

# BritLit Update

## BritLit Brightening Up Classes in Madeira & Barcelona

The 9<sup>th</sup> APPI Seminar in Madeira on the 18 and 19 September might have been called 'Two Days of BritLit' but it wasn't. 'Brighten Up Your English Classes', at ES Jaime Moniz, however, had a very strong BritLit theme, with the opening plenary by Fitch O'Connell making the running, followed by workshops by Graça Valério (APEL) by Ana Lomelino Gomes and Carmo Marques (ES Francisco Franco) as well as a third by Verrí Toste, all addressing the theme of BritLit. The seminar then ended with Verrí's plenary called - wait for it - 'BritLit: The Essential Skill'. (Actually, Verrí informs us that the word 'Reading' was missing before 'The', but we think it looks OK as it is!) Add it up and that comes to 5 sessions on BritLit over two days.



Is the message getting through? It would be hard to imagine that the Madeirense teachers who attended the seminar didn't come away with a pretty good idea of what the project was about, and how it has, in the words of one presenter, 'changed my way teaching'. Naturally all this enthusiasm needs some kind of reward, and we're looking forward to taking author Ron Butlin to the island for a couple of days in November.

Verrí also gave no less than three workshops at the British Council run teachers' seminar in Barcelona on Saturday 29 September where he once again addressed the assembled masses about the efficacious properties of BritLit. Verrí is rapidly becoming BritLit's foremost ambassador and teacher trainer *par excellence* – there are few with his range of experience in the field. Thanks to him and to Graça, Ana and Carmo for their enthusiasm and commitment.

### Changes in Portugal Office

Some of the keener-eyed of you will have noticed that one of the contacts in Portugal has changed. Many of you have got used to being treated so very well by Joana Styliano. With the shifting around of jobs in the grant team, we are regretfully saying farewell to Joana, for the time being, but offer a big welcome to Goreti Coutinho to the BritLit team. Many will know Goreti already from her work in the library in Porto.

### A Sticky End

Alas, the posters planned for the European Day of Languages on September 26 didn't appear on the Metro trains as planned due to the wrong kind of glue. Yes, glue! Reminiscent of British Rail's problems with 'the wrong kind of snow' and 'leaves on the line', Porto Metro found that the glue that had stuck three years of Poems on the Metro successfully onto the walls of its carriages was no longer suitable. At least all the schools who asked for the posters got them up on their walls on time!

## Talking Smoothly in Madrid.....

The British Council staff who make BritLit happen in three countries in Western Europe – Italy, Spain and Portugal – met to discuss a wider strategy in Madrid during September, and came up with a master plan to conquer the world! Ambitious perhaps, but BritLit has already made inroads to the international market with users of the

materials coming from every corner of the world. (Recent correspondence with users has shown that some English teachers in French Polynesia in the Pacific have not only enjoyed working with the materials, but have also been teaching some of their students some Portuguese using the kits – now there's something we hadn't thought of!)

## .....But Stuttering in London

Less forthcoming negotiations went on in London during the week following the Madrid meetings, and none of us are quite sure at the moment where BritLit goes next. Anxious times are ahead and if some of you notice a slight trimming of our sails over the next few

weeks then please bear with us as we adjust course and attempt to bring us into more prosperous waters. Hopefully, if you'll forgive the mixed metaphor, normal service will be resumed as soon as possible.

## Romesh is Chatted Up

Members of the ELT e-reading group had a chat with BritLit author Romesh Gunesequera on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September as part of their reading of his short stories 'Ullswater' and 'The House in the Country'. Both stories feature as BritLit kits and it was for this reason that they were chosen as the starting point for the e-reading group. The chat was moderated by the nice people from Encompass Culture project in London, and was a successful way to generate interest and enthusiasm.

If you haven't yet joined the ELT e-reading group or would like further information, then drop Chris Lima at [chrislima90@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:chrislima90@yahoo.co.uk) a line. She'll be pleased to hear from you.

Meanwhile, the good people in Uzbekistan were so impressed they want to invite him to help them start their own on-line reading groups. What a busy man he has become due to the BritLit connection.

## October dates

It's not a packed calendar for events in October, which is just as well as most of you are far too busy at school at the beginning of the new year. However, Francesca Beard will be in Portugal for a preliminary visit for Chinese Whispers, and Lawrence Sail will be in Madrid for an important event at Alcalá. For those who remember the highly entertaining Attila the Stockbroker AND you happen to be in the UK in October then check out his UK tour this month on [www.attilathestockbroker.com](http://www.attilathestockbroker.com)



### BritLit Italy:

[ellen.darling@britishcouncil.it](mailto:ellen.darling@britishcouncil.it)  
[alison.ball@britishcouncil.it](mailto:alison.ball@britishcouncil.it)

### BritLit Portugal:

[fitch.oconnell@pt.britishcouncil.org](mailto:fitch.oconnell@pt.britishcouncil.org)  
[goreti.coutinho@pt.britishcouncil.org](mailto:goreti.coutinho@pt.britishcouncil.org)

### BritLit Spain:

[isabel.fernandez@britishcouncil.es](mailto:isabel.fernandez@britishcouncil.es)  
[mark.levy@britishcouncil.es](mailto:mark.levy@britishcouncil.es)