



# Workshop for November 2014

## Seoul-KOTESOL Chapter

**FREE ADMISSION!**

**Topic: "Write In a Flash: Using Short Memoir and Short Fiction in Teaching ESL Composition"** by Dr. Miles White

**Date/Time:** November 22<sup>nd</sup> (Saturday, 3-5PM)

**Venue:** Rm. 105, Injaegwan, Sookmyung Women's University, Seoul, South Korea

**Workshop Coordinator:** Dr. Ian Done D. Ramos / [workshop@seoulkotesol.org](mailto:workshop@seoulkotesol.org)

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### Abstract

Of all the language acquisition skills involved in the ESL classroom – reading, writing, speaking and listening – perhaps the most difficult skill to teach students to do well at is writing. It is a skill that even many American university students struggle to do well. It is the most challenging and perhaps the most frightening of the four ESL skills next to public speaking. However, whereas some mistakes in speaking can be forgiven, writing tends to be a fairly unforgiving endeavor. In producing a piece of writing – whether for class papers, academic publications or emails – errors of grammar, syntax, tense and spelling get noticed and frowned upon in a way that would probably be forgiven easier if an ESL learner were just speaking. Writing is an exacting form merciless master. People tend to make judgments about things such as intelligence and ability by scrutinizing writing – thus the emphasis placed on college writing applications.

I have begun experimenting with a handful of tools to get Korean students to approach writing in an interesting way, including the use “flash” – a very short form of writing that can range from six to 1,000 words. In particular I am working with Six-Word Memoir, one-page Flash Memoir and one-page Flash Fiction that ranges around 800 words. In addition to these forms I explain brainstorming techniques and how to construct good papers from top to bottom, beginning with a clear title and introduction and working towards a satisfying conclusion. I suspect that writing may not be given sufficient emphasis in the teaching of foreign language acquisition because it is a difficult skill to teach, especially for non-native speaking ESL instructors but even for ESL instructors who have not specifically taught writing. Yet it can be approached by using a student's own personal background (memoir) and their ability to engage the human imagination (fiction). In the workshop I will cover a number of techniques I use and teachers will produce several pieces of short writing in order to learn how to use these tools with students.

### Biography

Dr. Miles White is from the United States and is the author of the book *From Jim Crow to Jay-Z: Race, Rap and the Performance of Masculinity in American Popular Culture*, a study of gender and racial performance within the context of American hip hop music culture, published in 2011 by University of Illinois Press. In 2014 Dr. White published the first three books in a flash fiction collection entitled *The Canvas Sextet*; the remaining three books in the series are due in 2015. Short stories from the series appear on his blog [thecanvassextet.com](http://thecanvassextet.com) and on a number of other online writing sites including Medium.com,

Readwave.com, and the Tahoma Literary Review.

Dr. White received his Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of Washington and his Bachelor of Arts degree from the Colorado College, both in the United States. As a newspaper journalist he has written or edited for half a dozen American newspapers including USA Today. He has presented conference papers in Canada, Poland, France, the Czech Republic and the United States and has taught at the University of Washington in Seattle, the Colorado College at Colorado Springs, Charles University in Prague, Bilgi University in Istanbul, and spent five years as a writing instructor at City University of Seattle in Slovakia. His writing has appeared in many academic books and journals. His essay *The White Negro Gone Mad* is forthcoming in December by McFarland in the edited book collection *Eminem and Rap, Poetry, Race: Essays*. He is currently an Assistant Professor on the English faculty at Gyeongju University, South Korea.

Direction of venue

