

## A writers' meeting space: the resource page

This is an updated version of notes from a 2012 CLESOL presentation: **A WRITERS' MEETING SPACE: THE RESOURCE PAGE**. *You'll see that a lot of references are to the international ELT market, because that's a bigger arena. It's also probably rather book-focussed, as I'm so interested in 'graded readers'...*

### PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Follow the IATEFL Materials Writing SIG on Facebook, or on Twitter (@MaWSIG), or join as part of IATEFL membership. It's for materials writers (and you don't have to be published). <http://www.iatefl.org/special-interest-groups/sig-list>. They have a blog: <http://mawsig.iatefl.org/#>, meetups, a Facebook group – a small international community.

The Materials Development Association (MATSDA) was set up by Brian Tomlinson (see next section). The focus is materials development for language learning. They hold events, and members can add their name to the Freelance Register. "We hope to help teachers become more confident in producing their own materials and, at the same time, encourage publishers to take account of ideas outside the mainstream." <https://www.matsda.org>

### THE HOW-TO OF WRITING FOR ESOL LEARNERS

#### How to do it (or how not to do it):

Start here: A long list of resources (interviews, articles, blogs etc) from ELT teacher2writer, at: <http://www.elteacher2writer.co.uk/writer-resources>

An article on 'My Top Ten Materials Development Resources' by Lizzie Pinard, though you might find it easier to google it, as this link strangely isn't working for me. <https://reflectiveteachingreflectivelearning.com/2014/06/06/my-top-ten-materials-development-resources/>

She refers to a number of professional texts on materials evaluation and design for the language classroom, including Brian Tomlinson's *Materials Development in Language Teaching* (2011, update of 1998 version, CUP), also his 2012 article at CUP, and Nigel Harwood's *English Language Teaching Materials: Theory and Practice*, 2010, CUP).

Sue Leather on Four Tips for writing a really good original reader:

<http://www.eltlinkup.org/sueleatherart.html> Sue has an e-book, *How to Write Graded Readers*, available from Amazon and other e-book platforms (from ELTteacher2writer – see more about them below).

Anne Collins, for Macmillan, on how to write a graded reader:

<http://www.macmillanreaders.com/features/how-to-write-a-reader>

An interesting article from Jason Renshaw (English Raven) on ‘busy’ looking pages in ELT coursebooks:

[http://jasonrenshaw.typepad.com/jason\\_renshaws\\_web\\_log/2011/02/coursebook-layout-and-the-pillars-of-distraction.html](http://jasonrenshaw.typepad.com/jason_renshaws_web_log/2011/02/coursebook-layout-and-the-pillars-of-distraction.html)

## PATHWAYS TO PUBLICATION: OVERVIEWS

Alex Case on the options for getting published in TEFL:

<https://tefltastic.wordpress.com/publications/by-topic/elt-publishing/>

Most writers’ centres have general information on getting published (not educational or ESL specific, but interesting none the less, for example:

<http://www.writingwa.org/information/faq/>

**Yes, there are literary agents for ELT** – well, there’s at least one:

<https://nickrobinsonelt.wordpress.com> It’s not clear to me if this site is current, but he’s also on LinkedIn and he’s the co-founder of eltjam, so you could track him down and ask.

ELTJAM is a product consultancy: <http://eltjam.com> - they invite contributions to their blog

**There’s a course available on getting published in ELT:**

<http://eltteacher2writer.co.uk>

They have training modules for sale as ebooks. Register for free in their database, but pay for courses: a matchmaking service. Their facebook page is interesting and has interviews with publishers, alerts to possible writing opportunities etc:

<https://www.facebook.com/ELTT2W> They tweet (frequently) @ELT\_T2W

**Find out more about sending proposals to publishers:**

Making proposals to ELT publishers (originally in the ELT Gazette)

<http://www.onestopenglish.com/jobs/your-career/publishing-for-teachers/making-proposals-to-elt-publishers/145002.article>

**Teacher experience:**

A writer’s journey (and advice) in coursebook writing – the comments below his post, from a number of ELT authors, are illuminating:

<http://scottthornbury.wordpress.com/2011/01/23/c-is-for-coursebook-writing/>

Getting published in Japan:

<http://www.blogitjapan.com/tag/getting-published-in-japan/>

A fun 'my story of getting published' from Nicola Prentis:

<https://simpleenglishuk.wordpress.com/2013/01/10/graded-readers/>

## SUBMITTING TO THE BIG NAME PUBLISHERS

**Submit a proposal to the big name presses** (Textbooks will need wide appeal to make it worth their while; reading books will need to adhere to publisher requirements on language levels/structure/vocabulary list/forbidden topics.)

**Onestop English has an article on this:**

<http://www.onestopenglish.com/community/jobs/your-career/publishing-for-teachers/making-proposals-to-elt-publishers/145002.article>

There's also an article on the OUP site, though no links to the actual submission process: <https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2010/07/29/a-decent-proposal/>

**The problem comes when looking for submission guidelines, as links seem to go out of date. You may need to do a search...**

**Cambridge University Press** "is always willing to consider new book proposals in all the major areas in which we publish."

<https://authornet.cambridge.org/information/proposaluk/elt/>

**Thomson/Heinle** say they are, "always happy to review relevant ESL materials".

[http://www.heinle.com/pubco/esl\\_author.html](http://www.heinle.com/pubco/esl_author.html)

For graded readers, you could contact Rob Waring (editor):

[http://www.robwaring.org/EFL\\_Texts/index.htm](http://www.robwaring.org/EFL_Texts/index.htm)

**OUP** has a general submission page; I couldn't find a specific eLT one:

<https://global.oup.com/academic/authors/?cc=au&lang=en&>

The same for **Macmillan**: <http://www.macmillaneducation.com/authors/>

**OUP ELT ANZ** has (minimal) information here: scroll down to the very end of the page: [http://www.oup.com.au/help\\_and\\_advice](http://www.oup.com.au/help_and_advice)

Join your local Society of Authors (or Writers' Association) for advice on contracts:

<http://www.asauthors.org>

<http://www.authors.org.nz>

## GETTING PUBLISHED: SMALLER LOCAL PRESSES

In Australia: photocopiable teacher resources by RIC:

<http://www.ricgroup.com.au/become-an-author/>

**Essential Resources** (New Zealand, Australia and UK) publish 60+ new school-based titles a year:

<https://www.essentialresources.com.au/Er/AboutUs/WriteForUs>

Can anyone supply other names? AMES NSW and AMES Vic are prolific, but have their own staff writers. What about New Zealand? Educational (school) publishers?

## GETTING PUBLISHED IN-HOUSE

A response to the article on coursebook writing, on the benefits of starting off with in-house publications: *Before you go diving (and falling, in many cases) to write for any of the ELT publishing superpowers out there, first take a look closer to home.*

[http://jasonrenshaw.typepad.com/jason\\_renhaws\\_web\\_log/2011/01/another-path-for-would-be-elt-writers.html](http://jasonrenshaw.typepad.com/jason_renhaws_web_log/2011/01/another-path-for-would-be-elt-writers.html)

In-house materials may end up being more widely available: Karen Barber's readers were originally published in-house, with local funding, by Central (now North Metropolitan TAFE) AMEP in Western Australia – they are now free to download on the website:

<http://guides.dtwd.wa.gov.au/c.php?g=171260&p=1128287>

## GETTING PUBLISHED: AUTHOR COLLECTIVES

*the round* says it is 'an independent collective of creative individuals in English language teaching' which helps with 'the difficulty of placing innovative, niche or critical materials with the big ELT publishers'. <http://the-round.com> (Current materials on offer are teacher reference works.)

## GETTING PUBLISHED: DIGITAL ONLY

An example of a (Canadian) company that publishes/distributes digital materials:

<http://fullblastproductions.highwire.com/aboutus/>

NOTE: there's also a lot on the net about the relative royalty rates for self-publishing e-books vs publishers' rates.

## GETTING PUBLISHED: ONLINE WORKSHEETS

### Share worksheets online:

<http://busyteacher.org> (includes Australian/New Zealand worksheets).

<http://en.islcollective.com> (has some Australian/New Zealand material).

## SHARE FOR FREE

Free and Fair invites submissions for authors wishing to share free materials:

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/free-and-fair-elt/i-want-to-share-my-materials-how-can-i-do-it/308441919314025>

## WHERE IS IT ALL HEADING? DIGITAL DIRECTIONS

### Many materials now will have some digital element. But totally digital? How about a MOOC? Or consider Udemy or another platform:

If your organisation is involved in MOOCs, is that an option? Could you create a video course through a platform like Udemy? An article by Jeff Cobb on different platforms: <http://www.learningrevolution.net/sell-online-courses/>

### General developments:

ELTjam looks at the future of the ELT industry – this includes digital materials development: <http://eltjam.com> (They are also a publishing packager.)

Take a look at their blog, for example: <http://eltjam.com/emerging-skills-for-elt-digital-writers/>

ELTTeacher2Writer has a book by Jeremy Day and Peter Sharma on *How to Write for Digital Media* – on various platforms, like Kindle, Smashwords, or from their site.

A Mawsig article: <http://mawsig.iatefl.org/an-authoring-tool-wishlist/>

Jason Renshaw on ELT apps:

[http://jasonrenshaw.typepad.com/jason\\_renhaws\\_web\\_log/2013/03/are-elt-publishers-going-to-make-it-app-n.html](http://jasonrenshaw.typepad.com/jason_renhaws_web_log/2013/03/are-elt-publishers-going-to-make-it-app-n.html)

ESL Techies:

<https://twitter.com/esltechies>

## LEARNING FROM OTHERS: THE TWITTERSPHERE

Most of the websites I've listed also have a strong presence on Twitter or Facebook, where you can find updates, like @MaWSIG, @ELTjam, @ELT\_T2W (Teacher 2 Writer).

(For Australian teachers of English to adults, do consider joining the ACTA Adult ESOL interest group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ACTAadultESOL/> and on Twitter, look for AusELT.)

## SELF-PUBLISHING: AUTHOR EXPERIENCE

### Authors talk in a panel:

<http://compellingconversations.com/blog/2010/01/25/passion-and-persistence-self-published-esl-authors-tell-their-stories/>

Read the comments and Eric Roth's response for a summary: choose a neglected niche market for your ESL book, keep expectations in check, and enjoy your small following.

### Other author experience:

<http://hallhouston.blogspot.com.au/2010/05/coming-soona-new-series-on-self.html>

- there is then a series of guest posts from other self-published authors

Interview with Dave Sperling (ESL café)

[http://www.eslcafe.com/articles/eslmag\\_article.html](http://www.eslcafe.com/articles/eslmag_article.html)

## GETTING PUBLISHED: THE DIY ROUTE

In Australia (and elsewhere), there are a number of teachers who have started off writing for publishers or departments, then turned to self-publishing. They don't publish other teachers' work, but they're useful to look at as examples of the go-it-alone mentality (I'm one of them). The ESL-SPIN network is a small group of independent Australian publishers who support each other: <https://eslspin.com>

### In Australia, ESOL teachers who are self-publishing include:

Susan Boyer (print and downloadable):

<http://www.boyereducation.com.au>

Hazel Davidson and Dorothy Court (print)

<http://www.sugarbagondamper.com>

Keturah de Clerk (online):

<http://www.e-phrase.com.au/index.php/site/about/>

Karen Barber (print):

<http://www.readmeagainpress.com.au>

A group of Victorian ESOL writers (print and downloadable):

<http://urbanlyrebirds.com>

Clare Harris (print materials and e-books):

<http://www.thebooknextdoor.com>

Pauline Bunce (downloadable materials):

<http://www.alphabheadaches.com/Publications.html>

There are also authors like Po Lin Woo and Helga Burry who don't have websites at the time of writing, but who sell their books through language bookshops.

#### **In New Zealand:**

Yvonne Hynson (part of our CLESOL group) has years of experience here (website, audio and books): <http://www.englishteacher.co.nz>

Pat Syme (online listening and reading)

<http://eslnews.org.nz>

#### **In the US/Canada/The UK (just a few examples)**

Elizabeth Claire (Easy English news, e-books, and background to how she moved from teaching to writing full time)

<https://www.elizabethclaire.com>

The team that developed ESL Podcasts offer free podcasts (there is a donation button) and they promote through Twitter (@eslpod)

[http://www.eslpod.com/eslpod\\_blog/about-us/](http://www.eslpod.com/eslpod_blog/about-us/)

Nancy Callan (photocopiable print books):

<http://www.esljigsaws.com>

Her blog includes an article on pricing ("just don't expect to quit your day job.")

<http://www.esljigsaws.com/blog/esl-book-pricing/>

Two brothers from Canada who've created an international online (podcast) learning system: Learn English Anywhere

<http://www.china232.com>

Jeremy Taylor has many e-books, including graded readers:

<http://www.jeremytaylor.eu/category/ebooks/graded-readers>

### **GENERAL THOUGHTS ON SELF-PUBLISHING**

Most writers' centres have articles on publishing and self-publishing, with warnings for the unwary: avoiding vanity presses, etc:

<http://www.qwc.asn.au/resources/writers-guides/publish-your-writing/getting-published-the-good,-the-bad-and-the-ugly/>

These centres may well run courses, including courses on the business of publishing, or digital publishing, for example:

<http://www.nswwc.org.au/whats-on/courses/>

There are many, many blogs on self-publishing, both in print and digitally, eg:

<http://www.thebookdesigner.com>

Examples of specialist books: this one is published through Lulu:

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/david-petersen/reading-english-news-on-the-internet-second-general-edition/ebook/product-18664469.html>

An Australian (fiction) writer muses:

<http://www.spacejock.com.au/SelfPublishing.html>

A (US) writer with a huge checklist for Self Publishing your Teaching Ideas:

<http://brightring.com/online-resources/self-publishing-your-teaching-ideas/>

## GENERAL THOUGHTS ON E-PUBLISHING

As above for writers' centres: there are plenty of courses out there.

You can find plenty of blogs and e-books on e-publishing (general, not educational); many have a particular 'angle' on marketing, social media, etc. I regularly read

<http://www.thepassivevoice.com>

<http://kriswrites.com> (Business musings)

Amazon (which sells e-books for their Kindle device or app) has suggestions, as does Smashwords:

<http://kdp.amazon.com>

<http://www.smashwords.com/books/view/145431>

## PRACTICALITIES

### E-books

Information on selling e-books through Amazon (for their Kindle devices or apps): note that they'll invite you to sign up for the exclusive KDP Select, where you cannot sell through other platforms, but you don't have to:

<https://kdp.amazon.com/select>

Smashwords is an example of a distributor, which will distribute your e-book file in different formats for different platforms, such as mobi for Kindle, e-pub for i-Pad, Nook, Sony Reader, Kobo

[www.smashwords.com](http://www.smashwords.com)

However, some authors are now selling directly to these other platforms ... do some research as things are changing rapidly! Everyone has different perspectives on what works best. You can sell digital files directly from your own website, and organise downloads and payment through a site like Gumroad:

<https://gumroad.com>

### **Enhanced (interactive) e-books**

This is an area where things are changing: there's iBooksAuthor:

<http://www.apple.com/ibooks-author/>

Also Kindle Kids' Books Creator

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html?docId=1002979921>

### **Print On Demand (POD)**

For print on demand, where books are printed one at a time, Amazon offers a service where your book is listed on Amazon, and a copy is printed and posted once someone orders it: Createspace. (General opinion is that POD books are looking better and better, and coming closer to offset print quality.)

<https://www.createspace.com.>

Another POD/e-book company is Lulu: <http://www.lulu.com>.

Lightning Source, a huge POD company used by big publishers, is now in Australia – and has a number of distribution partners. Call or email to get samples. Note that Lightning Source is not set up to guide the self-publisher every step of the way – but assumes you are a publishing company and know what you are doing.

<http://www1.lightningsource.com/international/index.aspx?loc=en-au>

Other local printers also do POD but of course what's missing is the distribution...

One general tip you'll read everywhere: be wary of companies that want you to invest a huge amount of money and promise the world. Self-publishing (print or digital) is now easy – marketing and selling is much harder. Penguin Random House bought Author Solutions and received some flak about this, for example:

<http://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/2014/06/03/the-case-against-author-solutions-part-1-the-numbers/>

### **Finding the people to help**

Do you find someone locally, or use an outsourcing company, for example:

<https://www.upwork.com>

**WHAT NEEDS TO BE ADDED TO THIS LIST...? Please contact me and let me know!**