What do I hope to accomplish today. What can we learn today?" The answers should indeed remind us that we're all learners and we're all teachers.

POETRY IN THE CLASSROOM

Have you ever taught poems in your classroom? Maybe, but usually because it is a mandated part of the curriculum. In fact, many of us run for the hills when thinking about teaching poetry, remembering our days of struggling to understand the meaning of the poem, to respond to questions, and its seeming lack of relevance.

There are many benefits and reasons for teaching poetry. Poems are a great entryway for English learners to reading in English, as they can be short and, therefore, not overwhelming for students. Poems generally have rhyming words, which help build connections between familiar and new words; rhyming words also help with pronunciation because the sounds of the words should be similar enough to rhyme, allowing students to sound out unfamiliar words. Poems also can be used to practice syllables and rhythm, important parts of spoken English.

To help your students become successful readers who love to read, whether poems, books, or songs, it is important to follow pre-, during, and post-reading strategies.

Before students read the poem, the teacher should provide some background information about the poem. For example, explain where the poem takes place or the period; give some historical and/or cultural context to the poem. Short videos are one engaging way to provide this information to students. Gallery walks are an interactive way to have students share what they might know about the main theme of the poem. Break students into groups and have them work together to answer questions about the main theme based on their knowledge, (who, what, when, why, where, how). Try to make the questions relevant to the student's own experiences.

Skim the poem and choose 3-5 words that are most important for students to know. Pre-teach this vocabulary before the students read the poem. Knowing the keywords first will help students better understand the meaning of the text as well as be able to engage with the text in more meaningful ways. When teaching the vocabulary, use visuals as often as possible, not translation.

During reading, ask students to visualize what they are reading. They can do a quick draw on paper, one for each stanza, that demonstrates their understanding of that part of the poem. Students can share their drawings with a partner or in small groups, discussing the reading with each other as they share what they drew and why; it is important to have students discuss "why."



Maureen Rooney, English Speaking Nation Coach in Uzbekistan

After students have read the poem, there are many engaging activities they can do to show their overall comprehension. Students can create a title for the poem; (I usually only share the real title after we have read the poem as a class.) They can draw one picture that encapsulates the overall theme or meaning of the poem. Students can write one more stanza for the poem, paying close attention to the rhyming pattern, syllable count, and word choice. If the poem involves more than one character, ask students to re-write the poem from the other character's perspective.

These reading strategies help to develop students' critical thinking skills, creativity, and, hopefully, a love of reading.

Some of my favorite poems - with lesson plans - can be found for free on poet laureate Kenn Nesbitt's website: poetry4kids.com.

April is National Poetry Month in the United States. What better way to celebrate it than by using poems in your classroom? Try to teach one poem a week with your students. By the end of the month, you will all love poems. Happy Poetry Reading!

TEACHING ACTIVITY: SUSPECTS AND DETECTIVES

This activity is a game of “whodunit” or guessing who the “criminal” is based on information supplied by the students. Students get a lot of **practice asking and answering questions** to find out who the guilty party is.

Preparation

This activity can be done with the detectives and criminals changing seats for interviews or moving around class. Think of your class setup.

Procedure

1. Tell half of the class that they are suspects and half of the class that they are detectives.
2. Have those students who are detectives remain facing the board; have the suspects turn their seats to face away from the board.
3. The suspects will write down what they were doing yesterday at four specific times.
4. Let them know that during one of those times, they should write something they were doing alone.
5. They will also write down what they were wearing.
6. Then have the suspects close their eyes.
7. On the board, you will write what time the crime was committed and what the criminal was wearing. Only the detectives can see this information.
8. Then the detectives will interview some of the suspects and see if they can find anyone who was alone at the time of the crime and was wearing the same clothes as the criminal.

When to Use it

- To get students thinking critically and creatively
- To get students to work together
- To have students practice question formation in a communicative manner

Level



Skills



Practice



Preparation Time

1-5 minutes

Activity Time

7-15 minutes

Contributor

Julie Holaway, Cristiane Tinoco

Variation

To make this more challenging, you can work with one student to be “It” and be vague about the time and clothing.



Beginner



Intermediate



Advanced



Listening



Speaking



Reading



Writing



Grammar



Vocabulary



Critical Thinking



Kinesthetic



Tactile

ENGLISH THROUGH COOKING

CHANA DAL RECIPE



Regularly, on our social media pages, we publish short "English through cooking" video recipes. We invite our friends-native speakers to participate in these videos. The aim is to learn new vocabulary and collocations through cooking as well as interesting recipes. This time, our guest was Shahnaz Savani who cooked Chana Dal, an easy healthy Indian lentil dish made with split chickpeas, onion, tomatoes, ginger, garlic, herbs, and spices.

Chana dal is not quite a curry nor soup but has a wonderfully saucy consistency that pairs perfectly when served with fluffy basmati rice and/or roti.

Like most lentils, chana dal is a highly nutritious and great source of protein, iron, and fiber.

STEP 1

First, **rinse 1 cup of split chickpeas** in running water a couple of times.

STEP 2

Place the lentils in a bowl. Then cover with water and **soak the chana dal for 4 hours or let it soak overnight**. At the end of 4 hours, drain the water and place it aside.

STEP 3

Place a pan over **medium heat** and add a few teaspoons of **oil**. As the oil heats up, add the **cumin seeds**. As the seeds start to sizzle, add **minced garlic**.

STEP 4

When the garlic turns golden brown, add **green chilies, ginger, and chopped onions**. Saute for 2 min.

STEP 5

Add **chopped tomatoes** and the remaining **spices**. Saute for another 2 min.

STEP 6

Then **add the soaked, drained chana dal and 3 cups of water**. Cover with a lid and cook on **medium heat for 20 min**.

STEP 7

When the dal is cooked, **add ½ cup water and salt** and stir well. Cook for 5 more mins. Add more water if required. Add **cilantro** for garnish.



PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES



COOK TIME: 1 HOUR



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups split chickpeas
- 4 teaspoons oil
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- 2 green chilies, ½ teaspoon red chili powder
- 1 onion chopped
- 2 medium-sized tomatoes
- ½ teaspoon cumin powder, 1 teaspoon coriander powder
- Salt to taste
- 2 teaspoon cilantro for garnish



NEWS & OPPORTUNITIES

ARTICLE ABOUT EWB NETWORK ON TESOL EFLIS NEWSLETTER

Read the article of EWB Director Nasiba Mirpochoeva "Building Professional Bridges through Partnerships and Collaborations in Central Asia and Beyond" in the Newsletter of English as a Foreign Language Interest Section of TESOL.

LEARN MORE HERE

[HTTP://NEWSMANAGER.COMMPARTNERS.COM/](http://newsmanager.commpartners.com/)

EWB MASTER WORKSHOP SUMMER 2023

We are pleased to announce a Request for Proposals for EWB Master Workshops grants! Qualified applicants should be current teachers of English with a minimum of three (3) years of teaching experience and prior teacher-trainer practice.

LEARN MORE HERE

WWW.EWB.TJ

EWB REGIONAL CONFERENCES 2023

For the first time, EWB is announcing three **regional conferences for English teachers** in three cities across Tajikistan. The conferences will be a unique opportunity to learn about trends in teaching English, share experiences and best practices, and establish professional contacts.

LEARN MORE HERE

WWW.EWB.TJ



EWB LEADERSHIP CAMP 2023 IN KAYROKKUM

The **EWB Leadership Camp** will create meaningful connections between experienced leaders and English teachers, enabling them to share best practices and develop practical professional tools to effectively navigate change, lead with purpose, and strategically respond to future challenges.

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To participate in EWB activities in your region, contact our regional representatives:

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