

# Ken Wilson

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## Author / Trainer

### About the speaker

Ken Wilson is an author and trainer. He has written about thirty ELT titles, including a dozen series of course books. His most recent course material includes *Smart Choice*, a four-level American English course for OUP. He also writes supplementary material, including sketches and songs. In 2008, OUP published *Drama and Improvisation*, a collection of more than sixty of his drama activities for teachers.

His first ELT publication was a collection of language teaching songs called *Mister Monday*, which was released when he was 23. Since then, he has written and recorded more than 150 ELT songs, published as albums or as integral parts of course material. He has also written more than a hundred ELT radio and television programs, including fifty radio scripts for the BBC *Follow Me* series, thirty *Look Ahead* TV scripts, and a series of plays called *Drama First*. His most ambitious audio material is a series of ghost and voodoo stories he wrote for Max Hueber Verlag in Germany. For many years, Ken was artistic director and sketch writer for the English Teaching Theatre, a company which toured the world performing stage-shows for learners of English. The ETT made more than 250 tours to 55 countries.

Ken lives in London with his wife and three cats, and writes books in a shed at the end of his garden. He blogs and tweets, and spends too much time on Facebook. Ken blogs at <http://kenwilsoneltwordpress.com>

### About the presentation

#### *Ten Quotations to Make You Think*

Teachers often quote the words of wise folk to support their ideas and opinions, usually from within the world of education. I find it useful to go outside our specialized world for words of wisdom that can genuinely make us all think about how we teach. When you reflect on quotations like these, they often prove to have more meaning that you originally thought.

For example, Mark Twain: I never let my schooling interfere with my education. A mildly amusing remark, but if we take it seriously for a moment, what does it tell us? Probably that Mark Twain was a bright, imaginative student who wasn't well served by the delivery style of education that was normal in his day. You can imagine him questioning his teachers, and either being told to shut up or being punished for insubordination.

What is the message for teachers today? Are we delivering too much information? Can we assert less control over proceedings in class and let the students use their imagination more?

Albert Einstein: Imagination is more important than knowledge. Students all know where they are in the class "pecking order" she's better than me, he's not as good as me. This pecking order is based on the ability to deal with the teacher's presentation style and the practice material in the book. For me, Einstein's quote means that if you bring student imagination and creativity into the equation, this knowledge-based pecking order stops being so dominant.

These are two of the ten examples that I will use in my talk, all with the aim of making people think.