

## **Famous Canadian Authors: Developing English Skills**

(Level: High Intermediate)

**Authors: Mohammed Hashemi, Alice Johnston-Newman and Jaklin Zayat**

**Publisher: Pearson Longman, 2008**

**ISBN: 978-2-7613-2562-2**

**Reviewer: Elaine Goldstein**

This is a well designed, versatile workbook/ textbook combination, with a wide variety of activities. There is no teachers' book or CD, but there is no need: the structure lends itself to ease of use and the teacher is free to either follow the instructions or add or subtract material as he/she wishes.

The book is divided into nine chapters, each focusing on a Canadian author.

Each chapter includes a short biography of the featured writer, some vocabulary exercises, and then an excerpt from one of the writer's short stories or novel. Discussion questions, vocabulary reinforcement exercises and writing tasks are included in between and following the biography and excerpt. A section called "Challenging Structures"- is devoted to dealing with difficult structures such as complex-compound sentences, phrasal verbs and idioms. In addition, there is a focus on grammar point, a cultural component and an online activity for each chapter.

The authors chose the work of some of Canada's most prominent and well-known writers; Lucy Maud Montgomery, Morley Callaghan, Mordecai Richler ( guess which book they chose to use), Farley Mowat, Mavis Gallant, Alice Munro, Carol Shields, Margaret Atwood and Michael Ondaatje.

The only negative points for me were the online activities which I found boring because they were all the same, and the fact that there were no happy stories-they are all heavy themes-juvenile delinquency, and difficult parent-child relationships are two examples. The only relatively ' light' excerpt was from Mordecai Richler. In my opinion, the authors could have chosen a Vinyl Café story by Stewart McLean, one of Farley Mowat's funnier tales (The Boat That Wouldn't Float comes to mind), or a story about someone who overcame adversity and succeeded in achieving a goal. As for online activities, the authors could have had students searching for information on the themes of some of the stories, and then doing some sort of project or

presentation. Or they could simply have added a component to the online activities section, for example, find information about a book listed and write or tell about it.

I have not used the book in class yet, but would very much like to as teaching literature in the ESL classroom has been one of my passions. I would definitely use it in the upper grades in a high school or college setting, in LINC classes and, in fact, almost anywhere. In short, I like the variety of the exercises, and generally the choices of excerpts.

I think this book would be a worthwhile addition to any ESL curriculum

## **Adding English, A Guide to Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms**

**Author: Elizabeth Coelho**

**Publisher: Pippin Publishing, 2004**

**ISBN 978-0-88751-095-3**

**Reviewer: Crystal Greg**

Elizabeth Coelho's "Adding English, A Guide to Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms", is a comprehensive resource which would benefit both new and seasoned teachers of English as a second language. It reflects her three decades of experience as a leader in the field of education. It is refreshing to find references to best principles and practices practiced within the multilingual classrooms of Ontario.

Although it is geared to the professional teacher, the in-depth coverage of topics such as phonology, grammar, and vocabulary development within the inclusive classroom make for fascinating reading. Clear and detailed charts are very transferable to the teaching of adult learners. Her stress on developing a nurturing and supportive language learning environment has culminated in a veritable plethora of excellent practical suggestions for lesson development, classroom management, and organization.

The book is divided into four sections:

**A Welcoming Environment**

Two chapters on how to foster the inclusive model of learning, and integrate a priori knowledge