

Recommended website

Inspiration Lane

<http://www.inspirationlane.blogspot.com>

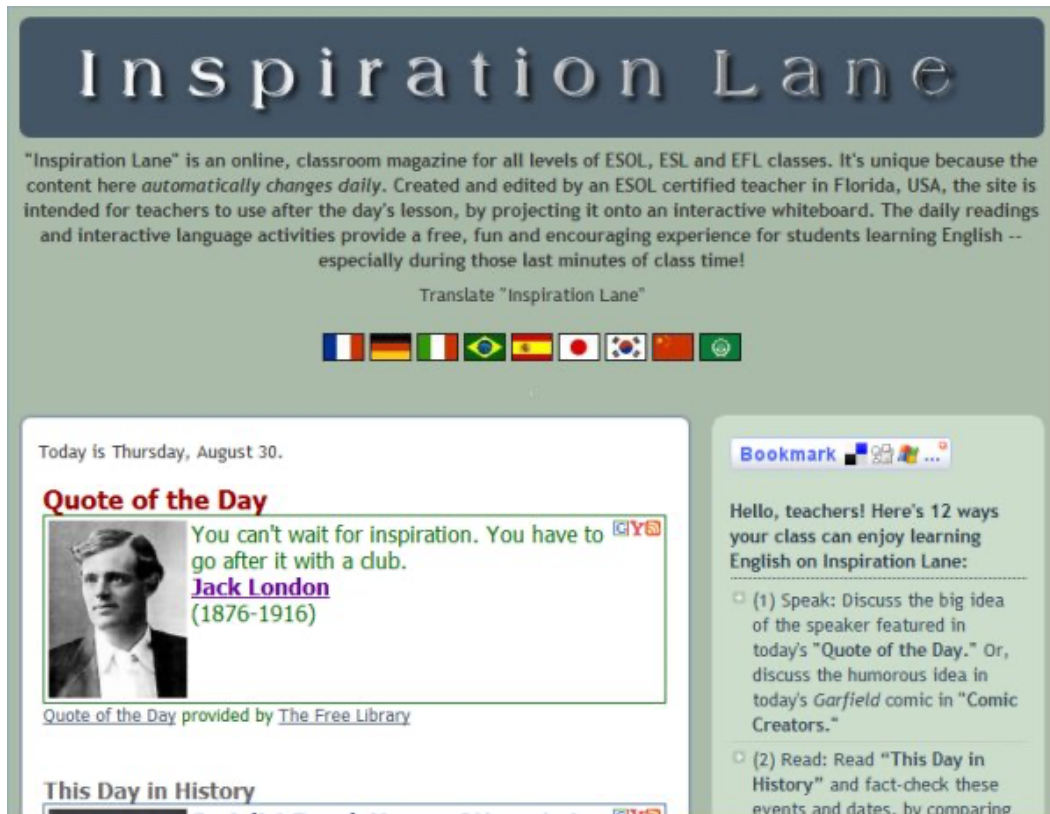


Fig. 1 "Inspiration Lane" homepage.

"Inspiration Lane" is an online, classroom magazine for all levels of ESOL, ESL and EFL classes. It is not just another blog; its content changes automatically on a daily basis. Created and edited by Susan Alyn, an ESOL certified teacher in Florida, USA, the site is intended for teachers to use after the day's lesson, by projecting it onto an interactive whiteboard. The daily readings and interactive language activities provide a free, fun and encouraging experience for students learning English - especially during those last minutes of class time.

A few months ago, Susan Alyn read an archived news article about a college now being sued because teachers dismissed students from their classes too early. Having taught in a local private college where her adult ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) students looked forward to the last few minutes of class — as that's when she took them to visit different web sites – this Florida teacher decided to create a free online classroom magazine to help other ESOL teachers, by providing them with a meaningful way to utilize every minute of class time with students.

With only limited skills on how to build a web site, Alyn decided to just stick with the standard blog format available from a site popular with bloggers. She researched online to find suitable content to add to her own ideas for this magazine, and was delighted to learn of a company with free content that automatically changes each day, as this aligned with her goals for the new magazine. The result was

InspirationLane.blogspot.com.

"Teachers often feel overwhelmed with demands being made on them in today's world of education, and teaching English to non-English speaking students is very challenging," says Alyn. "Teachers in classrooms with SMART boards or computer stations have additional needs for classroom resources that are online and offer new content daily."

Although technically simple by many standards, Alyn's innovative idea and online classroom magazine web site caught the attention of Texas State University, home to CALICO, the US-based international consortium of professionals involved in education and technology, as well as that of many EFL teachers worldwide seeking inspiration for their classes through the many inspiring activities, exercises, quizzes etc. suggested on the site. Alyn's new web site has already received hits from countries as far away as China and Thailand, as well as from colleges all over the USA.

"The e-mails from teachers have been very positive," said Alyn, who uses a Blogger screen name on the site. "If ESOL teachers in high school and college actually use this new site, and find it to be a big help to them in the classroom, then, my job is done!" Well, not quite done, as Alyn edits the new online magazine monthly for certain sections.
