



THE WORLD IN OUR CLASSROOMS



Winter Newsletter 2026



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President's Message

Welcome to a new year of learning and growing in the ELL world. Our BC TESOL executive is working hard to secure a keynote speaker for our fall 2026 virtual conference, which will occur on October 23rd, 2026. If you know of a keynote speaker you would like to suggest, please feel free to email us at bctesol@bctf.ca. We'd love to hear from you. In the meantime, please check out our professional development funds, our student scholarships, and the potential for a TIP grant below. Also, we would love for you to submit a creative teaching tip we can share with our BC TESOL members.

We hope you had a great holiday and we look forward to the new year with you.

Rebeka Delamorandiere

2025- 2026 BC TESOL Executive

President: Rebeka delaMorandiere

Past President: Liz Seitz

Treasurer: Analisa Feuz Secretary: Debbie Gomes

Members at Large

Karl Dick Kris Hull Jayashree Ramaswami

Becky Nelstead Janis Sawatzky Kiran Abraham



The BC TESOL Virtual Conference in October with Dr. Andrea Honigsfeld was a record breaking success with over 500 attendees!

Dr. Honigsfeld's keynote session followed by two break out sessions were chockful of research based practical ideas and strategies. Her engaging and captivating presentation received the most positive feedback from our membership!

Here are a few nuggets captured from her impactful presentation:

- The importance of collaboration and co-teaching
- The importance of implementing multimodal strategies for content learning
- The importance of always having a student centered, language centered approach in planning academic content



Dr. Andrea Honigsfeld
Molloy University
ahonigsfeld@gmail.com
<https://andreaHonigsfeld.com/>

Language domains extend beyond the traditional understanding of Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing to include Visual Representation



Dr.Honigsfeld emphasized the importance of creating a SWIRLing class where students get to SPEAK, WRITE, INTERACT, READ, and LISTEN!

Link below to:

Free resources, webinars and blogs on her website: [Link](#)

Image of books published by Dr.Honigsfeld: [Link](#)



RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES!

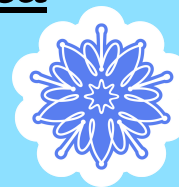


Submissions from educators!

Share your teaching ideas with your BC TESOL colleagues from around the province and get entered for a chance to win a \$50.00 gift card. Give and get in return!

You can submit original ideas/strategies, or an original adaptation of an idea that is of high interest to students, leading to greater engagement, and is effective in your classroom/school environment.

- **Each entry will be 250 words or less**
- **Please cite sources if using websites, podcasts, books, articles, etc. in your submission**
- **Successful entries will be notified by email and the entry will be shared in the next newsletter**
- **Please send submissions to bctesol@bctf.ca**



Scholarship Opportunities!



The Catherine Logan Eddy Scholarship

The Catherine Logan Eddy scholarship has been created to honour one of the long-time ELL educators in British Columbia. Before her retirement, Catherine dedicated more than 25 years to ELL pedagogy and research, working with both ELL learners and their teachers as mentor, advocate and scholar. Catherine Eddy also worked with Sylvia Helmer to co-author *Look at Me When I Talk to You*, as well as other publications which supported and advanced ELL professionalism in the province.

Purpose: To recognize an immigrant student graduating from a BC Secondary School who has combined hard work with school and community involvement, and who wishes to further her/his education/training at a tertiary institution in BC.

Scholarship Amount: \$1, 000.00

Click [here](#) for more information

The Sylvia Helmer Scholarship

The Sylvia Helmer scholarship has been created to honour one of the long-time ELL educators in British Columbia. Before her retirement, Dr. Helmer dedicated more than 25 years to ELL pedagogy and research, working with both ELL learners and their teachers as mentor, advocate, blogger and scholar. Sylvia's contributions to language learning includes years as a highly respected consultant for the Vancouver School District, a UBC professor and an ardent supporter of BC TEAL, ESL PSA, and TESOL. As well, Sylvia Helmer worked with Catherine Eddy to co-author *Look at Me When I Talk to You*.

Purpose: To recognize a refugee student graduating from a BC Secondary School who has combined hard work with school and community involvement, and who wishes to further her/his education/training at a tertiary institution in BC. This student will have started their schooling in BC as a student with refugee status in Canada.

Scholarship amount: \$1, 000.00 Click [here](#) for more information

Congratulations to Ananya Kohli - 2025 Scholarship recipient!

Here is a brief write up from Ananya Kohli:

I am currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts at the University of British Columbia, where I am completing a double major in Psychology and Sociology. My post-secondary journey has been shaped by perseverance, academic curiosity, and the foundational support I received as an English Language Learner. Studying at UBC has challenged me to think critically about human behaviour, social structures, and lived experiences, and my earlier ELL education played a crucial role in preparing me for this level of academic engagement.

When I first entered the Canadian education system, adjusting to academic English presented significant challenges. Understanding complex readings, writing structured essays, and participating confidently in classroom discussions required skills that I was still developing. The ELL program provided me with the tools and support necessary to overcome these barriers. Through focused language instruction, I strengthened my academic vocabulary, grammar, and writing structure, while also learning how to organize arguments, analyze texts, and communicate ideas effectively.

The support of ELL teachers was especially impactful, as they fostered a patient and encouraging learning environment where I felt comfortable asking questions and making mistakes. This helped me build confidence in both written and spoken English. Over time, I became more confident contributing to group discussions, delivering presentations, and engaging in collaborative academic work skills that are essential in psychology and sociology courses, where discussion, research, and analysis are central.

The ELL program not only supported my academic success but also helped me develop resilience and self-confidence. It allowed me to transition successfully into post-secondary education and fully engage in university life. I am deeply grateful for the guidance and encouragement I received through ELL, as it laid the foundation for my studies at UBC and continues to support my academic and personal growth

Congratulations to Ghofran Abdala - 2025 Scholarship recipient!

Here is a brief write up from Ghofran Abdalla:

Being the eldest in a family of five has helped me develop a strong sense of responsibility and a natural tendency to care for others from a young age. Growing up, I often took the initiative to help those around me, even when I only had a small idea of how to do so. This curiosity and willingness to problem-solve led me to develop a strong interest in engineering, which I plan to pursue as my postsecondary major at the University of British Columbia – Okanagan Campus.

Receiving this scholarship would not only support me in achieving my academic and career goals, but it would also play a significant role in fulfilling my parents' dreams. As both of my parents have a high school level education, becoming a first-generation postsecondary student holds deep meaning for both them and me. This motivates me to work even harder and continuously grow into the best version of myself. Additionally, as the eldest sibling, I strive to be a positive role model by demonstrating hard work, resilience, and dedication to my studies. This scholarship would bring my family and me one step closer to turning these aspirations into reality.





BC TESOL Professional Development Fund



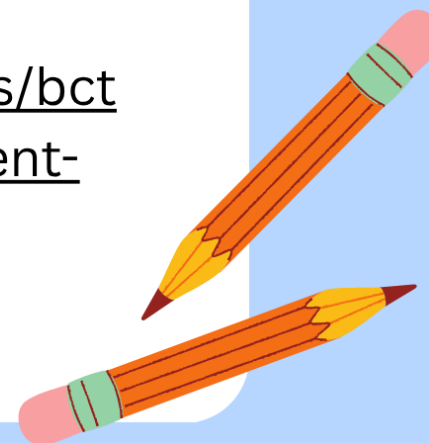
Available in amounts of up to \$250
for BC TESOL PSA members

Can be used towards ELL focused
professional development



Refer to the BC TESOL website for
more information:

<https://bctesol.ca/scholarships/bctesol-professional-development-fund/>





TIP Grant from BCTF

Have you always wondered about working with your colleagues on a pedagogical area of interest? You may want to check out the TIP! The BCTF offers the Teacher Inquiry Program which is a framework for ongoing collaborative professional inquiry and growth with funding support for up to \$7500. Please click on this [link](#) to check out the videos and get more details on the funding application process.

