

# The Identification of Irrelevant Lexical Distracters: An Apology

"The Identification of Irrelevant Lexical Distraction: An Editing Task" by J. Donald Bowen (TESL Reporter, Fall 1978) was printed with a number of errors for which the editors apologize. Please make the following corrections in any filed copies:

The title should read, "The Identification of Irrelevant Lexical Distracters: An Editing Task."

In addition, several typographical errors were not corrected before the issue was printed:

- p. 2, col. 1, line 35, "trees" should read "trees"
- p. 2, col. 2, line 42, "over" should read "overt"
- p. 2, col. 2, line 49, "on" should read "of"
- p. 3, col. 2, line 9, "GC" should read "GR"
- p. 3, col. 2, between lines 13 and 14 insert "total for the subtest scores. AC is the equated"
- p. 3, Table 1, line 2, "13.48" should read "13.48\*"
- p. 14, line 1, "Distraction" should read "Distracters"
- p. 15, The following words should be italicized (line numbers are indicated in parentheses): represented (6), expected (8), considered (10), imitate (12), mention (13), interesting (14), flew (17), number (19), Above (22), Find (23), presence (24).

A significant portion of the article—an appendix which contained a copy of the Editing Test—was also inadvertently omitted. It is reproduced below:

## Appendix A

### Editing Test\*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** In the following passage, unnecessary words have been added to the text. Find them and cross them out. For example:

Have you eaten ~~trees~~ your dinner yet?

The word 'trees' is unnecessary (and incorrect) and is therefore crossed out. There are forty unnecessary words to be crossed out. The test will be timed, so work fast. Stop when you are told to stop.

It was probably around 3,000 years ago that people first began *through* making things to help them measure the passage of time. Having observed that shadows move *medial* around trees as the sun moves across the *continued* sky, someone drew a circle and put a stick *next* in the center. As the sun passed overhead, he *flew* marked even divisions on the circle as the shadow of the stick crossed it *presence*. Then people could tell which part of the day *represented* it was by noticing which mark on the circle the *after* shadow fell across. These circles were called "sundials." Later, they were made *referred* of stone and metal to last longer.

Of course, a sundial *as* did not work at night or on cloudy days, so men *expected* kept inventing other ways to keep track of time. One *point* invention was a striped candle. Each *weak* stripe melted in about an hour; about three hours would have passed *drill* when three stripes melted.

A water clock was another *of* way to tell time. A container had a line with a number beside it for every *case* hour. It also had a tiny hole in the bottom. The container was *meaningful* filled with water that dripped through the hole. When *dot* the water level reached the first line, people knew that an hour had passed. Each time *column* the water level fell to another line, one more hour passed.

Candles and water *opposites* clocks helped people know how much time had gone by, but *after* candles had to be remade, and water clocks had *number* to be refilled. So after glass blowing was invented, the hourglass *elements* came into use. Glass bulbs were joined by a narrow tunnel of

(continued on page 16)

\*In this illustrative form, items for deletion are marked to facilitate discussion.

In an actual test form they are of course not italicized.

**THE IDENTIFICATION OF  
IRRELEVANT LEXICAL DISTRACTERS:  
AN APOLOGY**

*(continued from page 11)*

one glass, and fine, dry sand *given* was placed in the top bulb. The hourglass was easy *these* to use, but it had to be turned over every hour so the sand could flow again.

*Above* it was about 600 years ago that the first *and* clock with a face and an hour hand was *imitate* made. One of the first such clocks was *which* built for a king of France and placed in a tower of the royal palace. The *mention* clock did not show minutes or seconds. Usually it *considered* did not even show the correct hour! Since there were no planes or trains to *interesting* catch, however, people were not concerned about knowing the *easily* exact time. Gradually, clocks began to be popular. Find they still did not keep correct time, but they were unusual, and the *common* could be beautifully decorated. One clock was in the shape *before* of the a cart with a horse and driver. One of the wheels *longer* was the face of the clock.

Watches came into use as soon as *shortening* clocks were made small enough to be carried. These did not tell the correct *follow* time, either.