

## **INLT Story**

What is this, can you eat it ...??

### **Recipe:**

This is a great recipe for a light digestible and flavoursome paper. The preparation will be as enjoyable as the consumption.

#### **Ingredients:**

Take

one Tamarillo,

one Kiwi,

one Englishman,

one Scotsman,

one Polish-American flavour.

Generous amounts of coffee, tea, sweets and water.

If you want to be more adventurous you should seek additional 'ethnic' ingredients.

#### **Method:**

Soak the Kiwi, Englishman, Scotsman, and the Polish-American in good ideas and some literature for a few months. If possible mix with ideas an Australian and a Canadian. They are best cooked together but you can remove these before preparing.

Soften them up with a week's conference and mix them together over a weekend.

In an ideal situation mix them with various other ingredients and ideas.

Add generous tea and coffee. Add a little Aussie Rules Football for flavour.

Re-introduce the Australian and Canadian thinking and leave standing for six to eight weeks and publish the paper.

Best served hot off the press!

### **Alternative**

There was an Englishman, a Scotsman, a Kiwi and a Polish-American who were attending a writing workshop. They were asked to write a paper.

Kenny Lynch

## **Brisbane Haiku**

### What was good?

- Looking out at the view from a windowless room
- Cake
- Camarderie
- People talking same language/like minded
- Graduate participation

### What has amazed me?

- Flurry of laptops
- Complete reinvention of papers
- Great venue
- Focus and enthusiasm of participants

### What was great?

- Pauline typing while asleep
- Comments from other groups in writing process
- Meeting new people
- Making connections face to face with those already known
- Reviewing links with old
- Being exposed to new ways of dealing with diversity that can be put into practice
- Reframing old ideas and broadening perspectives

### What was disappointing?

- Can not do this more often
- International representation - bit restricted

## **“Divided by a Common Language”**

Perhaps this short tale would begin during Ian Hay’s keynote at the last day of the IGU Congress, Friday. During his talk, he made frequent reference to the “Anglo-American-Australasian axis” of core membership of the INLT. I had never quite thought of this grouping as what geographers might call a “functional region” before – but the significance of this dominance in terms of geography education became clarified for me over the ensuing weekend.

From the outset, I was confused by the term “Australasia” which (as an American), I had previously taken to mean Australia, NZ, the Southeast Asian and Pacific Islands countries and their increasing economic/cultural ties. But that connotation made no sense, given the way folks from Australia and NZ actually used the term (e.g., one cannot speak of Australasia in this way as a core/dominant group in geography education, since there were (for instance) no representatives from PNG, Fiji, Indonesia, etc on INLT. So I asked several Australians and Kiwis about the term and received a general consensus that, indeed, it referred only to their countries and not the lesser-developed neighbours in the region.

So, a new term for me, and a new example of “core” and “periphery” to use in my own teaching – in this case the functional core of international geography education that needs to reach out to the “non-AAA” periphery to fully justify its claim to be “International” Network of Learning and Teaching Geography. Indeed that we all recognise the acronym “AAA” signifies the importance of the idea.

Beyond that trivial bit, however, I was struck this weekend that there are significant differences within this AAA axis. Not only the multiplicity of accents of spoken English to revel in, and not only different spellings of English words. More critically are the different experiences and realities we live and work in, educationally and in terms of how our discipline thrives (or does not) in our respective countries.

So, while it is vital for INLT to reach out to the “non-AAA”, it is also clear that we have much to learn and share from each other, within this axis, so that I believe that INLT has important roles to play in improving what we do in geography education regardless of the ultimate success of the goal of enlarging its membership.

And, oh yes, the football game was a major highlight!

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I came to the INLT symposium expected to contribute to discussions on a topic about which I knew very little. I soon discovered that my fellow-discussants were generally in a rather similar situation. Briefly I looked into the abyss and saw the prospect of a TGHE paper of exceptional brevity – perhaps the shortest on record – well short of the expected 5000 words. Through conversation, however, together we began to appreciate that collectively we had more experience and understanding of the topic than we had originally imagined. The ideas began to flow and soon turned from a trickle into a torrent. Each participant's experience was different and thereby added real volume and extra breadth and depth.

I desire the conclusions from this experience. The first is the power of conversation between geographers from different traditions and parts of the world. The second is that and simply through the process of thinking, we can bring to the surface knowledge and understanding which were previously buried from view. This is the power of the INLT. 5000 words may not be enough.

Brian Chalkley

This is my first INLT gathering and my first experience of working in an international team with people I had not previously met. It was with a sense of isolation that I fired off emails into cyberspace in the hope of connecting with team members. The ground work for the paper was rather patchy, with uneven participation and contributions not always on the same wavelength. However, I was reassured by the organisers that this was entirely normal so I ploughed on.

I have to say the meeting here in Brisbane has been a refreshing contrast to those earlier awkward correspondences. What a pleasure to take time out to work with other geographers who are passionate about teaching and learning. The two days here have been used very productively to thrash out ideas and gain consensus on the focus and shape of the paper. How often does one get to sit in a room filled with 30-odd geographers with such a vested interest in teaching and learning. Thus I have enjoyed this INLT workshop and feel we have made excellent progress on the paper. I now have a better understanding of the INLT process and feel much better equipped for future sessions, if I am able to attend. Thanks particularly to Eric and Mick for keeping us on task and setting up this stimulating environment.

Why have I always felt stuffed, but intellectually invigorated, at the end of INLT workshops, having been to four events?

I learnt at the Brisbane workshop that INLT is a community of geography post-graduate students and staff engaging ethically in active, collaborative and community behaviours to develop effective inquiry based learning to contribute to geography and inter disciplinarity.

INLT means Individual Narcisstic Learning Therapy

Richard Le Heron

It's nice to show up for a meeting and see the faces of many colleagues whom I very much enjoy. Knowing and working with, and it's heart warming to meet others for the first time that I know I'll continue communicating with in the coming years. INLT has proved to be a wonderful network for sharing ideas and resources, but it's also a living testament to the power of believing strongly in an idea – that international collaboration is important and can lead to professional and personal enrichment. All weekend long, I've had constructive discussions with members of my project group as well as with other groups, whether at a breakfast table or at "The Gabba" to watch Aussie Rules Football.

Michael Solem

Thank you to all involved in the important work of INLT geography network! I have very much valued the opportunity over the last two days to reconnect with people who I met in Glasgow at the INLT two years ago as well as to network with new colleagues. It is wonderfully fulfilling for me to connect and reconnect with people who share my interest in, if not passion for, geography and learning, and the juxtaposition between these.

I find great value in these international collaborative projects, as I see many of the activities that we engage in as encompassing what we are attempting to develop in our students. I have purposefully decided to engage in topics that are less central to my former geography learning experience to foster personal growth and learning.

I think that the physical meeting of colleagues in a shared space and time, characterised by an intense two-day workshop of thinking, reflecting, collaborating and celebrating the diversity of experience and approaches, to effective methods of teaching and learning is fundamental to the success of our projects. I think that the cross-fertilisation among projects, teams and papers is also very important in gaining broad and realistic perspectives and in mimicking the reality of the landscapes of geography learning throughout the globe – although the dominance of ‘western’ experience concerns me. Each member has valuable ideas to contribute and I hope that we all ‘learn’ and that our ideas are disseminated to others through paper publication and conversation.

Julie Trafford

Moment of eye opening discovering what meanings and practices lay behind phrases commonly used in different cultures e.g. service learning, word based learning. Through explaining out and unpacking these terms to each other we (I) realised that:

- a) We (I) had no idea what each term meant to the other but had been assigning our (my) own cultural meanings
- b) That each country does / approaches things very differently even though it may appear similar at onset.

This was a productive moment for me.

Erena Le Heron

At the INLT workshop in Brisbane I was reminded that I still had a lot to learn about teaching and learning. During one feedback session, the facilitator suggested something different: instead of a group delegate standing up the front and telling everyone in the room about their paper, each group was asked to provide an outline of their paper on a large piece of paper and state their key findings, then everyone would walk around the room commenting on and discussing other groups' ideas. This allowed more people to have a say about the ideas of each group, it was more interactive, and it introduced variety to the workshop. I now have another 'tool' to use in class with my students.