

## Braden Renner – Teaching In Thailand Report, October 2014

I was living in Kelowna, British Columbia, Canada going to school and working full-time trying to pay off student loans. Graduation was fast approaching and for lack of a better word I felt uninspired, more so than I have ever been before. I needed a change, I didn't have a concrete plan after college and I knew I didn't want to stay in my current profession. I desperately needed a change of scenery; my life was beginning to stagnate. At the insistence of my girlfriend I signed up for a TESOL course put on by Oxford Seminars at the local university, with the promise to her that if I enjoyed it I would entertain the idea of teaching overseas.

I will start by saying that I really did enjoy the Oxford Seminars course, the instructors were knowledgeable, experienced, and offered a very good insight into what it would be like teaching overseas. Overall it got me excited enough to take the leap and engage the "Placement Services" provided by Oxford Seminars. Unfortunately however Oxford Seminars let itself down as a company by the misrepresentation of certain facts to me.



The silver lining and best thing Oxford Seminars did for me was to put me in touch with Philip at [www.EnglishCampsThailand.com](http://www.EnglishCampsThailand.com). In fact Oxford put most of what they guaranteed on Philip's shoulders to fulfill. I must hold the record (or damn near close) for most email inquiries ever, as I emailed back and forth with Philip for nearly two months before committing to teaching in Thailand. After finally making that commitment I attended an English Camps Thailand 4-day Professional teacher development and Thai cultural immersion and orientation seminar in Thailand in April, 2014. I learned more in 4 days than I did in the whole 100 hours with Oxford Seminars. While Oxford Seminars gave me a basic generalization of what was

required for teaching overseas, Philip and his staff taught me the teaching methodologies and skills that have proved personally to be necessary and indispensable for teaching specifically in Thailand. From a solid exposure and grounding in Thai culture to ISM lesson planning to more specific and detailed tools such as the T-BAAN acronym (take the course and you will understand) and hands on teaching practice sessions I gained all the theoretical and practical knowledge to adapt and teach effectively and with confidence in Thailand.



Immediately after completing the April, 2014 orientation seminar I was placed by English Camps Thailand in an absolute dream job and I am teaching in an all boys' government high school. While the words "all boys" and "high school" together might scare many people, I assure you it's been incredible thus far. I teach M1-M5 (grades 6-11) and to be honest, while there are some days the boys can be more difficult I wouldn't trade them for any other class.

I have just completed my first term and I am in awe, of the school I teach at, the country I am living in, and the change I have gone through. I am inspired for the first time in a very long time.



Philip and Kwang's, (English Camps Thailand's Placement Director) continuous help and support have been essential during my transition into living and teaching in Thailand, I wouldn't be here without them. I had some visa issues because of a missing documents and Philip was the only person I could get hold of and he went beyond the call of duty and got me the necessary documents from another company in time. Philip and Kwang still to this day make themselves available 24/7 for any inquires or problems I have and they go way above what should be required of them.



Listen, anyone can rent a classroom at your local university and run a TEFL or TESOL course but my advice would be to avoid such companies, save yourself a headache, and save yourself some cash by going with a reputable company, like English Camps Thailand, that actually cares about you, listens to your needs, over delivers on its promises and operates within the territories where you want to go. Take the road less travelled, you won't regret it.

**Cheers,**  
**Braden Renner**  
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