

## TITLE

How to Use Storypal, a Free Pen Pal Platform, to Motivate ESL to Practice Writing

**DESCRIPTION** This workshop is a jumpstart introduction to Storypal for teachers looking for ways to boost ESL students' motivation in practicing writing. Many ESL teachers around the world are leveraging the digital era to help their students immediately see the practical and authentic reason for learning the global language. Having a pen pal friend triggers an intrinsic motivation in young learners to express themselves in the target language while making them become more aware of different cultures.

However, planning and managing pen pal exchanges can be daunting. Storypal is a free pen pal platform that helps teachers reduce foundational workloads and create safe, fun and easy classroom pen pal experience for themselves and students.

The workshop will first, briefly cover how to set up a class and get connected with partner teachers on Storypal. Second, the workshop will highlight tools available for proofreading and monitoring letter exchange status. We will share case studies of pen pal exchanges on Storypal including the on-going research on exchanges between elementary school students in Busan who are learning English and elementary school students in San Francisco who are learning Korean.

## CO-PRESENTERS

### **Heehwa Choi**, Co-founder, CEO of Storypal

Heehwa Choi is a co-founder and CEO of Storypal. As a member of Storypal, she creates opportunity for young students to make international connections regardless of their socio-economic background. In 2012 and 2013, without visiting Kenya herself, by collaborating with Kenyan friends on the internet, she helped Korean and Kenyan elementary school students create creative stories and publish them into books. In order to create a platform that specializes in global education collaboration, she taught herself how to code ruby on rails web applications and created storypal.co. She studied and worked in U.S.A. and Switzerland. She graduated from Smith Collage with a B.A. in Government and Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology with Social Enterprise MBA. She speaks Korean and English fluently and is learning French and Chinese. In her free time, she enjoys exercising, reading, browsing through interior designs, traveling and spending time with family and friends.

### **Musa Dan Karami**, CBDMO of Storypal

Musa Dan Karami is Chief Business Development and Marketing Officer of Storypal. He helps teachers around the world connect for global collaboration. When he was a teen ager, he started his first business importing bicycle parts from a neighboring country and providing ice cubes to less affluent neighbors. With his warm yet charismatic nature, he is also a highly sought after professional speaker and community leader. Originally born in Niger, his latest community leadership roles include the chairman of Kenyan community in Korea. His academic carriers took place in Niger, Kenya and South Korea including a master's degree in international relations from Pukyong University. In his free time, he enjoys exercising, reading, learning a new language, traveling and spending time with family and friends. He likes making reference to Einstein's quote "imagination is more important than knowledge," and believes that many valuable things seem impossible until it is done.