

## New Year's Resolutions for English Language Teachers

Compiled by [Tomiko Breland](#)

It is believed that the practice of setting New Year's resolutions began some 4,000 years ago, with the ancient Babylonians. At the beginning of the year, they would make promises to their gods in order to have good favor bestowed on them for the rest of the year. Today, people the world over make New Year's resolutions to better themselves in some way, personally or professionally; English language educators are no exception.

Here are just a few of the 2014 New Year's resolutions set by members of TESOL International Association with the hopes of pursuing excellence in English language education. What will your New Year's resolution be this year?

### I resolve...

"...to spend more time with students to get to know them as people rather than as numbers."

*Sarah McGregor, San Jose State University, California USA*

"...to commit myself to creating a learning environment that favors reflective practices and teacher autonomy. In 2014, I would like to support professional development through the creation of a teachers' association to promote teacher autonomy and to encourage research-based activities within the teaching community."

*Vino Sarah Reardon, CFS, University of Buraimi, Oman*

"...to focus more on the students instead of the final outcome. As a teacher, I want to push my students to a higher proficiency level, but oftentimes I forget that I am teaching students who have emotions and needs. I will be patient, and I will let them know that I am there to help them."

*Judy Ma, Brigham Young University, Utah USA*

"...to sing more with my students. Music can give us courage to stand up to injustice. It can help us as TESOL educators to link teaching English with social responsibility. As we witnessed in the tributes to Nelson Mandela, the South African freedom songs inspired people around the world to get involved in the movement against apartheid. A song can lift our spirits. In the language classroom, singing can help students who are tongue-tied and self-conscious. Music can energize students and teachers alike—especially those who have all worked long hours before coming to class! Music is a great motivator."

*Shelley Wong, George Mason University, Virginia USA*

"...to cull through 20 years of resources and handouts. Then, define and use a more efficient and organized method to store teaching resources."

*Cristin Boyd, San Jose State University, California USA*

“...to continue to help all teachers understand that English learners can respond to higher-order thinking questions no matter what English language development (ELD) level. We, as teachers, can be more creative in our approach to facilitating learning for all learners.”

*Judith B. O'Loughlin, CATESOL Education Foundation, USA*

“...to flip my class in the new year, making use of my university Moodle in addition to teachem and showme. This idea will help my students regulate their learning.”

*Mohamed EL Zamil, Ajman University of Science & Technology, UAE*

“...to use more student-centered teaching methods in the New Year. I am already to increase student involvement by requiring several projects throughout the semester and as a final exam in my oral English classes. With classes averaging about 50 students, team work will be needed.”

*Gayla Baker, Hangzhou Polytechnic College, Zhejiang Province, PRC*

“...to enjoy teaching more by stressing about it less.”

*Sarah Jackson, San Jose State University, California USA*