



ESL 2023

VOICES

Writings, Poems and Essays
by Students of English as a
Second Language

**Cuyahoga
Community
College**



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BACKGROUND AND MISSION

In 1991, Mara Hegedeos, Assistant Professor of English/English as a Second Language, collected ESL student essays college-wide and put them under one cover. Thus ESL Voices was born. Since that time, the mantle has been taken up by faculty from the different campuses, with heroic efforts to secure funding in the earlier years. We do appreciate the efforts of all those editorial teams, and we especially appreciate the current administration's support – both moral and financial – of the publication of this edition of ESL Voices.

ESL Voices showcases the writing of our international, immigrant, and citizen English-language students and recognizes two important facts: the ability to write well is hard work, and the ability to write well in a second language is twice that. Through ESL Voices, Cuyahoga Community College acknowledges the achievements of its ESL students and motivates continued writing improvement.

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Alyssa is beginning her final year at Cuyahoga Community College. Upon graduation, she will have earned her Associate of Applied Business in Graphic Design and a Certificate in Web Design and Development. Alyssa's portfolio has a strong emphasis on typography and package design. Her goal as a designer is to help small businesses with full-scale brand continuity across multi-media platforms. She also enjoys designing posters and event graphics for her husband's band, *The Chewy Center*.

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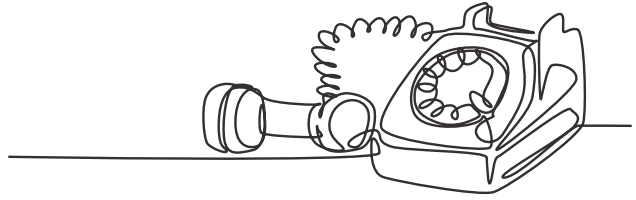
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AROUND THE TABLE

UKRAINIAN BORSCHT

Yuliia Prykhodko

Ukraine, Level 1

Ukrainian borscht is very healthy. My family loves borscht was taught to me by my mother. It is our family's favorite soup.

7 cup - water

300g meat

5 carrots

8 potatoes

1 cabbage

2 beetroots

2 onions

1 spoon sour cream

3 spoons salt

1 spoon cream soup

Method

First, cut the meat into pieces and fill it with water, the meat is cooked until tender. Then, cut potatoes, cabbage, carrots add put all ingredients to the meat. Second, cut beetroot and onions, and stew in a frying pan, and then add salt. Later, when everything is ready, add beetroot and onion in control and cook for 20 minutes. Finally, put a spoonful of sour cream in each bowl of borscht. Bon appetit!

CUTE PINK CAKE

Rana Samaan

Syria, Level 1

"Cute Cake," I love pink color and I love all the pink stuff. So, I'm going to tell anyone who loves pink color about my delicious cake.

Ingredients:

1-pound Fresh Strawberries (rinsed and hulled)

1 cup cake flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

Half teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon salt

1 and half cups Unsalted Butter

1 cup Granulated Sugar

5 large egg whites

Half cup of sour cream

3 teaspoons Pure Vanilla Extract

Half cup of Reduced Strawberry Puree

2 drops pink food coloring

1 cup Freeze-Dried Strawberries

1 ounce (about 29.57 ml) block Full-Fat Cream Cheese

First put the fresh strawberries, flour and baking powder in the blender. Then put baking soda, salt, butter, salt, Granulated sugar and the eggs and mix them. After that, add sour cream, vanilla, milk and Reduced strawberry puree and mix them up. Finally, add pink food coloring, freeze-Dried Strawberries and Full-Fat Cream Cheese and then mix them too. Next, put them in the large bowl and then put them in the oven at 375 degrees. Don't open the oven until you have finished baking. Take it off and set the cake aside until it gets cold, and you can decorate it, Enjoy.

FAMILY RECIPE FOR BORSCHT

Veronika Goliney

Ukraine, Level 1

All women in my family know how to cook borscht, but everyone cooks it according to their own recipe. I adored the borscht prepared by my grandmother. So, I want to describe how she cooked it and now I cook it.

Ingredients

2 smoked veal ribs

2 liters of water

7 potatoes

1 onion

2 tomatoes

2 carrots

2 beetroots

2 tablespoons tomato paste

half of a cabbage

300 grams (about 10.58 oz) of cannellini beans

2 cloves of garlic

1 tablespoon salt

1 teaspoon parsley

Instructions

First, you need to put ribs in water to boil on high heat. Then, add potato. Chop the onion and tomatoes. After that, grate the carrots and beetroots. Fry the onion for about 3 minutes, then add carrots, beetroots and tomatoes. Fry everything together for 10 minutes. Wait for the water to boil and add fried vegetables to the ribs. After that, chop and add the cabbage. Then, add the beans and garlic. Add salt and parsley at the end. Cook for 10 minutes.

MANSAF

Esraa Alfalahat

Jordan, Level 1

Mansaf is a traditional Jordanian dish, it's served on big occasions like weddings, consolation of and big family gatherings. It's consumed in any way, like hand or spoons. All Jordanians like this dish. It's very delicious and I want to share this recipe to show my culture to others.

This dish made of some Ingredients like:

2 Kg of lamb meats

4 Cups of water for meat

1 onion

½ Kg of rice

4 Cups of water for rice

½ Cup oil

2 Liters of yogurt called "Jameed"

1 Cup of nuts like pine, almonds

1 Cup of parsley

4 Loaves of thin breads called "Shrak"

2 Pinch of salt

3 Pinch of special Jordanian spices

Here are the steps to make the Mansaf recipe. First, wash the meats, then boil lamb meats with water and onion for about 50 minutes. Next, warm the yogurt to add it to the meats, then boil it with the meat for about 1 hour. Finally, add some special Jordanian spices to the yogurt and meats. Second, make rice. Wash the rice and soak it for half an hour in warm water, then put the oil in the pot and warm it. Add the rice to the oil and add some salt. Next that, stir and add the water to the rice and boil it. Finally, put the thin bread in the dish, then add the rice after that, put the meat above the rice. Decorate the dish with nuts and parsley as a final touch. Put the yogurt in another dish alone and add it to the rice and meat at the time of eating.

MANDAZI

Dina Shagayo

Tanzania, Level 2

Mandazi is a favorite African food, special for breakfast because it is sweet and soft.

I like it because it is my favorite breakfast. Also I like to eat it with tea, hot milk, yogurt.

4 big cups of flour

1 bag for cake flour

1 cup of sugar

1 small spoon of baking powder

6 big cups of oil

2 small spoons of yeast

1 small spoon of salt

4 small spoons of honey

1 cup of coconut milk

To make it first, put your flour in a bowl, second add your cake flour and mix them together. After that, add sugar, baking powder, yeast, salt, honey and mix for 2 or 3 minutes. add coconut milk and mix. After finishing mixing, put 3 small spoons of hot oil and mix together 5 minutes. Finally, add hot water and mix together with machine or your hands and cover for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes, make small pieces you want and put oil in a pot and put it in oven 5 minutes. put on low fire. When the oil is hot, put the pieces of mandazi in your hot oil flip them very 2 minute. after 8 minutes, it will be ready to eat.

TOMATO AND EGG STIR-FRY

Yibing Xu

China, Level 3

Tomato and Egg stir-fry serves 4

If you ask a Chinese which dish is your favorite dish, the answer is mostly tomato and egg stir-fry. It is the first dish Chinese children learn. I remember the first time I cooked was it when I was young. It is the most popular and delicious dish in China. It brings me many memories of growing up. Because tomatoes and eggs are easy to obtain, I often make this dish for my family now. It is my family's traditional classic dish.

2 medium tomatoes
3 eggs
2 washed shallots
2 tablespoon soybean oil
1 teaspoon rice wine
1 teaspoon salt

Beat the eggs into a bowl, sprinkle a little salt, pour the rice wine, and whisk them until smooth. Peel the tomatoes and cut into small pieces. Chop the shallots.

Preheat the pan and add 1 tablespoon oil wait about 20 seconds. Then, pour the egg, fry it until small pieces, and put it in a plate.

Add 1 tablespoon oil into the pan again and put the tomato pieces. Stir-fry them until soften to add the egg pieces and continue to fry about 2 minutes.

Sprinkle the salt and a little white pepper and mix them. Put on a nice plate and garnish with the shallots.

MOON CAKE

Jianmin Zhang

China, Level 3

This is a magic food. It has been around for thousands of years in China. When I was child, I had heard many legends about it. The Moon Cake is not only a delicious food, but also it has many stories. People like to eat it during the Mid-Autumn Festival because they want to reunion with family. I like to eat it because it is like hometown's moon. When I eat it, I always remember the taste of eating moon cakes in my hometown during the Mid-Autumn Festival. I also remember the scene of my mother making moon cake. Do you want to know how to make moon cake? Let me tell you about it.

Materials:

Walnuts, 100grams
Pine nuts, 100grams
Sesame seeds, 100grams
Almond, 100grams
Peanut, 100grams
Flour, one kilogram

Water, 200grams

Sesame oil, 50grams

Five eggs

1. Making outer skin of moon cake: One kilogram flour added to 200 grams water, 50 grams sesame oil, and five eggs yolks. Put them into basin to mix and stir until it has toughness.
2. Making filling for five kernel moon cake: Fry and crush the walnuts, the pine nuts, sesame seeds, almond, and peanut. Then, add 300 grams of sugar and 50 grams of sesame oil. Mixing and processing into balls. It's about one centimeter in diameter.
3. Making moon cake: Use special pattern to press these materials into shape of moon cake. After taking shape, paint the outer layer with a little sesame oil.
4. Put the moon cake into oven. Bake it for 20 minutes at about 300 degrees centigrade. Then, take them out it. It will be edible after it's cool.

PEANUT BUTTER RAMEN NOODLES

Mahdi Alshaheen

Jordan, Level 3

Since I live alone, I often have to cook myself. And since I sometimes have to improvise with what's in the kitchen, this recipe came about. It is very easy to do and takes no more than 7 minutes.

For this, you need ramen noodles of any kind or brand, of course as the name suggests, peanut butter, vegetable spices that you like to use, chilli powder, chili flakes, ground nutmeg, sesame and of course the spices in the package.

First, you start to cook the noodles for about 3 minutes. Since such noodles often contain chemicals during processing, you should pour them into a sieve after cooking and let water run over them briefly. They stay in the sieve for now. Then you take a pot and pour about 1 1/2 cups of water into it and add a tablespoon of peanut butter. Mix the peanut butter with the water until a sauce is formed and add half a teaspoon of the vegetable spices, some chilli powder, a pinch of nutmeg and the spices from the ramen package. Stir everything together and pour the noodles from the sieve into the pot. Everything is mixed and left for a minute with the lid on a low temperature. If the sauce is too thick, add some hot water and a little more peanut butter if the liquid is thin. Then the whole is put into a plate and sprinkled with chilli flakes and sesame. If you're feeling extra, you can boil an egg till soft, slice it into two half's and add it on top of the ramen. And there you have the finished dish. Feel free to try it and tell me if you liked it.

PANEER BHURJI

Diti Patel

India, Level 3

Paneer Bhurji is an Indian Vegetarian dish. Bhurji means scrambled and Paneer means cottage cheese. So, this dish is scrambled Paneer or cottage cheese. A perfect mix of spices and it is tangy. Made of onion, tomatoes, ginger garlic paste, green chillis and various spices, and paneer or cottage cheese. This dish is famous in North India, and it is served at north Indian dhabas known as roadside eateries also kind of food truck.

Ingredients you need -

1. Paneer (cottage cheese)
2. Ginger Garlic Paste
3. Onions
4. Tomatoes
5. Green chillis
6. Butter
7. Red chili powder
8. Turmeric powder
9. Coriander powder
10. Garam Masala
11. Cumin seeds
12. Salt
13. Coriander leaves (optional)
14. Naan
15. A salad as per your choice

You can get all the spices at an Asian store or online. About Garam masala you can get at an Indian store near you. You can find naan anywhere at an American store also or at an Indian store.

Recipe to make Paneer Bhurji

Crumble 250 to 500 grams (about 1.1 lb.) of paneer with your hands and keep aside.

Heat almost 3 tablespoons of butter in a frying pan. After butter is melted and heated add cumin seeds and let them crackle for about 5 seconds.

Then add almost 2 cups of finely chopped onions.

Stir the onions till they are translucent or transparent, and till the onions are soft. Stir the onions on a medium to low heat. I suggest low heat is the best.

Then add 1 teaspoon ginger garlic paste and chopped green chillis.

Mix it till the smell of raw ginger goes away.

Add 1 cup of finely chopped tomatoes.

Mix the tomatoes and begin to Sauté them on a medium low heat.

Cook the tomatoes till they are completely soft. Add a pinch of salt so that the tomatoes can cook faster.

Now add all the spices

1 teaspoon of turmeric powder

2 teaspoons of red chili powder

2 and half teaspoons of coriander powder

1 tablespoon of Garam masala

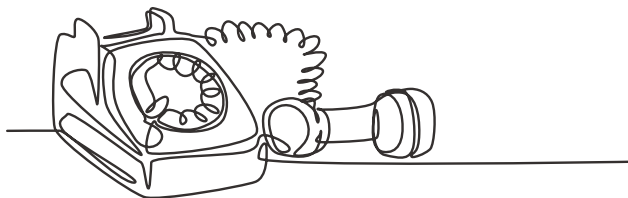
Mix very well for 8 to 10 minutes on low heat.

Add your crumbled paneer and salt as per your taste.

Mix and cook the paneer for 5 minutes on low heat. Do not overcook the paneer.

Switch off the heat and add coriander leaves as per your liking and it is optional.

Serve it with naan and put a nice salad on the side.



CHALLENGES

IN 2013

Sandeep Boparai, Second Place Prizewinner
India, Level 1

The year 2013 was difficult. In August, 2013, I was happy and sad because I had to leave my cousin and friends in India. I came to the United States with my family. I was thirteen years old when I started school in fifth grade. Everything was new for me. I did not know how to speak English. The school taught me a lot and new things. I met one of my Indian friends who helped me a lot with everything. The teachers were so nice. They all helped me with a lot of stuff, how to say words, and how to do the homework. One of my ESL teachers helped me with English. After the second period, I went to her class. Sometimes it was very hard to understand the assignments. In late fall, it was the first snowfall. It was beautiful. Sometimes, I got very cold by walking from my bus stop. I came home, lay in bed and took a nap. On New Year's Eve, I had a great day with my family. It was a great start to 2014. But, in March my mom went to India for surgery. Ten days after the surgery my dad and mom left the hospital. In the evening, she had some pain. They went to the hospital. Halfway to the hospital she passed away. My family did not know what just happened. One day later, my aunt, my grandmother and I went to India for the funeral. After we arrived there everyone was sad. My aunt and I stayed there for fifteen days. It was a hard time for me and my family. During that time my grandfather had an accident here in Parma. My grandfather (my dad's father) and my brother were crossing the road when someone hit my grandfather. Thank god my cousins were here. They took care of him until we came back from India. In April, we came back to the United States. My dad and I went to see him everyday in the evening. My grandfather stayed at the hospital for three months. In summer, I hung out with my cousin and some of my friends. In conclusion, a lot of shocking things happened through the years of 2013 and 2014.

WHY COLLEGE STUDENTS DON'T GET ENOUGH SLEEP

Jianhong Mei

China, Level 2

There are many reasons “why college students lack sleep?”

First of all, Some college students from high school to college have not yet adapted to the new life. Some college students feel uncomfortable with the new learning environment and learning style. They attend classes and complete all kinds of homework. A lot of courses and homework have brought them pressure. How to get good grades in exams also brings pressure on them, It makes them unable to sleep well.

Second, college students are in adolescence, and their psychology and physiology are undergoing changes. They will be confused about a lot of things, especially curiosity and confusion about sex. They think a lot at night. This also causes them couldn't take good sleep.

In addition, many college students like playing electronic games. They play electronic games at night. It makes them excited. It causes some college students not to sleep well.

Also, some students like to participate in social activities, such as going to bars to stay late partying and drinking more, It causes poor sleep quality.

Another important reason is their family's financial pressure or their parents' quarrels affect their sleep. Some college students have difficulty getting the care of their parents or teachers. They have health problems. It makes them sleep difficult.

There are also some college students who do part-time jobs and take care of their families, so they don't have enough time to sleep, It is also one of the important reasons.

TWENTY FOUR HOURS OF MY LIFE

Ariola Gjoni

Albania, Level 2

January 6 and 7, 2022 was a very challenging time of my life. The afternoon of the 6th started quietly for me, but I became confused. In the afternoon, I drank coffee with my brother. Together we discussed different questions for the interview that I was going to have the next day at the US Embassy. He helped me to prepare for the interview because he is very good at English. Then I went home as I always do. I checked my email and my account on the government website. I was very surprised when I saw a new email in my mailbox. I read that I was selected to start a new job in the Ministry of Defense. I was waiting for them to contact me for almost three months after I passed an exam and interview. This email made me very confused. I had to decide if taking the ministry job or going to the US was a better opportunity for me. I did not have the chance to be in the two places. My interview at the US Embassy was at almost the same time that I needed to sign the employment at the ministry.

This made me angry. Why should I have to choose between these two opportunities? That was my confused afternoon.

The evening was more stressful for me. I remember that I had positive and negative feelings. I had to make a choice. I did not know which was a better choice for me. I needed a lot of time to decide. I called my sisters to learn their opinions about this situation. They told me to go to the embassy for an interview. They thought that going to the US was a good opportunity. Their opinions made me more confused. The interview was at 10:00 in the morning, and the meeting to sign the contract for the new workplace was at 10:30. If I decided to go to the embassy for the interview, it was not guaranteed that I could pass it. On the other hand, the new job was mine, but I had to be there at a precise time. The law says that I would lose the opportunity to sign the contract if I did not go there in time. I would not have enough time to go there. It was risky for me if I did not pass the interview at the embassy. After many confusing questions in my mind, I decided to go for the interview. It was the most stressful evening for me.

The morning was positive and nice for me. I felt comfortable with my decision. First, I woke up early. The sun was shining more than on other days. I had a positive feeling that everything was going to be fine. Then I checked to see if I had all the documents required for the interview. Everything was ok. I put on my clothes, and I did my makeup. I called my sister to have a coffee with me before the interview. Next, I show up at the embassy. I was waiting in line to enter inside for the interview. I saw some people that had applied for school in the US but did not pass the interview. I started again to be confused about my decision, but I did not have time to think anymore. They called my name for an interview. The interviewer asked me different questions, and he said that I passed the interview. I could not describe my feelings at that moment. I was more than happy with my decision. Last, I called my parents, my sisters, and my brother to tell them that I passed the interview. The positive and nice things came this morning for me. To summarize, these twenty-four hours in my life were the most demanding for me.

PROBLEM AND SOLUTION OF OBESITY

Nasrin Islam

Bangladesh, Level 3

Obesity is a problem in today's world. The leading causes of obesity are eating more than necessary, poor diet, doing less exercise, and physical movement. Sometimes it is due to genetics and various diseases. Obesity happens to children as well as adults. Children gain weight very easily because they love candy, soft drinks, and fast food. People get various diseases due to obesity.

Nowadays obesity is a major problem in the USA. For example, in the USA people can calories. so people eat more calories foods than they need. However, obesity is mostly a medical problem and it leads to various diseases in the human body. Example heart disease, diabetes, sleep apnea digestive problems, bone problems, and certain

cancer. Obesity causes a lot of damage to the human body. In addition to the damage to the body, it disrupts our normal life. have fast food and most people can afford this food very easily. As a result, people eat fast food very often which is harmful to the human body. Fast foods are small amounts of food but high in, on other hand generally the problem of obesity can be solved if you follow the doctor's advice and follow some rules.

Sometimes the doctor's food pyramid or some diet chart does not work for this problem. because it may be due to other problems of the person, such as hormonal imbalance or genetic obesity problem.

Some life changes can save people from the curse of obesity. I think the first solution to the physical problem is to convince yourself that you have to survive this problem. First, he or she should consult with a doctor. After that follow the rules given by the doctor. One of the obesity solutions is a proper diet chart from a nutritionist. For example, avoid sugary foods, fatty foods, salt, oily food, and mainly processed foods. Children also need a proper diet chart for losing weight. So he or she needs to stop eating the food that the nutritionist told them or to stop and start eating healthy food, such as different kinds of vegetables, fruits, dietary fiber, and good fat. Also, have to drink plenty of water to reduce toxins in your body. Obesity people sometimes feel a little ashamed and guilty from their mind, so in that situation, they need support from their family. Also if the family encourages him or her to lose weight and helps them or to prepare meals then the journey will be easier for them. Next, he or she should exercise daily with a trainer. Because a trainer can show you the exercise you need. And of course, you need to move often. For example, you should do some housework. However, you should cut down on your alcohol too. Finally, you need to reduce your stress and depression levels.

To sum up, if you have a physical condition due to your unconsciousness then of course if you follow a healthy diet, exercise daily and doctor's advice can help you to lose weight. Also adults and children both need education about being healthy. We should know that obesity can be life-threatening for us.

HOW I TRAINED FOR A MARATHON AND MY ADVICE FOR OTHER RUNNERS

Monica Ofelia Manzo Puente

Mexico, Level 3

I love to run in all kinds of ways: outdoors, indoors, on a treadmill or on the street. Running is a very complete exercise for your body; this sport doesn't focus only on one muscle but it strengthens all the muscles of the body and because of that it is very important that your body is prepared. In this sport there are several races that you can do like 1km, 5km, 10km, 21km which is a half marathon and 42km the full marathon. Thus, I want to tell you about how I trained for a marathon and give my advice for other runners. I will tell you how I got

involved in this incredible sport; consequently, which steps I followed in order to achieve my goal of running a marathon. Also, I will give you some tips that helped me to develop my running skills and for last, how you could start running.

My dad ran on the Mexican National track and field team when he was young. He ran really fast, and he passed this passion to me and my whole family. I have been running since I was 12 years old. I remember when I started it was extremely boring for me, I didn't like it at all. I just did it because it was a family activity every Sunday morning, like a routine. We used to wake up early then go for a run for about 30 minutes and after that we had breakfast at a restaurant. At that time, I wasn't excited about running but then I started to do it by myself, just for fun. When I am running, I like that I have that time just for me so I started using it like therapy or meditation. I started enrolling for races like 5k, 10k, 16k. Then when I was eighteen, I went to NYC city to run my first marathon.

The first thing I did was to find a team. It's better to run with company than run by yourself because in this way you will commit more to the routine, and you will make new friends with whom you can share a goal. This is also motivating, having a crew that will cheer you up at the races or even just on the training sessions. In order to get on a team, I found a coach that introduced me to his team. Having a coach will guide you a lot so you won't hurt yourself and you will definitely improve your skills of running. Further, I started eating a balanced diet that helped me to feel lighter and stronger as well as encouraged myself to sleep early and seven or eight hours at night so I was able to complete my running routine every day.

With a focus on achieving my goal of running a marathon, I had to follow a strict workout plan combined with running and functional training, this means that you focused the exercise on one part of the body, like one day legs the next day arms and I did this for almost 6 months. Combining these two types of exercise helped me improve my running skills to become faster and made my body able to run long distances.

A week of my training for the marathon I did look like this : On Monday, I had an easy run plus arms and abs. An easy run is when you run at a comfortable pace. On Tuesday, I had no running but cardio for 30 minutes plus legs. On Wednesday, I had to run intervals, this is when you run a small distance at your fastest pace. On Thursday, I had cardio plus legs. On Friday, I had an easy run plus arms and abs. Usually on Saturday, I have a long run. This was the best day of the week for me. The secret for me was that I never ran the miles of what I was training for. I will give you an example of what I mean. For my marathon, I had to run 26.2 miles in the end, so each Saturday I never ran that many miles. This is because that would have been too much for my body and of course my body wasn't ready yet for that distance, that's why I trained so hard. After a lot of training, I finally got to the big day in New York City for my race and I finished the marathon. I felt all the emotions and satisfaction of achieving my goal. It was completely awesome and now that you heard about my experience with running a marathon, I would like to give you my advice if you want to start running and run in long races too.

If you want to start running my advice for you is to get onto a team, commit yourself to your training and finally to start with small distances but always encourage yourself to go for more and more. A great motivation for your mind is that you should train for a purpose,

before you start your running routine, find any race and commit to do it and that will mentally prepare yourself to make it happen.

To summarize, I have told you about how I started running, how I trained for a marathon and achieved my goal, and last I gave you my advice to other people who would like to train for long races. My desire to achieve this goal was to make my dad proud after he passed and I'm really sure that I made him proud.

AN EMBARRASSING DAY

Hitomi Yamasaki

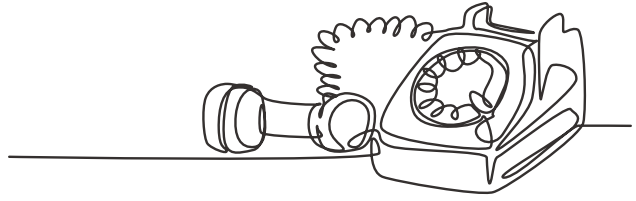
Japan, Level 2

November 2018 was an embarrassing day. The embarrassing day began in the morning. My mom and I left our house to travel to South Korea. This was the first time my mom had traveled to a foreign country, so I prepared the details of our trip. We arrived early at Chubu International Airport in Japan. We had enough time until the airplane took off, so we were waiting at the cafeteria until it was time to go to the gate. We went to the gate, and waited to board the airplane, but I noticed I forgot to get a hot spot. I had to get it at another building in the airport. When I noticed, I did not have time to go get it. I asked the flight attendant about this problem, but she said I did not have time. I called the hot spot call center. The operator said I could get to a hot spot near the airport in South Korea. I was relieved because I always use a hot spot when I travel somewhere. That was the beginning of the unexpected day.

The afternoon continued to be an embarrassing day. We arrived in South Korea. It took about two hours. First, we had to get a hot spot. I heard from the operator that the place where I could get a hot spot was near the airport, so we walked there. However, it felt like the place was really far from the airport since we went there for the first time. Next, my mom and I went to a currency exchange to exchange Japanese yen for South Korean won. After that, my mom and I went to the guest house in Myondon. Myondon is a most famous area in South Korea. I usually stay at a hotel when I travel somewhere, but this time I reserved a guest house because it was much cheaper than a hotel. When we arrived at the guest house, we were surprised because our room was on the sixth floor, and there were not any elevators. My mom and I were tired by the time we walked up the six flights of stairs and arrived in our room. We were also surprised that the room was very small. There were only two beds and a bathroom. We laughed at that unexpected room. Then I noticed my passport was lost. I was very embarrassed, and I knew I showed my passport to an employee at the currency exchange. I ran there. Fortunately, the employee had my passport. It seemed I forgot my passport on the counter after I showed my passport to the employee. I was grateful to get my passport back. After that, we ate Korean dishes near the guest house. We thought the food was so good. My mom and I had enjoyed watching South Korean movies, and she had sometimes told me that she wanted to go to South Korea and eat Korean dishes, so we were happy to go to South Korea. After lunch, we went around Myondon. South Korean cosmetics

are popular in Japan. We bought some cosmetics. We had a good time that afternoon, but something unexpected happened.

In the evening, the most embarrassing thing happened. We walked to a Korean restaurant from the guest house. It took thirteen minutes. We drank a drink called drunken rice and ate Korean dishes. After the dinner, we walked to the guest house. We talked while we were walking. There were a lot of people on the street. I was walking fast. I noticed my mom was not around me. I looked for her around me, but I could not find her. I noticed that she had the hot spot. We had the hot spot that we shared. I did not have a way to contact her, so I thought I had to go back to the guest house and call her. I arrived at the front of the guest house, and I called her. We were able to contact each other. She said she was lost. We talked on the phone for a long time. Eventually, I decided I would go to her. I learned the specific building where she was, and I went there. Finally, I found her. It took just about 1 hour, but I felt it was a very long time. Losing my mom made me very embarrassed. To sum up, a lot of accidents happened to us on this day.



PLACES

MY EXPERIENCES IN ROMANIA

Mahdi Nazari, First Place Prizewinner
Afghanistan, Level 2

One day in September 2016 was a life-changing day. My family and I had just arrived at the Romanian airport from the Turkish airport in the morning. At about 7:32 a.m, there were other families with us from the same country, but I did not know them. An Afghani translator came to us and started speaking the same language as us. That made me so happy because I thought we had to speak Romanian and did not know any Romanian. After a while, she told us the bus would be there to take us to camp. At that moment, I was just thinking about what the camp would look like. After five minutes, the bus arrived, and my family sat on the chairs together. During the bus ride, the translator gave each family a room number. That made me think that our camp would look like a hotel or something. We were on the bus for almost two hours to get to our camp. When we arrived at the camp, I was amazed that our camp was so big. It was four times bigger than a football field, and eighty percent of the camp was covered with grass. The building was one floor, and it was long. When I entered the room, the first thing my mom told me was to make myself comfortable and take out the stuff I needed from my suitcase. After an hour, we were done with setting up our room, and then I heard someone knocking on our door. The chef of the camp told us in English that each family would receive food three times a day. It was hard to understand him, but he showed us with his fingers and that kind of helped. So far, this is how we arrived at the camp in the morning.

I looked at the clock, and it was already afternoon. I did not even realize it because we were so busy setting up the room. I got bored from staying in my room, so I decided to explore outside of the camp. When I went outside, the first thing that shocked me was that there were big fences all around the camp with barbed wire on top of them. I thought I was in jail or something, and the second thing that shocked me was that there were five guard rooms in the camp. Each corner of the camp had one guard room, and there was one in the middle. I started exploring more and started smiling because of other things in camp. There was a big playground for the kids, one football field, and a volleyball court. Later, I went to the playground, and I was surprised by the kids there. There were so many kids my age, and

that made me think I could find so many friends. But I did not just stop there to play, I started exploring more because I knew that I was going to stay in this camp for a long time. I was guessing for about eight months because the translator already told us that we were going to stay for a long time. For that reason, that made me think I need to start making friends because I could not just be by myself for the whole time. After a while, I met a new friend named Ali at the playground. He said he used to live next to my city in Iran which made it better. The afternoon had already passed, and I did not even realize it.

The sun started to disappear which means it is about night time. It was getting dark outside, and it was about 7:00 p.m, so I went back to my room. As I was going back to my room, my friend Ali was following me. I asked him why are you following me? He said my room is right here, and that made me even happier because our rooms are next to each other. As I entered my room, I smelled something weird. When I looked at the desk there was some Romanian food. I did not know the name, but it looked like spaghetti, so I tried some, and it was not that bad. As I was eating Romanian food, I felt this exhaustion in my body. My mind has not gotten used to Romania time, and I think that was the reason my body was so tired. It was already night time, so my mom told me that I should go to sleep. This day was one of the most important days in my life because it was a life changing and new experience outside of the world.

MY FAVORITE PLACE

Hitomi Yamasaki

Japan, Level 2

The bedroom in my parent's country house in Japan is my special place. I lived there for about twenty years. I spent lots of time there. The room was on the second floor and not big but it is an important place for me. It had pink walls and paintings of cherry blossoms. There were two big windows in this room. I could see the rice field, mountains, flat roads, and some houses from the window. Frogs began to croak in the summer. If you live in this house, you might think it is very noisy, but I got used to this song, and I always heard it when I was in bed. So I did not think this song was noisy, and I could fall asleep easily. There was a comfortable single bed. I slept in this bed with my dog every night. The dog's name is Momiji. Momiji means Japanese maple. It was too small for two to sleep, but I loved this time with him. There is a small table by the bed. This table turned into a Kotatsu when winter came. Kotatsu is a traditional Japanese heating table covered with a blanket. The heater was attached to the underside of the table. So only my feet were warm. When I went back home from school, I sometimes slept in this place because I was very relaxed by the kotatsu. There was a closet at the corner of the room. The closet was filled with my favorite clothes and accessories, but the closet was not big, so I had put my clothes in a dresser in another room. When I did not want to put things away, I sometimes put them in the closet at random. Then the closet was in a mess. There was a desk and a chair in this bedroom. I always sat in this chair when I studied. There was a laptop and school supplies on the desk. When I studied

at this desk, Momiji was always sleeping next to me. Having him next to me was calming for me. After I was tired from studying, I held him in my arms. There is a bookshelf in this room. Its bookshelf was lined with various kinds of books. There was also a TV in this room. I used to watch movies, anime and TV shows in this room. When I watched TV, Momiji was next to me. This room has an oko. An oko is a Japanese diffuser. The room smelled like roses, sometimes the room smelled like citrus. I love a good fragrance, so I liked choosing the oko for my healing. This bedroom in this house is my special place because I feel like I was living in traditional Japanese living.

PUERTO RICO MY HOMETOWN

Janice Gonzales

Puerto Rico, Level 3

Let me tell you about the beautiful island that owns a piece of my heart. My hometown is such an amazing place, have you ever heard of Puerto Rico? Also known as “Isla del Encanto” is in the Caribbean. Our island is the smallest island in the Greater Antilles. Puerto Rico limits to the west by Haiti and the Dominican Republic, separated by the Mona Passage, to the east by the Virgin Islands, to the north by the Atlantic Ocean, and to the south by the Caribbean Sea. Our island is the smallest island in the Greater Antilles with a lot of places to visit and things to do.

Since the island is surrounded by water, it has a beautiful coastline with an attractive view of the Atlantic Ocean or the Caribbean Sea. Puerto Rico has beautiful beaches with white sand and crystalline water. It is ideal for simple beach bumming, swimming, snorkeling, or practicing water sports such as paddleboard or kayaking. Some of the beaches of the island are Flamenco Beach, considered among the most beautiful in the world, Cayo Icacos, Seven Seas, and Isla Verde. Isla Verde is one of my favorite beaches where I spent long hours in Summer getting sun kissed. Also, if you would like to see an amazing sunset visit Combate Beach, Crash Boat, or Domes on the west side of the island. Domes is perfect if you like surfing. Although it is not a place to swim.

Visiting the island's center was another thing I enjoyed. On the road trip to the center of the island, the view is spectacular; you can see a lot of mountains, and some of them have waterfalls. In some areas of the mountains, you can also appreciate the view of the Atlantic Ocean. Some places I liked to visit were Toro Verde Nature Adventure Park, one of the longest ziplines in the world, Tanama River, and Jayuya town with an impressive nature view. One Sunday a month my family and I usually visited a different town in the center of the island, and we always tried to find the best coffee shop in the area. Another place that my family and I like to spend time during the summer is El Yunque National Forest. This rainforest has diverse types of trees, birds, and native animals such as the coqui frog, several rivers, and a waterfall. On hot days, this place is amazing to visit.

Puerto Rico is not just an island with natural beauty and a unique diversity of animals. It also has a historic landmark right in the capital San Juan called Old San Juan. It is special for

its history, culture, ambiance, exquisite restaurants, and festive nights. To get to know the city start walking along the Paseo de la Princesa and finish in the historical area. In these areas, you can learn about the history of the city by visiting places like La Fortaleza, which is the Governor's House, museums such as Casa Blanca, Museo de Las Americas, and the two forts which are San Cristobal and San Felipe del Moro. In both, you can admire the view of the Atlantic Ocean and look towards the horizon. For relaxation, you will find squares where you can sit to relax, enjoy the view, take part in cultural events, talk, and eat. I have many memories of the city where I spent time with my family, friends or on a date with my husband.

Lately, I have been missing my hometown. I miss my favorite beach where the sun kissed my skin or visiting the mountainous area and breathing fresh air. How I miss walking through Old San Juan and spending time with my friends talking, eating, and laughing. My beloved Puerto Rico, a beautiful island with a lot of places to visit and memories to create.

MY H MART

Nawale Zakaria
Sudan, Level 3

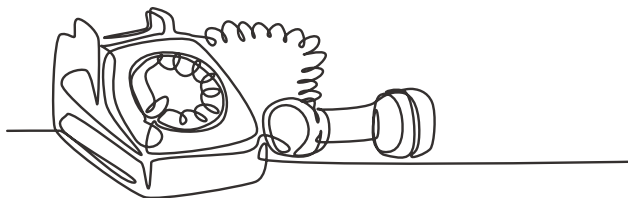
My H Market would be the West Town Village Market location on West 117th St. I pick West Town Village Market because I was not born in America, so when we came here it was hard to find a market which had the thing we needed in order to make a meal, such as spices, Halal meat, and a lot of more that reminds us of our home country. Even though it was an Arab market, it still had a lot of things that we would use back home. I would usually go there with my mom and siblings, and every time we go there it would be a full of laughter and joy. Also our mom would tell us stories on how to use the ingredients to make the best meal back home and that she was happy to have had found this.

MY FAVORITE PLACE

Mohadisa Rezai
Afghanistan, Level 3

Kabul market is a small market, and every time I see this place, it reminds me my home country. Kabul market is in west side of Cleveland. This is the place where Afghan people can find everything from their country. Kabul market has Afghan clothes, dishes, groceries, and home decoration stuff. Moreover, every time I go to this place, for a moment I think I am in my home country. Most of the stuffs in the market are from my home country. One more thing which is special about this market is its name. The owner of this market has chosen its name from the capital of Afghanistan. In this market, we can find our original Afghan bread, which we use a lot with every meal. Furthermore, there we can find dried fruits which imported

from my home country. I can also find my favorite Afghani dresses and jewelries which Afghani girls wear them. The market also has Afghani handmade, colorful carpets which are extremely expensive and elegant. This is the market where I go and feel very relaxed and happy. The people in this market speak my native language and everything in this market reminds me of my home country and I like this place very much and sometime, I visit this place for no reason, just to refresh the memory of my home country. At the end, I would like to say that Kabul market is the place that takes me to my country for a moment, and I am glad that I can find every Afghani stuffs that I need.



ACADEMIC EXPLORATIONS

TRI-C FOR ESL

Naheda Jarrous

Syria, Level 1

The colleges are good places to learn English if you are an immigrant and you need English as a second language. First of all my college, Tri-C, has very good team and they support all levels that you need to complete your education later. In addition, Tri-C has great teachers. They are professional and they have a lot of ways to help their students understand. Also the roles are very comfortable. Students allow to discuss with the teachers and they can email them anytime. Finally, there are many events to help students with speaking and listening. If you are looking for ESL classes, I think Tri-C is perfect.

ALBANIAN SCHOOL

Robert Sula

Albania, Level 1

In Albania schools are difficult but with a little help everything goes good. When you start high school, you want to choose science subject or not. I choose science subject because I like math, chemistry and physics but this subject are not easy. The students were polite and friendly since we knew each other before. We help the student with homework and we learn in class when we can. Sometimes we are noisy in class, but teachers was very kind. We stand up when they come. After teachers ask for student who is missing and after that start with lessons. They ask for homework, for exercise that we don't understand and help for any problems. High school is one of the most beautiful things happened in my life.

HOW TO INCREASE YOUR ENGLISH VOCABULARY

Xenia Stagurscaia

Moldova, Level 2

If you want to speak English well, you should increase your vocabulary. There are a lot of ways to improve your vocabulary. The first and the most important way is to study every day. It is a common way how to study fast and have good progress in your English. Next, you can use different ways. People create many tools for studying. For example, mobile apps, online assignments, movies with subtitles, and many others. Most of these tools are absolutely free. Also, you should read. The best books for beginners are children's fairy tales. If you have higher level of English, you can read news. When you read, you have to circle new words. After this, you need to rewrite the new words in your notebook and translate them. Because you want to improve vocabulary, you should use an English- English vocabulary. This kind of vocabulary will help you to learn more. When you translate the new word, you will be able to make sentences with them. Try to make as much sentences, as you can. It's going to help you to remember the new words. One more way is to write meanings of words on cards and glue them on things which they mean. For instance, you can glue cards on your mirror, table, cabinet, bed, wall etc. This method will help you to remember meanings of the most common words. After this, try to communicate with somebody in English. You will hear many new words from your conversation partner, and you will remember them. However, if you don't use learned words in your speech, you forget them. That means you must use them every day in your colloquial speech. An easy and pleasant way is to watch your favorite movies, cartoons, TV shows, and video in YouTube in English with English subtitles. Finally, you should change the language on your cell phone into English language. In conclusion, if you want to improve your English vocabulary, use any of these variety methods. Choose one or more ways which you like the most and study.

TRADITIONAL EDUCATION VS. REMOTE LEARNING

Khrystyna Semenyna, Thirdplace Prize Winner

Ukraine, Level 3

In the modern world, education has become an essential part of our lives. It gives us a lot of opportunities to get a better job, a higher salary, and generally to improve our standard of living. But for some people, it can be rather challenging to go to college and traditionally get an education for different reasons like having a full-time job, a young child, or many other things which won't allow them to devote enough time to classes. Fortunately, nowadays, it is not even necessary to leave your home to get your degree. Thus, based on your needs, it is fundamental to carefully think about the format that suits you more - online or traditional. Looks easy, doesn't it? Everything you have to do is just to choose between two options, yet that can be a surprisingly tough decision for future students. Indisputably, both online and

offline education have some advantages and disadvantages that are important to consider before making your final decision.

One distinction that can be found in the fundamental thing you have to face before even starting your classes is a schedule. Remote education has a clear superiority in this criterion. It can give you much more freedom in choosing a sufficient time and days for your classes, so you can create a more flexible schedule which will ensure you the possibility to combine studying with work or other things. Unfortunately, traditional education can't provide you with a flexible timetable, which means you will have to organize your entire life around a presumably rather uncomfortable schedule, which can later become an unpleasant issue for some people. One more noteworthy difference is that when you take online classes, you don't have to spend time commuting to your college; instead, you can use this time for your hobbies or other activities that you like.

Although these forms of learning look very different, they have many more similarities than you would expect. For example, in both online and offline studying, it is necessary to do homework. However, the requirements for your assignments are slightly different. You might get the same task despite this in traditional learning, you are supposed to do it usually on paper, in contrast to remote schooling where you have to do that task online to send this file to your teacher. Nevertheless, the world is changing fast; consequently, even if you go to class in person, you will encounter more and more assignments that you have to do on your computer as well. It is not surprising at all because technologies give more possibilities for learning, so no matter what type of education you choose, you will still encounter working with electronic technologies.

Another significant difference is the number of distractions during the class. In a traditional classroom, everything is thought-out to help you to focus on a topic and eliminate all possible distractions. This leads to more efficient studying and understanding of the information compared to online learning, where there is a high chance that you will be interrupted by the people you live with, messages on your phone, or dozens of other possible reasons. Therefore, it is generally harder to be a successful online learner. However, it is possible to achieve that, but you have to be self-disciplined, motivated, and attentive during the lectures.

Aside from what was said, no matter what type of education is chosen, you are supposed to participate in class. You have to ask and answer questions in online learning, just as in traditional education. However, some students on remote studying may experience a lack of interaction with their classmates since it is interesting to discuss and express your opinion on some topics with your peers. They can feel lonely or bored from constantly staying at home. Therefore, the lack of communication can be a significant thing you should consider before choosing remote learning. On the other hand, depending on the type of personality you have, it can be easier for some students to participate in online lectures, where there is typically less social interaction, and it can be totally fine for them to be at home all the time.

To summarize, there are a lot of differences and similarities between both types of education. Online schooling can offer you a flexible schedule while traditional learning can provide a great environment for studying and social interaction. So you should carefully consider all

nuances and your specific needs. It can be overwhelming at first. Despite that, give yourself some time and think consciously about what you expect from your learning experience, then thoughtfully compare all criteria and decide what is more important for you before making your final choice.

GENDER IN ARABIC SENTENCE STRUCTURE

Mzoun Almatrafi

Saudi Arabia, Level 3

The topic of my paper is how gender influences Arabic grammar. In my native language, gender plays a role in sentence construction. In Arabic, the verb conjugates according to the gender of the noun and the adjectives also decline according to the noun's gender.

In English you would use the same verb for a male or female noun. For instance, you would say he drives or she drives. However, in Arabic you would say for men هو يقود hua yagood or هي تقود hea tagood for women.

In English you can use you to mean both male or female. If I was talking to a female friend, I would say you went to the movies. Likewise, if I was talking to my male friend, I would say you went to the movies.

However, in Arabic, the word you for masculine is أنت — anta, and you for feminine is انتِ — anti.

1. When speaking to a female friend I would say — انتِ ذهبتِ الى الفيلم
2. When speaking to a male friend I would say انتَ ذهبت الى الفيلم

For a native English speaker it might be strange to assign gender to objects such as a car or a chair. What might help someone is to understand that masculinity is the default grammatical gender. Femininity of an object is derived by having something special to reflect this noun. There are certain signs to indicate the femininity of an object but the round (ة) Taa is the most common sign of femininity.

Therefore, in Arabic, if the noun being described is masculine, then the adjective is also masculine. The opposite is also true, if the noun is feminine, then the adjective is also feminine.

For example, In English, if I want to describe someone, we say he or she is a teacher. However, in Arabic, we say:

- هي معلمه for woman
- Hea moalmeah
- She is a teacher
- هو معلم for male

- Hoa moulem
- He is a teacher

PASSIVE VOICE - FORM AND USE, ENGLISH AND UZBEK

Feruz Mukimova

Uzbekistan, Level 3

If an action is performed by an unknown person, then we use the passive tense. The Uzbek language has this tense as well like the English language. We call words in which the action is unknown, but the action has been completed, in the passive tense.

For example: My car was scratched yesterday.

If we translate this sentence into Uzbek, it is not known who scratched my car, but this action has been completed. That's why we used the passive tense. In the passive tense, there are Uzbek language agreements, which are used only in the third-person plural tense.

Other times, for example, in the first person, suffixes -da and -ga are used. These suffixes are added to the verb only in the third person plural. And then the passive tense sentences are made.

Another example is; These buildings were built by others.

In this word, we added the suffix "by" to form the passive tense. When we translate the suffix "by" into Uzbek, it means (by a person or something). This word alone tells us that this sentence is in the passive tense. If we translate our words into Uzbek. You can see that our sentence is in the third person plural in this sentence. Only in this case, we used only the word "by" without using any additions, and our sentence is formed in the passive tense. Uzbek and English grammar are very close to each other, but in some cases, we can see the difference.

DIRECT SPEECH IN ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN

Rostyslav Cherveniak

Ukraine

I will talk about direct speech in English and Ukrainian and I will cover all differences and similarities. So, direct speech in English is: the exact words that are spoken are written in a sentence using all punctuations like quotations mark inverted commas. It is also used in books to help readers understand better what is going on. In English you always need to put sentences in quotation marks that are repeated, and usually you need to say by who. Here are some examples of direct speech:

1. "What are you going to do today?" Said Anthony.

Here we used the exact sentence that was spoken by Anthony, we wrote it in quotation marks to show it, and at the end we added (Said Anthony) to identify him.

2. Jim asked, "Where are you going?"

This is another example of direct speech, we also used quotation marks to show the exact sentence that was said by Jim.

Now let's talk about direct speech in Ukrainian. It is pretty the same, direct speech is a way of transmitting a foreign language, in which the speaker or the author of the text fully preserves its lexical, syntactic and stylistic features. However the punctuation is a little different. The sentence we want to mention that was said by someone we put in quotation marks, and then we are writing by who it was said, in the English variant we divide them by comma (,) but in the Ukrainian version we are using (-) and (:). For example:

1. The entire army had one motto: "For the freedom, for the native country!"

У цілого війська девіз був один: «За волю, за рідну країну!» This is the example in my native language, and this is transliteration, U ciloho viyska devis був odun: "Za volu, za ridnu krainu!"

And in English we say that sentence: Whole army had one motto: "For freedom, for native Country!"

As we can see some words are put in different order because of differences in grammar.

2. Another example, «Ось я йду!» — обізвалась Зима.

Translation: "Here I come!" - said winter.

Transliteration: "Os ya idu!" - zuma skazala.

And this sentence has no difference in translation.

TENSES- ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Yiu Fai Fung *China, Level 3*

In English, we will use different tenses to represent different times in sentences. We will use simple present for habitual actions and facts. This is the base form, or we will add -s with the third singular particular (he/she/it.)

Ex: I love you. Or He loves you.

Beijing is the capital of China.

Besides, we use simple past tense to represent actions that are finished and occurred at a specific time in the past.

Ex: What did you do last night?

I watched a movie last night.

Ex: How did you feel after passing the test?

I felt happy.

Also, we use the Present Progressive: present be + -ing form of the verb to represent an action that is happening right now.

Ex: What are you doing right now?

I am watching a movie.

In Chinese, the Chinese verb never change . We use the same Chinese characters to represent habitual actions, actions that are happening right now and action that are finished or occurred in the past.

Ex: 我去 (qù) 學校 。 I go to school.

我去 (qù) 了學校 。 I went to school.

Although the Chinese verbs aren't changed, Chinese speakers will add particle 了 (le) after the Chinese verbs to represent the actions that are finished or occurred in the past.

Ex: 你昨晚做了甚麼? (nǐ zuó tiān zuò le shèn me?)

What did you do last night?

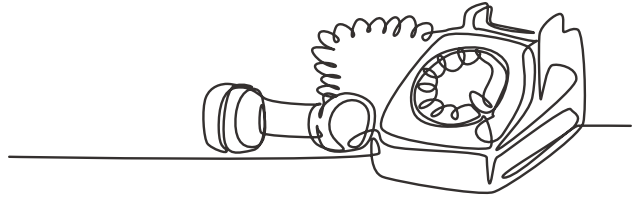
我看了電影 。 (wǒ kàn le diàn yǐng 。)

I watched a movie.

Because of the unchanged Chinese verbs, Chinese speakers may add time words (ex: now, last night, etc) when asking questions to refer to different times.

Ex: 你昨晚做了甚麼? (nǐ zuó tiān zuò le shèn me?)

What did you do last night?



RELATIONSHIPS

MY FRIEND CINTHIA

Gina A. Palomeque

Ecuador, Level 1

If I had to describe my friend Cinthia this is how I would describe her. First she is an Ecuadorian girl. She emigrated from Ecuador when she was only 13 years old. She is 38 years old. She speaks Spanish and English too, because she studied here at school in the United States. She works as a housekeeper in Manhattan, NY with a very nice family. A few years ago, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. Since then it was very difficult for her, because she had to fight a disease that is not easy in her life. Next, her life has not been easy. She has three children: two girls, their names are Jheily, Katherine, and her son Andrew. All children are still young. She is married; her husband's name is Ronald. He is her support in her life. Finally, she is getting better in her health, she is a fighter. She fills you with that charisma no matter the situation. She gives you a smile, she is lovely, friendly, smart, respectful. She is very strong, that's why I admire her a lot and consider her my best friend.

MY BEST FRIENDS

Iuliana Tocan

Moldova, Level 2

I don't have many friends. I have two, but they are the best. I want to tell about my friendship with my husband and my friend Diana. We are so different, but at the same time, we are the same. I can't say that I love one more than another, but I know that every love is special. They make me to feel more confident and more important. My husband is older than me by four years. He is taller and more seriously than me, but I'm funnier than him. He has the same goals as me, to make a happy family. I hope we will achieve our goals. He is as hardworking as I am. When we met each other, he was shyer than now, but now he is more open to me than at the beginning. When I'm with him, I feel safer. About my second love, Diana. She is

as old as I am, we were classmates, and now we keep a beautiful relationship. Diana is taller than me and her hair is longer and darker than mine. She goes to the gym and her body looks better than mine, but she motivates me to be better than I am now. I am more creative and calmer than her. I love them unconditionally and I hope as time goes we will make our relationship more and more beautiful.

MY BEST FRIEND

Jianhong Mei

China, Level 2

I have a good friend from my childhood. Her name is QiuHong, she is very beautiful and smart. Also, she is very interesting, she is a little boyish. And she likes to wear jeans. Her math grades are not good, but her handmade are excellent. During that time we often learned and played together. I helped her with math, she helps me solve some problems, she's very friendly to people. Once my bicycle broke on the way to school. She let me ride her bike to school first. And then she stayed to fix my bicycle because I wouldn't fix it. She said I wouldn't be late if I went first, and I could help her with lessons after class. she's very kind-hearted and generous. she treated me friendly and sincerely. We are always so happy together and can learn a lot from each other.

She always says: "A life without a friend is a life without sunshine." QiuHong has done the same as she says. I'm happy to have such a friend. If she is in trouble, I will try my best to help her. Now she lives in Shanghai China. I miss her very much.

MY LIFE WITH AUTISTIC CHILDREN

Angelica Morales

Puerto Rico, Level 3

Being a mother with children with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) can be very difficult. I have two kids a boy who is six years old and a girl who is three. I found out that my son had autism when he was two and a half years old, and my daughter when she was two years old. When I began to see that my children hit themselves or walked with their toes or moved their hand and head a lot, I realized that something was happening. When the doctor told me that my children were going to have autism it was very hard for me. I was young and I did not know the change that my life was going to have. As time passed, I realized that they didn't speak, hit themselves, were more active than normal, they moved their hands and head a lot, also they didn't like strong noise. They are very sensitive children, but at the same time very strong. I cried every night because I didn't like to see them suffer, I just asked God if he could give me strength to continue and support my kids.

They need a lot of help, there is when I put them in autism therapy, speech and occupational therapies and more. In does therapies they were taught how to calm down their anger, wait for their turn, play with puzzle, colors numbers and more. They started does therapies in the same moment the doctor told me their were autistic. I took all the help the doctor offered me, so my childrens could move forward. All my days are exhausting, but I thanks God that they are with me and healthy. When the months passed they began to develop their speech and stopped hurting themselves, and anything they did made me happy. I made the decision to not have more kids, so I can give them all my time, and give them myself an extra therapy in home and to be able to help them with there development. Their autism are diferent from the other one, they have diferent symptoms. Everytime that we go to the mall, store or any place, I must remeber to bring there favorite toy so they can entertain themselves, but they still cry and scream sometimes, right now they are more calm but there are some days when they are super sensitive.

My life has been a little exhausting, but I never wanted to change it, I like it the way it is. I have learned to be more calm and take things more easy. Even so, there are nights when I go to bed and cry. They make me laugh every day, and my nights are so perfect. I try to give them everything they need or ask of me. Having them in my life is the best thing I can have; I can not live with out them. They learn very quickly from us, but we learn from them too. They are the loves of my life.

If

Desiree Bokola

United States, Level 3

If you were a flower
I will be your petals.
If you were a sun
I will be your rays.
If you were a dove,
I would be your plumage.
If you were a tree
I would be your foliage.
If you were a galaxy,
I will be your stars.
If you were an angel
I will be your wings.

