

## *Faces—Characters in Search of Authors*

### **Review by Dana Kampman**

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*Faces—Characters in Search of Authors*. Patrick R. Moran. 2008. Brattleboro: Pro Lingua Associates. ISB 13:978-0-86647-277-7; ISBN10:0-86647-277-0. (Photocopyable Resource), 116 pp. \$22.00

Have you ever seen someone intriguing and wondered, “Hmm, what’s her story?” The book *Faces—Characters in Search of Authors* gives you and your students the chance to stare unabashedly, ignite your imagination, find your words, and create one of a kind characters and stories. Patrick Moran has compiled a book of 50 faces waiting to be brought to life. The fifty hand drawn faces equally represent gender and five age groups. The faces intentionally lack detail. They are visually appealing yet void of color, makeup, jewelry, and facial expressions. The illustrations purposefully offer no hints at identity, nationality or cultural affiliation, thus allowing for endless possibilities and ultimate learning.

In the Teacher’s Guide, which is part of the book, Moran describes classroom activities that allow students to use language to bring the 50 faces to life. The Teacher’s Guide is divided into eight organized sections from “Creating the Character” to finally creating a “Cultural Identity.” Each section is packed with practical ideas for the classroom. The activities emphasize imagination and play while offering opportunities for learning languages and exploring cultures. Student authors partake in dialogues, discussions, and role-plays not as themselves but as a fictionalized character. This may lower inhibitions and create a relaxed playful environment for learners to engage with the material. From initially creating a brief biography of a person to debating topics, student authors are taken on a journey that allows them to build rich characters and extensive vocabulary and language. Furthermore, teachers are supported by Moran’s concrete illustrations of student work. The examples help the teachers carry out the suggested activities by visualizing the final products.

Moran had teachers and language learners in mind when creating this easy to use, versatile book. The book focuses on all four skills, is adaptable to all levels and languages, and elicits student-generated material while blending language and culture learning in a fun interactive way. *Faces—Characters in Search of Authors* is not meant to be a one-off activity. The faces are meant to be vehicles that precipitate a wealth of learning

opportunities. Moran has packed an incredible amount of language learning opportunities into his drawings of 50 faces. *Faces—Characters in Search of Authors* offers endless classroom possibilities for language learning and culture exploring.

### **About the Reviewer**

*Dana Kampman is currently teaching girls at Al Yamamah University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. She has her MA in TESOL from SIT (School of International Training).. Dana loves people watching.*