

BritLit Update

Ron Butlin: Scottish Flair and Warmth

As teachers and students in Funchal, Porto and Coimbra discovered recently, the lilt of the Scots accent wasn't so hard to penetrate once they had tuned into author Ron Butlin's way of rolling his r's and shortening his vowels! Ron presented himself and some of his poetry and stories to over a thousand students in the 5 days that he was in Portugal, and made an equal number of friends while in the country.

The inclusion of Ron into the BritLit project came about as the result of an earlier trip to Spain, where whisky and literature was a focal point of interest. Following his time in Portugal, however, he says that he fully expects characters in his novels or short stories to start drinking glasses of *vinho verde*. We shall see.

He also found time to talk to members of the Porto reading group about his approach to writing. His warm and open discourse charmed all who heard him and we hope he will be able to undertake more BritLit tours across Europe in the near future.

Ron Butlin's latest book is a collection of short stories entitled "No More Angels", and BritLit will be using two of the very short stories as the basis of



two new kits for 2008. Meanwhile, here is a poem from his latest collection, 'Without a Backward Glance':

*Mozart is very clear water
that seems only a few inches deep,
and yet you will never, never
touch the bottom*

*or, you will walk upon the surface
thinking that this is easy
and not the least miraculous.*

Visão Verde and BritLit

Ensino Secundário

A Associação Portuguesa de Professores de Inglês - APPI - apresenta a didactização do poema *My name is litter*, do poeta britânico Levi Tafari, um dos *visiting authors* no âmbito do projecto BritLit, coordenado pelo British Council e a APPI. Levi Tafari tem realizado várias visitas a escolas portuguesas onde tem contactado com alunos e professores de Inglês através de sessões preparadas com o objectivo de perspectivar o ensino e a aprendizagem da língua através da literatura britânica contemporânea.

Download - [My name is litter, de Levi Tafari](#) - autor Octávio Lima

<http://aeiou.visao.pt/portugalverde/default.asp?content=33>

Snow in Portugal in November

The arrival of Snow for a couple of days in Porto and Aveiro at the beginning of November was neither a cause for concern or of putting on warm winter woollies. Accompanied by mum Francesca Beard, young Anais Snow sat in on a meeting of teachers assembled to design new classroom materials for the 2008 performance by Francesca of her show 'Chinese Whispers'. The team, composed of state school, university and British Council teachers, were sharing their ideas on how best to introduce students at various levels to Francesca's quick-paced, provocative and engaging performance which explores issues of identity through language and culture. There will be performances and workshops by Francesca in early April 2008, but there's a lot to prepare. This is a brand new venture by BritLit, and promises to be one of the most exciting things we've done yet. Snow was impressed, and gurgled her appreciation. Watch this space



ELT e-Reading Group Gains Ground

The new international e-reading group for teachers of English continues to grow and now includes teachers all across South America and Africa and is looking to expand even further. The e-reading group meets on-line, of course, and has already had an on-line discussion with BritLit author Romesh Gunesekera. Indeed the project works closely with BritLit and favours the stories and authors we work with. Chris Lima, who works out of Brazil, is the brains behind the project and she would like to hear from anyone who wants to join in.

To find out more, click away at this address:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/arts-literature-creativereading-eltereading.htm>

Finally, they're here!

teaching English

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BRITISH COUNCIL BBC

BritLit
Using literature in the ELT classroom

A Handful of Poems
Poems by Tony Mitton

The four poems in this collection are all by Tony Mitton, and the materials are the first to be designed by BritLit for the age range 9 – 11 year olds. Each collection includes text and audio of the poem as well as learning activities, teachers' notes and visual support.

Downloads

- Audio bank
- Quizzes
- Pronunciation
- Books and notes
- Radio

BritLit
Teaching children

BritLit contents

'Meet The Author' kits

- Ron Butlin
- Melvin Burgess
- Levi Tafari
- Menna Elfyn
- Benjamin Zephaniah
- Romesh Gunsekera

For secondary level

- Ullswater
- Lucky
- Views from Edinburgh
- Whose face do you see?
- Liverpool
- Visiting Time
- Poems on the Metro
- The Curse
- Carapace
- Bend it like Beckham
- A House in the Country
- Fever Pitch
- The Red Rover
- Down by the Cool of the Pool
- Walking through the jungle
- Jack and the Beanstalk
- Old MacDonald had a farm
- Little Red Riding Hood

Robin Hood Rap

- Rap poem - The text of the poem
- Rap poem - Audio file mp3
- Flash cards
 - Robin Hood Story - Power Point (7.1Mb)
- Worksheet 1 - A quiz
- Worksheet 2 - Map of Sherwood Forest
- Worksheet 3 - Rhythm and Rhyme
- Worksheet 4 - Scroll book
- Worksheet 5 - Wordsearch
- Teachers' notes and key

I Wanna Be A Star

- Star poem - The text of the poem
- Star poem - Audio file mp3
- Poem flashcards
- Teachers' notes and key

Key

- Key poem - The text of the poem
- Key poem - Audio file mp3
- Worksheet 1 - Magic Box
- Worksheet 2 - Word Maze
- Worksheet 3 - Formatted poem
- Teachers' notes and key

Arabian Nights

- Arabian Nights poem - The text of the poem
- Arabian Nights poem - Audio file mp3
 - Flashcards - Power Point
- Worksheet 1 - Matching pictures to blanks
- Worksheet 2 - Gapped poem
- Teachers' notes and key

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/download/britlit/mitton/mitton.shtml>

Levi in Italy

Levi Tafari will be visiting schools and British Council centres in Naples (12, 13 December) and Rome (14 December) as part of the BritLit project. For further information check the site <http://www.britishcouncil.org/italy-english-britlit-tafari.htm>



New Additions

The 'Ullswater' kit <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/download/britlit/ullswater/ullswater.shtml> for secondary school has had sound added to it. In recent weeks, author Romesh Gunsekera and poet Lawrence Sail have been recorded reading from their works to add to the texts in the kit. Romesh reads the last part of the story which is the focus of the kit, where the two brothers meet over a glass (or two) of Arrack and hopeless antipathy sets in. Lawrence reads two of his poems which have been added to the kit due to their subject matter, family relationships. Full of darkness and poignancy, both prose and poetry offer a serious addition to the BritLit corpus.

On a different note altogether, the very short story by Louise Cooper, 'Emergency Landing' <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/download/britlit/emergency/emergency.shtml> which is available for younger teens, now has the author reading the story. As usual with Louise's stories, there is a twist in the tale, and the author reads with ironic precision!

Bubbling Away

Work is underway on the two new kits being prepared by teachers from Italy, Spain and Portugal and, it is hoped, they will be completed early in the New Year. One of the kits is another story by Louise Cooper, 'The Wolf's Tale' for younger teens again, and has a very different take on the Little Red Riding Hood story. The other kit is for older teens and looks at issues of immigration and refugees from an unusual angle. 'Loose Change' is by Andrea Levy.

Under Consideration

A story by Melvin Burgess is being considered as suitable material for a new kit, together with the two stories by Ron Butlin mentioned above. Melvin's tale sees a family breakdown through the eyes of an adolescent boy – a device Melvin explores extensively in other stories and novels. The plan is that both the Burgess and Butlin stories will break new ground, and be ready before next Easter. Let's hope so!

*Merry Christmas to everyone from the BritLit team.
Have a well deserved rest and we look forward to
seeing you again in the New Year*

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