
ELI STUDENT VOICES

Volume 16, Issue 3

Fall, 2012

It's Never Too Late to Say "I LOVE YOU"

(1st Place)

Nataliya Ostarova

Advanced Informal English

How often do we think about words we are telling each other every day? Do we think about the meaning of these words or are they just random sounds from our mouths? One recent event turned everything upside down in my mind. It touched my heart. I can't stop thinking about this. I will probably remember it for the rest of my life. On the one hand nothing special happened, but if you look deeply, you will definitely see how pure, beautiful, amazing and full of kindness it was.

Thanks to international school I've met a new friend, he is from Japan – a country where incredible nature, i.e. the falling sakura which inspire thousands of people – meets with high technology which is developing every day, running to the future. You never know when and how will it happen – the moment when you will meet your real friend; you can't even know how they will look. Before this time I couldn't even think that I'd meet somebody from Japan, but it happened and I thank God for this! It was an incredible time, which we were spending together, we could talk all day long about anything. I've learned a lot of different things about his country and after that I began to fall in love with Japan! How different our cultures, countries, worlds can be...everything! But it was not a hurdle for us. It's amazing to discover something new, every time I was wondering how people from totally opposite cultures could find something to share with each other, something similar! It was a great time that I will remember till the end of my days!

Who can say what friendship is? Which ingredients make up this complicated dish? I can only say that one of the most important components is mutual help. When somebody needs your advice or help you have to do everything to rescue this person, but if it is your friend you have to do your best! So this story doesn't differ from many others, but it still lives inside me, like a small twinkle which will never go out.

My friend, like most of us, has a family, but his father is ill and now he is staying in the hospital under the supervision of doctors around the clock. He felt very bad. He can't speak and in order to get some food he should use some special machines. This process gives him a huge pain but he doesn't give up! And it could be a great example to people who lost their hope to live. Because of this situation (when his father felt worse) my friend decided to go back to Japan to see his dad, because nobody knew how many days he had left to live.

Even this situation wasn't a barrier for us to talk; we spent hours texting each other or talking by Skype. I wanted to support him in that difficult moment, be as close as possible in spite of the fact that we were on different continents. And once during one of the conversations, he told me that he never said to his father that he loves him! I was shocked! How is it possible? – It was the only question in my head for that moment. Never? Seriously? - Resounded in my head and he explained to me that in his culture people prefer to show their love from doing different things, not scattering their words to the wind. Looking back, I understood him, because we are using the phrase "I love you" every time, even without thinking about its meaning. That's why in our society three simple words, which can be significant for many of us, just lose their power; I mean that today we do not appreciate the words that used to be the expression of real and strong feelings. It shocked me so much! After this in my mind settled an idea - what if he finally, in the first time in his 30 years, utters these cherished words? To be stubborn from childhood, I started to tell him this every time we talked. It was a hard time for him, but I realized that it could be the last time he is talking to his dad, seeing him; it could be the last chance to do something unusual and extraordinary, something that he will remember all his life! It took almost 5 days to convince him to make this hard step, but finally he did it! He said this at first it seemed simple, but looking deeply into it, it's an important phrase in his life!

His dad can't speak or emit any sound because of his illness, but for that moment, despite the pain, he lifted his head, smiling by the corners of the mouth and barely noticeable tear rolled down his wrinkled cheeks. I know my son, I know - that could be heard in the awkward silence of the hospital ward. Such a touching moment, thoroughly imbued with love and tenderness, stopped for a moment in this place. It is etched in the memory of my friend forever.

More than once he told me "thank you" for the fact that I still was able to convince him to do this. But thanks - this is only a drop in the ocean of the feelings that I experienced, imbued with the moment of unity between Father and Son.

It was a new experience for me too. After this situation I started to think about words I'm saying every day, because we are never musing upon the fact that thanks to simple words we can make somebody happy, give something more than just words – hope to continue to live, seek an opportunity to breathe, to smile, to love. We should always remember that words can bring happiness, but also they can hurt. Something small and slight can be a big problem for a man! You never know what can be important for this or that person, that's why it's better to control the endless stream of

words that pour out of your mouth and keep in mind that there is always a time to say something nice and good to your parents, friends or just people you meet on the street, because it could change something in their lives and if not then at least give them a good mood.

The Day I Met Anna (2nd Place)

Alfredo Ochoa

R/W 43

On a regular day I was walking on the beach. The sun and the moon were setting at the same time when a magical woman appeared. It was the girl of my dreams. I knew she was the one. So I approached her to introduce myself. That might have been the only chance I had with her. She was short of height, not like a dwarf, just a little smaller than me, and about a little taller than me when she wears high heels. She had black, hair dark as the night and blue eyes, intense as the blue sea. Her name was Anna.

“Hey, my name is Alfredo, is it that such a creature as you has a name?” I said.

She laughed and replied “Hello, you can call me Anna. What brings you here?”

As soon as we started to dialogue she realized that there where fifty billion rainbows posing at the horizon. We freaked out, it was the first we saw such thing. The moment was mystical. Both of us felt a spark turning on deeply inside our bodies. Each other knew that fate had a big thing for us. We were destined to spend the rest of our lives together. We dated around 3 years after until the day I proposed her. Some people say that God himself descended from heaven the second she replied in tears:

“Yes, I will marry you.”

Ps: I love you Anna.

A Precious Memory

Jaesub Shin

R/W 43

Dear Grandmother,

Hello, grandmother. How have you been? Long time no see. I'm so sorry for the late letter. I hope you are doing well as usual.

I used to go to your house every season. My memory of your house was so beautiful and warm place. There were mountains in the background and immense rice fields near your house.

When I arrived at your house, you always welcomed me with a big smile. “Come on, my darling!” You said in a soft voice and hugged me warmly. I was eagerly looking forward to seeing you because you always prepared a lot of food such as pork meat, chickens, and sweet potatoes. That was more than just delicious. Hot sweet potatoes were especially delicious. They were so soft that they almost melted in my mouth. In addition, there were a lot of attractive places

around your house. The one place I liked was a trampoline house. “Grandmother, I want to go to the trampoline house, trampoline house!” I kept nagging you take me to the trampoline house. My little sister and I jumped on the trampoline. We competed for high positions in the air. I felt as if I were flying when I jumped. You looked at us with a smile of indulgence. Also, behind your house was a thriving vegetable garden and beyond it a huge orchard of grape trees. I hung out with my cousins in your house. I still remember those things.

One day, my little sister and I rode a bicycle in the yard. A frog suddenly jumped out of the grass. We found the frog and tried to catch it. The frog was very tiny and fast so we couldn't easily grasp it. The frog ran away to the mountain path and we followed the frog. “I give up, I will return to the house.” My sister said. However, I did not give up. Finally, I got that frog and I was so proud of it. I went too far from your house and couldn't remember how to go back to your house. For a child, getting lost on the road is one of the scariest experiences to have.

A few hours later, as it became darker and the wind blew harder, I looked around carefully but saw nothing in the darkness. I couldn't recognize my location so I was confused. The mountain was so spooky that it felt like a ghost might appear and I believed there was a scary man-eating monster living in the mountains. I cried in fear and trembled while grasping a frog. Waiting for you and my mother was all I could do at that time. It was the scariest day ever in my life.

You and all of our family members started to search for me madly. “Have you seen a little boy? He looks weak and short,” you endlessly asked people who were on the mountain road. Our families were worried about me. You climbed up and down the mountain again and again. At that time, you appeared in front of me. When I saw your face, I stopped crying but your eyes were filled with tears. I saw your eyes and cried again. You grabbed onto my hand tightly. Your hand was the warmest in the world. It seemed like I was wearing fur gloves. We walked side by side along the narrow mountain path without a word.

I miss you so much.

My Favorite Room

Evgenia Kovaleva

R/W21

I love to read books; for me, this is the best idea how to spend my free time. My favorite room in my house is our reading room. This is a small and cozy room. Also, this room is very sunny. There are big windows and a leather sofa. Beside the sofa stands a bright light. Under the sofa there is a soft and fluffy rug. In front of the sofa is a big wooden bookcase. There are many flowers and pitchers next to the bookcase. There are lots of different books. For example, there are history books, romantic stories, classic literature and detective novels. I really like to read the books in my reading

room. You can dive into the world of books and enjoy the pleasant atmosphere.

My Best Memory

Shogo Isa

R/W 43

Dear, Carlos and Cristi

Hi! How are you doing? I'm doing well! Today, I wrote a letter to you because I have a lot of things that I want to say. Unfortunately, we almost have to be apart. If I could, I would stop time right now. You know how much I am going to miss you. It is too hard for me, but today I want to say "thank you" instead of "see you".

My best memory with you guys is when we went to New York together. We spent four days there. One day in New York we went to see the Statue of Liberty on a ship. That was about thirty or forty minutes cruising, but I felt like I was riding the ship much shorter. Maybe it is because the Statue of Liberty was very huge and beautiful, and I wanted to see it more. We took a lot of pictures together, and all of them are amazing pictures. I want to go to Liberty Island if we could go there again.

After we went to see the Statue of Liberty, we took a train, and we went to see the New York Yankees' game. That game was against the Boston Red Sox, and we all were wearing New York Yankees' T-shirts. The game was amazing because they hit six homeruns total, but we could not get any homerun balls though. Every time they hit the homerun, we went crazy, and we screamed a lot. Also, we could see Ichiro Suzuki who is the most famous Japanese baseball player, and the Red Sox's pitcher, who is Venezuelan. Even though, he was on the other team, he was doing very well, so you guys might have been happy. The funniest thing in that game was we showed up on the big screen twice! The first one was only I showed up, maybe this is because I was dancing at that time. The second was we all could be in the screen! That game was awesome because the Yankees won, and also we could be on the screen. We had so much fun, and I will never forget that game.

In the evening, we went to Times Square, and there are so many people and many kinds of shining billboards. I felt like we were famous actors and on the stage and surrounded by a lot of audience. We just sat down in front of the Times Square building and talked about many things, such as about Venezuela, Japan, each other, and that trip. I remember that you said "You and Momo have to come to Venezuela, there are so many beautiful places, and I will take you to everywhere!"

And then, I said, "I promise you that I definitely will visit you, and I would love for you and Cristi to come to Okinawa too." "When you come to Okinawa, I will take you to a lot of beautiful places!"

That was just talking time, but that time was very valuable because we could know each other a lot.

Everything that we spent together is my treasure. You gave me a lot of things which are invisible. Sometimes you gave me advice, sometimes we rode bicycles and went to a lot of places together, and we had a lot of parties together! I have many memories which we have had together, and I cannot count them because there are so many, but I remember everything and I will never forget them. You guys are like my brother and sister because you always take care of me, and I am really thankful for what you guys have done for me. These memories are always shining like a star inside of me. My treasure will be never forgotten, and I promise you guys that I will add to my treasure more memories with you guys again. Thank you for everything.

Your best friend and also brother, Shogo.

Momentum

Kristian Legcevic

R/W 60

The magnificent sound of silence that embraces my body, it drugs me and lays me down on a bed which is partly rough, but at the same time soft as a feather. With my extremities extended, projecting to the uncertain infinity, my head warm, and my mind cold; my eyes fuzzy, but still as a rock; the sweet aroma of an odorless wind. I begin to wonder where my soul has gone.

The contrast of a still world seems empty and irrelevant when experiencing millions of sensations. Of one full of bright black, of dark white, and of something simple as a spot of light in the middle of a candid darkness.

A reality that is summarized on a sky starry by pearls, hidden under silhouettes of majestic sages of nature who foresee a doubtful future, and leave the power in my hands... a perception of echoic, graceful movements made by winged creatures, which ensure peace to my uncertainties. While my senses and my grasping unconsciousness are wallowed, the tide along the grass waving my back around is willing to twist my thoughts and to make my reasoning to faint.

It is the beauty of a Technicolor sight that brings excitement to my heart and tranquility to my mind. Nothing can feel better than a marvelous moment like now.

The "Big Eyes" [Timed Writing]

Fangyuan Qin

R/W43

One of my dreams is to be a journalist who works for a travel magazine so that I can travel around the world and take photos to record what's happened in my life, the beautiful sceneries I've seen or the touching moments I've experienced. There is no doubt that taking pictures is an ideal tool to record lives, and also to help people express their feelings. I'm always impressed by good photos, because through photographers' sight, I can see a totally different world. Even now I still can remember the first time I felt the power of a

photo. I was only 7 years old, and this photo was named “Big Eyes”.

In the 1990s, a project was launched in China named the Hope Project. This project aimed to help poor children who couldn’t afford their education fee in poor areas. The photo “Big Eyes” was one of the most famous advertisement photos of this project. It was taken in 1991 by a journalist whose name was Hailong Xie. He visited in a small and poor village in the northwest China this year. The children were having class when he took this picture.

“The Big Eyes” was a black and white photo. It was a closeness of a girl’s face. The little girl with a pair of big eyes is in the center of this photo. That’s why people called the photo “Big Eyes”. Her facial expression shows she was panicked but curious in this photo. She has such a kind of complicated emotion because she had no idea about what happened and even didn’t know what the camera was. She just stared at the camera lens. Even though there was still a strong aspiration in her eyes. I can feel that she really aspired to have a chance to study. A pencil was held tightly in her little hand. It seemed that she was so afraid of someone taking the pencil away from her, so that she held it with all her power, like to hold a chance of study. It was a cold winter, she just wore few clothes. The clothes were out of fashion and even not suitable for her. She was thin and lack of nutrition, but her eyes were sparkling and filled with hope and faith.

This photo touched millions of people in China when it was published. People realized that there were still a huge amount of children who cannot go to school because of money in somewhere. We should and also we can do something for them. In that time, I was only 7 at primary school. My parents encouraged me to donate my pocket money and used books to them. More than 15 years have passed, but I still remember the feeling of helping this little girl. Since that feeling was so good and made me feel I was needed that I became a person who willing to help others when I grow up. I am still thankful for this photo changes my view of life.

I will always support that a good photo really can touch you and even change your life, because, for me, the “Big Eyes” is such a photo. That is why I still hope I can be a photographer one day to take some touching photos to impress others and change their views of life.

"Because They Did it Yesterday, They Can Do it Today Also"

Sangjin Park

Advanced Informal English

All of us have our own dreams. For those dreams, we got here together although the specific reasons and situations are different from each other. As you know, in order to achieve our goals, we have to take a lot of effort. The bigger the dreams are, the more time and work are required for us like climbing a mountain. Usually the dream itself becomes an important motive for us to go further toward it, but at the same time, we are likely to give up because of the dream. That's because we cannot be 100% sure that our own way to the

goals is right and don't know how much time it will take to get there. As the goals are often so mean to us, they seem to be running away from us while we are chasing them. However we cannot give up halfway. What a stupid decision it will be if we give up at the position some steps before the destination! Nevertheless, it is not that easy to devote ourselves to approach it, so quite a number of people give up and try to console them with self-justification. Remaining firm in our resolutions seems to be easier said than done.

There is one phrase that I keep telling myself when I feel like giving up what I am doing. It was from one of my favorite Korean actor's story. Even I forget this sometimes, but it will be somewhat helpful to you when you are struggling to get your goals. When the actor was a middle school student, one day his science teacher asked the class why women divers could go deep into the sea even in cold winter. Still now, especially in Jeju Island in Korea, women divers dive to pick some seafood such as pearls and abalones for a living. Some students tried to get the right answer, but nobody could. Some of their answers were reasonable, but there was not the right one the teacher had for the question. Finally the teacher said, "Because they did it yesterday, they can do it today also." When I listened to this on the radio, I was impressed even though I am not that emotional. If someone doesn't have any dream, his of her life would be miserable and disinteresting; however, we also cannot but be frustrated on the way to achieving our dreams. That’s because we are not God who can do anything as he wants. However, if we chew over the teacher’s idea, the process of achieving our goals will not seem to be difficult. Even though we feel every single day for our dreams is hard, we can do our own things that we planned for our dreams without doubt. We went through yesterday, so we can do it again today. Then we will get very close to the destination before we know it. Although I am not the right person to spread this idea because I tend to complain about my situation forgetting the lesson, I just want to share the message hoping that we will achieve our own goals in the end.

My Life in Saudi Arabia and United States

Amal Abdulrahman

R/W 41

Every person likes to do things to the best of their abilities. Sometimes he thinks that what he is going to do is possible or difficult, because he only thinks about achieving his goals. Depending on the goals, he might lose or change many things in his life. I am someone who changed many precious things in my life for the sake of my goals. One of my favorite hobbies is traveling, which was very helpful to me to face many problems when I came to the United States of America to learn English and to get a master and PhD. There are many differences between my life in Saudi Arabia and my life in the United States, specifically in my daily schedule, the way of life, and culture.

The first difference is my daily schedule. The main thing is that I changed from a teacher to a student. In Saudi

Arabia, I had a job as a teaching assistant at King Khalid University. I had a lot of work every day: teaching students either in class in the morning or online, usually in the evening, arranging scientific or volunteer activities. However, I am a student in the United States. I have a lot of work every day: attending classes, doing homework, and a few volunteering activities. I miss the things that I did in Saudi Arabia: hearing sounds of prayers from mosques five times every day, visiting my relatives, flexibility to do any volunteer activity anywhere and anytime, and time management. For example; in Saudi Arabia, one day is enough time to organize a complete activity, and I could do it at night while I need days to get approval in the United States, and I never could do it at night even if I love to, such as the Project Downtown activity in Gainesville. Also, a big problem for me in the United States is the time. I really love to always be on time, which was very easy in Saudi Arabia. I do not drive, but rather I have a car with a chauffeur in Saudi Arabia. However, in the United States I have to spend more time on buses or more money for a taxi, a car and parking.

The second difference between my life in Saudi Arabia and the United States is the ways of life. In Saudi Arabia, I live with my lovely family as any normal family in the world, which has a strong relationship. Families there usually live together in a big house or near each other. The worst day in my life is one when I cannot see anyone from my family at least once. On the other hand, after I came to the United States, I live with my sister only and sometimes with my father in our apartment. This is very painful to me. Nothing in the world can equate to a moment or a second with all of them. One example about how different this is is when I worked in Saudi Arabia, I often went back home around 4:00 p.m., and my family would wait to eat the lunch until I arrived; everyone could eat alone, but we believe that it is tastier if we eat together. Other example: as a Saudi woman, I do not have to pay for anything; like my house, car, water, electricity, or food, and there are no taxes. Also when I was a student, the studying was free until I finished high school. Then, the government gave remuneration to study at the universities. In contrast, even if my father pays for almost everything in the United States, I still have to spend a lot of money for many things. In addition, in the United States the Saudi government also pays for my studying, health insurance, and the airline tickets to come here.

The third difference between my life in Saudi Arabia and the United States is the culture. Saudi Arabia has a distinctive culture. Due to its flexibility, I had to change many things in my life in the United States. For example, the men and women are separate in many places like universities, gyms, and some malls. That is very helpful, because any woman always likes to wear different clothes depending on the different places, but I had to wear hijab just in specific places if there were men, such as in the streets or supermarkets. In contrast, in the United States men and women study together. Because of the importance of learning in my culture, I have to do many things for it, so I could study with men, but I could not leave my precious hijab in many places. Also many international students have a

misunderstanding about hijab and some of them wear pajamas at universities! In Saudi Arabia I had to learn morals and to be polite before anything else; like when I meet people even if I do not know them, I greet them by saying: "peace be upon you." It is the same in United States, and I would greet everyone by the same greeting, but I should greet in different ways like saying "hi" or "hello."

In conclusion, my life is very different in Saudi Arabia compared to my life in the United States. Even studying in the United States. It is difficult for me in contrast to teaching in Saudi Arabia, but I am really thankful for Allah who gave me this amazing chance to study in the United States and visit this great country. Yes there are many challenges, but those are the things that help me to achieve my goals. I am determined to change my hopes into reality, and I will prosper. I always remember a beautiful quote which says, "Everyone has to expect obstacles in his life, but he must not let them stop his achievements."

To Whoever Finds This Letter

Barbara Escobar Perez

R/W43

New York, 2027

Oh my god! I find myself in a small room and I cannot get out of here. The zombies are outside and they are hitting the door now and they want to attack me so I don't know how to escape. I have a gun but only one bullet.

Now I don't have anything; all that happened so fast. I remember a few weeks ago all was normal with my family, with my dog, and with my friends.

One day in the news an alert appears about some strange virus. The virus makes people aggressive and they kill and eat humans. If a zombie causes a wound in a healthy person, this person contracts the virus and he or she has strange symptoms like internal bleeding. I could see many situations and the people screamed from the pain in the long process of their change in to a zombie. One of those cases was my family. I was in the attic and I was cleaning some things and in a moment I heard a strong sound; it was my mother and she yelled for help. I ran as fast as possible but it was too late. I found my mother on the floor and she was wounded. I didn't know what was happening. She yelled her lasts words "take care!" I turned around to see what happened and it was my sister. She pounced on me to attack her new victim. She had blood all over her body and on her face. I took a chair and I hit her with all my strength.

She fell to the floor unconscious. I went to my mother but she continued screaming but stronger; she seemed out of herself. In a short moment she stopped screaming. She began to vomit and cry blood. I tried to help her but it was the same. She tried to attack me and my sister joined in the attack. I ran for myself; I could not understand anything. How did my sister contract the virus? When did it happen? In a second I remembered it. It was my dog.

He had the same symptoms a couple days before all the big surprise with my mother and my sister happened. We

never killed him and now he killed my sister and my mother. Soon I heard a bark. Oh great! I was running by myself from my mother and my sister, and now from this zombie dog. I went to the front door; the dog tried to grab my leg. I took a coat hanger and hit him with all my strength. Finally, I managed to open the door and walk out unscathed. I looked at my leg scared but it was fine. Suddenly I saw a big disaster on the streets. The people were running for their lives and the zombies played their game to kill and eat everybody who was at their fingertips. I felt something on my shoulder. I didn't like to look behind me but, I needed for myself. OK... I counted... one! and I turned around quickly to hit it with my coat hanger as fast as I could. In a moment, I heard "Stop!" I thought that sounded like a familiar voice and I asked with a very great surprise "Sasha?" She said "Yes! It's so great to see you alive" I liked her and I hugged her like she was a light to not feel alone in the new and weird world. She told me she was in the same situation as me and she knew about a place where maybe we'd be safe. After that she gave me a gun to protect myself. Quickly we started to run quickly, some zombies including friends tried to attack us. We killed the majority. We shot without thinking if they were important for us. It was them or us. Finally we didn't find the place and it was too late... the day passed very fast and we needed to rest for the night. I saw a little house and the house looked clear. We went inside to sleep. At night we heard a strange sound, I took the gun and she did the same. Our idea was look around the house if a zombie was inside but it was a bad idea. She went to the first floor and I looked in the other rooms on the second floor. Finally I heard somebody screaming. The zombies trapped her. I wanted to go help her but I knew it would be the same story like with my mother and my sister. After the scary noise of my friend, all was quiet. I ran to find a room for me to hide. I opened a door and I closed it with latch.

Now I am here alone. My whole family, my friends and my dog were attacked and now, I am the next on the list. I am looking at the gun and my mind is struggling between surviving this hell or finishing all of this. In a second I hear the door open and the weapon fires. The shot hit the floor. At this moment I see all very slow. I am smiling sarcastically; I know what is going to happen. I am just going to say I'm Belen and know you know my story.

Belen Smith.

Importance of Being Natural

Da Mi Kim

R/W 40

One day, out of nowhere, my friend said, "I want to have beautiful eyes. I need cosmetic surgery." As the techniques have been perfected, more and more people want to have plastic surgery to be beautiful. Some people insist that upgrading physical features helps to become confident in life. It might make you feel good; however, I think being natural is more important in a human's life. The problems caused by intervention are the result of increasing numbers of medical

accidents, financial problems, and loss of individuality of the person.

The most important reason why I think that it is dangerous is the safety of doing surgery has not been proven yet. On television, we often see the news about the death during plastic surgery. It shows us the danger that still remains.

Another important reason is the cost. The cost of having plastic surgery is very expensive. Moreover, the people who want to have surgery are mostly twenty. They don't have money, therefore they use parents money, or they borrow from bank. It causes financial problems for them. If the cost is too high to pay back, they will lose their financial credit and have a hard time in the future.

The last essential reason is the loss of the individual. Nowadays, the focus of beauty is big eyes, small nose, thick lips, and white and small face. If everyone makes their face like this, their individuality will disappear and there will be similar faces everywhere, even if they're not family.

In conclusion, plastic surgery and other interventions have several high risks as argued above. Therefore, I disagree with doing something like these to make a person more beautiful. If you really want to be beautiful, then how about doing exercise? Not only will it make you more beautiful, but also healthier and more confident.

Moving to a New Place

Evgenia Kovaleva

R/W21

My first moving experience was the most difficult for me. When I graduated from high school, I decided to study Chinese language and culture in Beijing, China. I had two high school girl friends who went to China one year before me. When I went to China, I didn't know anything about the language, the culture or the people, but I did have my two friends there. I went to China on June 1, 2008. It was a sunny and very hot day. My friends met me at the airport. The next days were the most difficult days for me. I had to do a lot of different things: to register at the Beijing Language and Culture University, to pass a medical examination, and to find housing. It was very difficult and I was nervous because it was the first time I had to do those things. Luckily, I was helped by my friends.

A Letter to Braulio

Jose Bardawil

R/W 43

Hello Braulio,

You remember the elections in Venezuela? The whole week before the elections on October 7th all the Venezuelan people here in Gainesville were excited because the future of Venezuela depended on that day. As in Venezuela, the people were so worried about the final results of the elections, my friends and I were very worried about it

too even when we were here in Gainesville. The whole week before the day of the elections we were thinking about what we were going to do that day. Luis, one friend from Venezuela said, "We need to do something that makes us feel like we are in Venezuela."

"What are you thinking about?" I said

"Do you want to cook all kinds of Venezuelan food?"

"Oh! I like that idea!" I said.

On the afternoon of October 7, Juan, Luis and I went to the supermarket and bought all the ingredients to cook all kinds of Venezuelan food like empanadas and arepas. After the supermarket, we went to my house to make the food for all the Venezuelan people that were invited to watch the elections at Isaudry's house. While we were cooking, we could smell Venezuela and our traditions. The night came and all the people went to Isaudry's house to wait the results of the elections. All the people came with the colors of our flag, yellow, blue and red: we had 4 Venezuelan flags; we could feel that we were in Venezuela with the food, the people and the environment. The elections began, we sat on the floor and on the couches watching the elections and eating our traditional food. I could see the hope, a fresh start and a new change in our country in the eyes of my friends.

A tense moment came and we all started to get nervous about the results, it was almost time to give results; a few minutes after Tibusay Lucena came out with the election results, I hugged Isaudry and I felt she was shaking and her breath was very deep. Tibusay said the results and the results were not favorable to what we expected. I could see the disappointment and sadness in the attitudes and in the eyes of my friends. All my friends started to cry, they were so disappointed, desperate. One of my friends named Alberto hit the wall because he was very upset and angry with the situation in Venezuela. I couldn't believe what was happening in Venezuela and I was on the couch crying alone like an orphan, a few minutes later Juan came to where I was, he hugged me and he said:

"Don't worry, everything is going to be fine"

"I don't think so, what about my family?" I said

"They will be fine, Jose don't worry..." said he

It was almost midnight and none of my friends could believe it. Most of them decided to call their parents to look for moral support. We also realized what was going to happen in our country and we started thinking about our future and the future of our family. What I felt at that moment was inexplicable, it was a mixture of sadness and disappointment, I was destroyed like when a family member dies or when someone fails at something. I hope you understand how we lived the day of the Venezuelan elections here in the United States even when we are so far from our country. We still feel sadness for what happened at that time.

Your friend,

Jose Daniel

PS. I miss you and all my friends in Venezuela, greetings to all.

Traveling to Another Country

Jasser Alharbi

R/W40

One of the good things in this life is to explore another country and different people. Different countries offer new landscapes, beautiful weather, culture, food, people, buildings, cities, animals, and rules to learn about. Three reasons to travel are seeing a new country, trying another culture, and developing business.

A traveler will be excited to see a new country and feel the different weather. For example, I still remember that day when our plane landed in Sri Lanka at 5 am. It was like a new life for me because the weather was really amazing, raining and a little humid. In addition, the green trees between the houses made the view wonderful. Therefore, travelers can see different cities, streets, and nation.

One of the enjoyable parts of traveling is trying a new culture. Trying another culture leads to trying its food. For example, in Sri Lanka we tried good chicken biryani. That was delicious. In addition, there are different rules for eating. In some countries, people use their hands to eat, yet in others, the people use a spoon, knife, and fork to eat.

Traveling to another country is a significant way to develop business. For example, photographers travel to take pictures or to attend lectures about photography. They also meet each other and talk about their experiences to develop their skills. They can even take a picture and sell it to make money.

Traveling is interesting and enjoyable because we can see a different land, weather, and people. It is fun to try a new life, and to make money with new people in other country. For these reasons, people like traveling to another country. If you are interested in seeing a different land, people, or developing business then you should travel.

My Father and My Mother: I Love You So

Amal Abdulrahman

R/W 41

When I came back from Orlando to Gainesville I remember very important thing that I didn't do. I decided to write about many important people in my life, but I didn't until today. Today is November 23, 2012 which is the last day to submit in Student Voices. Every one of them effect in my life. I couldn't forgive to myself if I did not write about them.

My family is the most precious in my life. It consists of my parents, three brothers, and five sisters. I miss them all the time. My father is the biggest hero to me, and I cannot love any one before him except Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him). I hope to give my father my life. He is not like any father. He does more than what fathers do. For example: my father resigned because of my studying. He was the head of school, but he is still the head of many people's heart. His major is English, so he helps me a lot in the United States. He does not allow me make anything even my breakfast. Also

my mother: I grew up between her hands and protected inside of her heart's warmth. I could not be a success without her. Nothing in the world equals a minute of peace and comfort with her. She is a great grace in my life. She is the sun in my life which lights my days and warm my feeling. She is one of the best kinds of mercy. After my parents are my siblings. I feel between them that I have the loveliest world. They make the life easier for me. We always share different kinds of feelings together; such as laughter, crying, happiness, sadness, and puzzlement. Every one of them has a place in my heart. Hatem is my youngest brother's name. He is 6 years old. He came to Gainesville for the first time when I came last year. He is very amazing. He woke up early before my classes to bring an apple for me. He decided to go help me after his discussion with my mother.

I could not imagine what my life would be without teachers. A teacher is the person who lives between darkness to change it to lightness. I am thankful for everyone who taught me at least a letter. Either who taught me in schools or out them; like: elderly who I learned from their experiences, online classes or YouTube. I have great teachers in Saudi Arabia and in the United States, such as Nora, Aisha, Mona, Mariam, Alia, wafa, Najla, Afaf, Hanan, Lina, Scott, Melina, Ramandeep, Patrick, George, Maya, Chris, Anderieana, CJ, and Taylor.

Kindness and poor people are very important in my life, because I learned many things from them. I learned how the respect and smiling can do what the power cannot do. Also I learned that whoever has kindness has the most value from a lot of people. If you want to be lovely you should to be kind, and that is way I love them. In addition, I am thankful for poor people who changed my way of thinking. I lived near a poor family for a week. It was one of my favorite remembrances. I really believe that money is not everything. They gave my live great meaning if I help them when I was pessimism and I saw their smiling, I am ashamed of myself.

My family, teachers, kind and poor people are very important, because they could change many things in my life. As a kind of thanking, I would write books about them. Thank you so much for everything. Everyone should know that our lives will have meaning if we consider everyone and everything around us. There are a lot of amazing and rare, but sometimes we could not see them.

The War between the Two Soccer Gods

Jungjun Bae

R/W 40

Soccer is my favorite sport. There are a lot of good soccer players. However, there are two soccer player gods: Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo. Both of them transcend human power. They have been the best for several years. People who like soccer, often compare these two gods. However, they are different people and also have their own strengths.

One of the gods, Messi, is small. In terms of physical build, he looks like he would have a disadvantage. However,

height doesn't matter for Messi. He uses his small build to his advantage. When he dribbles the ball, he is very fast, and he keeps the ball close to his foot. His dribbling is so short and quick. His role is very extensive on his team. He doesn't have a position. Sometimes, he helps to defend the opponent's players. He also passes the ball to his team in the middle area for making a chance. However, his best strength is forward. His shooting is very accurate and delicate. Another characteristic of his is that he is a Barcelona man. His team has been FC Barcelona since 2004. He said, "I want to retire on this team." He will spend his soccer career just on one team. It is very special.

The other god, Ronaldo, has a perfect physique for a soccer player. He is one of the fastest players. Although his dribble speed is slower than Messi, his acceleration is faster. He always shows us great dribble skills. He has various skills, and he is also a good free-kick kicker. When he kicks a ball at the free-kick, the ball moves like magic. Ronaldo's positions are striker and winger. Because of his huge speed and dribble skill, even the best opponent defenders are embarrassed by him. When he was in Manchester United FC, he played as a winger. At that time, he got a lot of prizes. Since then, he has been called the best winger in the world. Interestingly, he has been on many prestigious teams: FC porto, Manchester United FC, and Real Madrid FC, which is his team now.

Both of these soccer players have achieved great success. However, they are very different. Messi doesn't look like a soccer player because of his physique. In contrast, Ronaldo has the perfect build for a soccer player. On the other hand, Ronaldo can't take various positions on the field like Messi. One of the reasons that people complain about Messi is that he has been on only one team. They think that Messi won't be the best player, if he goes to another team. On the other hand, Ronaldo has proved to us his value by changing teams.

These two soccer players, Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo, are also the best rivals. They always show us fantastic playing. Although they are like enemies to each other, they are colleagues, with unique characteristics. We are happy to watch their achievements. Because of them, we can be excited when we watch soccer.

Survive or Die

Gabriel Guerra

R/W 43

Imagine that you are in one of the most dangerous places in the whole world with no water and food. You can't stay alive without knowing the main survival skills. On TV there are two channels that explain how to survive: the Discovery Channel and Animal Planet, and both have many interesting programs such as *Man vs. Wild* and *Survive*. They have many common characteristics and some differences. These programs talk about how one person can survive in a remote place. Also, all the episodes document their efforts to survive and find a way back to civilization.

Man vs. Wild talks about how Bear Grylls survives in all the uninhabited places in the world. It has an episode where they are talking about how he can find the way civilization when he was in Siberia. Similar to *Man vs. Wild*, *Survive* has an episode where two men tried to survive in the Wyoming Mountains. In both programs, they don't have any survival tools, only a knife and a lighter and the things they can find in the ground, trees, lakes, rivers, etc. On the other hand, *Man vs. Wild* has only one man trying to survive, and *Survive* has two men trying to keep alive but there is the main problem, because they are two and both has different knowledge about the nature. Bear Grylls is the main character of the first program, he is a British adventurer, writer and television presenter; also he was in the British Army and served in the United Kingdom Special Forces Reserve. However, Cody Lundin and Dave Canterbury are the main characters in the *Survive* program. Canterbury, like Bear, was a soldier; and Lundin is a naturalist.

In the Grylls program, he needs to survive in the Siberia's frozen mountains and go across a forest to grab the train that can take him to the civilization. In the first part he was on the top of a mountain, and he tried to go down because of the low temperature. When he went down, he found a dead deer and he cut the skin to take out some meat to ate it. After that, he went to a cave to sleep there for the night. On the other hand, Cody and Dave were in the Wyoming Mountains on winter, first they found some equipment of other people that have been there days ago, now comparing the two programs, they have some extra tools that can help them to survive, like a parachute and some ropes. After that they pass through a frozen river. Similar to Bear, they found a dead moose to eat at night. Then they dug a cave in the snow to sleep there and keep the body temperature.

Back to *Man vs. Wild*, Bear Grylls continue his way to the train but he encountered a frozen lake, in the same way like Dave and Cody, he tried to pass across it because if he tried to go around he can spend such as 2 days. When he crossed the river, he saw a forest and he went there because he thought that there he can find some food and a place to sleep and he was right. Once there he caught a squirrel and he made a bonfire and he slept between the trees. In the other side, there are Cody and Dave trying to went down to the forest to did a bonfire and find food, too. They went down following a river and they knew that if they find a river, it can take them to the civilization because the people used rivers to fishing and other things.

Bear find the way to the train between the forest and he saw a train and he ran to grab it. Dave and Cody followed the river down to the towns and they found a man that is fishing in the river, he takes them to the town. Both found a way to survive in the nature eating animals, building refuges to sleep in the night, and others.

These two programs are very interesting, because they explain who can the nature can confuse you if you don't have any knowledge about it. In *Man vs. Wild*, Bear Grylls shows us how to keep alive in Siberia, one of the coolest places in the world, and who to found food and water. On the other hand, there is *Survive* a program where two men explain

the same techniques to survive in the Wyoming Mountains. Finally, they say that you can't survive one day without knowing these important skills.

Christmas is Finally Here

Saeed Alahmari

R/W 60

One night, I had a long flight that lasted for about thirteen hours from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to Washington, United States. Immediately after airport procedures had finished, I headed to a hotel. I was really exhausted. When I was pulling my suitcase in the hotel and heading to my room, where I could get a deep sleep, I found in the aisle some ladies, they started smiling on me, and they said by the full mouth "Happy New Year". That was nice of them and also left a great impression about American's courtesy. I walked to my room without even eating a single bite. When I got in my room, I did all my obligatory prayers, and I fell asleep without changing my clothes. I slept for around 12 hours continuously. The next day, I found Saudis student completing his document in the lobby. He told me about what he heard the previous night of loud music and scream in the hotel and others celebration parties. I answered, "No Idea, I was in such a deep sleep". This turned out later that it was the best idea for me to sleep before any party started. However, during my staying in Washington DC at Christmastime, I noticed how people congratulate others even if they don't know them. But also the Christmas days were so cold which accelerated my departure to lovely Gainesville. Today, we are getting closer to Christmas again, when it is my custom to congratulate my teachers and my friends by saying "Have one year ahead to new Christmas with next article and new experience".

A Letter to Maria Virginia

Genesis Aular

R/W43

Hi best friend Maria Virginia. I'm going to return to Maracaibo in April. I haven't heard from you in a long time. I love Gainesville. It's so beautiful and save here.

I want to tell you the most memorable experience that I've had in Gainesville. It was in my birthday. I have an Arabic friend and he knew that I wanted to go to Miami for my birthday. He lied to me, he told me "No, I can't go; I have to go to Tallahassee to take a driving test because I have already passed many times the speed limit I got many tickets, I should go to take the test."

I was sad because all my friends were in Miami but at midnight he surprised me. He arrived to my house. He told me "You have to wake up tomorrow at 7:00 am"

I asked "Why?"

He said "We are going to go to Miami tomorrow at 8:00 am"

I was so excited when he told me that I yelled, because I couldn't believe him. I was so happy I felt like if I

could climb Everest just like that. I woke up at 7 am as he told me. I had the best birthday that I've ever had. I went to the beach but I couldn't swim because the waves were as large as a skyscraper so the people couldn't go into the water. I went to many restaurants. On Friday, I went to Olive Garden with my friends, we ate Italian food; it was delicious, like food of the Gods. After we ate dinner, they ordered a cake to sing me "Happy birthday". We sang in English, Arabic and Spanish. Also on Sunday we went to the malls in Orlando; it was awesome because the malls in Orlando are so cheap and we could buy a lot of things.

My friend and I went to Miami Beach at night and we walked to the entire boulevard holding hands; furthermore in Miami Beach we went to a café and we smoked hookah with my friends and the guy who served the food was gay. He wanted to talk with Luis the entire night. It was so funny. You were the only person that I missed for have a perfect day. I really miss you.

With love,
Genesis

Wear a Uniform or Not? [100 minute timed essay]

Eduard Fajardo
R/W 52

Over the past many years all schools have had different opinions and politics about what their students have to wear. A big percentage of those schools believe that the best way to obtain students equality is requiring them to wear a uniform. In contrast, other schools think that the students have the freedom to choose their own clothes and accessories. However, both options are equally valid when trying to explain whether the use of uniforms is good or not for schools. As we will see, using uniforms can reduce discipline problems, decrease social problems, but it can also prevent freedom of expression.

One of the most common facts in the school is the fights between students. Usually, they might start by differences about beliefs, religions, customs, ways of expression, music, or even clothes that students wear. According to school board members of Polk County, Florida, "The uniforms would reduce discipline problems" (The Associated Press, 2009, p. 1). This means that students who wear uniforms have a better behavior in their classes than students who do not. For example, I remember a time when some students from my school who were using soccer team's t-shirt had a fight against other students that liked another soccer team. In this case, the problem was caused by a difference between two groups of people which just disagreed on sports. Here we can see the problem could have been solved if the students would have worn uniforms.

Not only discipline but also social problems could be solved using uniforms. An anonymous student at The Rock School in Gainesville said, "The uniforms do level the playing field in a way. Students don't get lumped into groups

according to style or financial means" (Carlson, 2001, p. 1). Regarding this topic, in many opportunities I have been a witness of discrimination in different ways. For example, some children can be rude when they do not accept others' social conditions in a specific group or club. Also, problems, such as what kind of clothes you wear, or what kind of music you listen too, are pretty common in private schools where parents usually spend thousands of dollars on their children. Again, if students wear an equal uniform, nobody would know which social condition the other person has.

Opposed to this concept, some people believe that wearing uniforms, students would not express their real personality, or that it would "limit their freedom of expression and lump them into one category [which] may or may not express their attitudes," said the Rock School's students (Carlson, 2004, p. 1); though eventually they will have to obey some school rules that they do not like. However, many people think that this statement is not true because students have different ways to show their values and skills. They can show their own personality by participating in sports, academic challenges, or even just talking. They do not have to follow or use any specific clothes to show what they are.

In conclusion, each school has the freedom to implant their own politics. Likewise, students have several rights, but I agree with the opinion that schools should adopt the idea of using uniforms because it is the best way to generate a concept of responsibility among the students.

References

- Carlson, O. (2004, February 24). In a Similar Fashion. *The Gainesville Sun*, p. 1.
The Associated Press (2009, May 8). School Uniform Policy Angers Some Parents. *The Gainesville Sun*, p. 1.

The Land of the Sun

Jose Luis Lujan
R/W 20

Did you know that Venezuela has the most beautiful cities in the world? One of them is Maracaibo. This city is called "The Land of the Sun" because the weather is very hot there. Maracaibo is located in the North-West of the country. This excellent location offers to the city many advantages like business, culture, and tourism.

Oil is the base of Venezuela's economy and business, and Maracaibo has the biggest deposit of oil in the country. It extracts more than 60% of the oil in Venezuela. In Maracaibo you can find different types of industries in addition to the extraction industries. For example, Maracaibo handles oil refining, and transfers the oil to different products like: plastic, gas, gasoil, and synthetic clothes. Because all these things Maracaibo is very important for Venezuela's economy.

Maracaibo also has a lot of culture because the people who live there are mix of people from other countries, but this happened many years ago. One of the most important characteristics of culture in Maracaibo is the music. It has its own kind of music, and its name is Gaita. This type of music

is played with typical Venezuelan instruments like: maracas, furruco, tambora, and the cuatro. Something else is the food. You can't find these types of food in others countries. Like the music, the food is made with typical ingredients of the region. The city's religion is Catholicism. Therefore, it has many monuments and buildings about the religion, like the famous "Basilica de La Chinita". In fact, this building is recognized throughout Venezuela. For Venezuelans the customs and traditions characterize this special city.

One of reason why this city is visited is that it has many places of interest. There is a big lake near to the city, and it's the largest in the country. The most famous monument is the "Rafael Urdaneta Bridge". This bridge is the longest in Venezuela. Some tourist sites are more natural like "The Lighting of Catatumbo". Sometimes, at night, above the lake we can see lighting on the horizon, but they're very far away. That's why we can't hear them. In this city every November 18th a festival is celebrated in honor of the Virgin Chinita. She's the patron of the city. This festival lasts only a week, but people come from all over the country to see it. You will have fun if you go to see one of these places.

In conclusion, Maracaibo is the base of Venezuela's economy and very important for trade. You can learn about different cultures there, and you can find and have fun in different places. This city is beautiful for me, and I hope you can visit and enjoy all the attractions that this city offers. I suggest you visit and learn more about it.

Letter to Myself

Mario Curbelo

R/W 43

Dear Mario Curbelo,

If you are reading this, what I was afraid happened and you are not crazy: the zombies have arrived. To understand why they appeared, I have to explain that there is a virus in the air; consequence of the chemical and biological terrorist attack the worst person in the world after Bin Laden called the CPT; they exploded a nuclear reactor and the gas spread. Many people died or that was what everybody thought. The truth is the terrorist group found a way to revive the dead; they don't feel, they just want to eat your brain.

I don't know what year I'm going to read this letter but this happened on May 31st, 2015 when I turned 18; I was in a party and the reactor exploded in Ratle City. All the citizens died. Two months after the explosion, the zombies went to the closest city that was Gainesville, which is where I was; everything was in chaos when they arrived. I was afraid I didn't know what to do, I had no experience with guns, but I had luck to know a friend who knows how to use them. He told me "Hey man it's easy; you don't have to worry."

"But I have never had a gun," I said.

"Always be relaxed, in that way your arm and your aim will be steady"

"Ok and the reload?"

"When you feel a click, that means that the weapon is empty, but always check how many bullets there are in the magazine"

"You get it, thanks for the advice"

Thanks to Gabriel I learned how to use guns.

Remember that the only way to kill zombies is with a single shot in the head but if you don't feel sure if the zombie is dead, go back 5 steps and shoot it again in the head; this is called the double tap. I recommend that you get a pistol because the pistols are easy to use. There is a pistol called Glock; the accuracy of its pistol is the ideal to kill zombies. Always practice your aim with empty bottles. I hope you may not have problems. Find a military knife; this knife is very sharp. Always take your gun with you; at worst, if you are surrounded by a lot of zombies and you lose your weapon, don't waste your time looking for it: run away!

Every morning go out to run a couple of miles, so you have good conditions to run when it is necessary. Make good friends, you never know when they are going to save you. A good couple of friends are always necessary because in that way you won't feel alone, you will have someone to talk, and they can help you survive. The food is very important. Maybe in those years there will probably not be much food so eat whatever you can. Always ration the food and the ammo. Always think about things before you do something.

The worst thing that would happen is if a zombie bites you. I don't know if there will be any cure but if there isn't any cure, you must go away from your group because I don't want you start to eat your friends; my next recommendation is probably sad but you have to do it, take your gun, point to your head and shoot yourself; if you are going to die you are going to do it like a man.

Take care and good luck.

With love, your past.

Life Changing Treasure

Wei-An Chen

R/W 40

Everyone has felt lonely before. When I was 20 years old, I dropped out my college, because I lost my passion for computer science. I transferred, and moved to a city where I had never been. It never rains but it pours: I also broke up with my girlfriend. When I was confused and felt lonely, I met the treasure of my life. "Wen-Zi" means meatball. My meatball is not a kind of food. It's a golden retriever. I met him when he was four months old. At this meeting, he rolled on his back and exposed his belly, and I immediately decided to take him home.

When Wen-Zi was young, he looked small, chubby, and fluffy. He walked unsteadily just like a little chicken. A few months later, he had grown up quickly. He became four times bigger than before, and his hair grew longer. He looked like a little lion. Today, he is still smaller than average male dog, and he has a baby face, so he always looks like he is one year old. He has a good temper-- never angry. Even if you pull his tail or grab his food, he is always smiling and friendly.

We did everything together: going to the park, watching TV, going shopping, and even taking a bath together. If I went out alone, he would wait for me. I no longer

felt lonely. One day, I was sick, and I couldn't do anything. I just slept all day. When I woke up, I saw he had stayed with me and watched me. He didn't wake me up, even though he didn't eat all day.

Since we have lived together, my life has changed. I no longer feel lonely, and I feel happy and more energetic every day. My passion for life, and studying has returned. A year after he came home with me, I was back to my original school. Two years later, I finished my college. Because of Wen-Zi, my life is more colorful than before.

Now, Wen-Zi lives with my parents in Taiwan. We are family. I miss him very much, since I have come to the U.S. We have daily video call by Skype. I cherish the time with him. I will treasure our memories during our life together.

Valentina's Halloween Mug 1

Awaad Aldera, Isliany Araujo Yopez, Jenia Kovaleva, Maria Jose Moncada Vergara, Hui Ye Zhu (Group Descriptive Paragraph)
R/W21

It is a wonderful and pretty mug of Halloween. There are many different colors. For example, there is purple, orange, black, brown and gray. The mug has a nice handle. The handle has a picture of a withered tree. Under the tree, you can see a pumpkin. There are other pumpkins, bats and headstones. The pumpkin wears a straw hat and the headstones have terrifying faces. It is a nice, good Halloween cup to drink hot coffee.

Valentina's Halloween Mug 2

Khalid Alfahad, Afnan Alhejaili, Juan Mejias Stabilito, Miguel Mura Higuera (Group Descriptive Paragraph)
R/W21

The Halloween mug has many things. The mug has orange and black colors. It has many bats and dry trees and a cemetery. This mug has a haunted house and a frightening pumpkin. It has a dry tree and a goblin and two ghosts. It has a cemetery. It has a handle. As you can see, this mug is very funny and pretty and you can drink coffee from it.

Steps of Success

Asma Abdulrahman
R/W 30

The concept of success differs from person to another. All of these concepts converge in everyone's desire to satisfy himself and achieve his ambition, regardless of what this ambition is. In order to achieve his goals, I think he has to follow some steps that will help him. Some of these steps are:

The first step is the desire to succeed. Everyone has to have a lot of desire to change for the better. The first and most important step is making a decision to move forward on the road to success. The second step is the self-respect. Everyone has to respect himself and his humanity. He has to understand that humans are vulnerable to failure and success. That is why he has to enjoy his successes and take advantage of the mistakes the next time. The third step is confidence in himself. Everyone must trust himself and his abilities, because there are no conditions for success. The fourth step is settings goals. That is the practical step in the road to success. The fifth step is he should take advantage of mistakes and make them a way to teach him. Those mistakes he had made will be his guide the next time. The sixth step to success is the determination and effort. Everyone must do everything possible in order to achieve his goal and to stay away from despair and frustration which can lead to returning.

These are some of the steps that help to succeed. Finally, always remember this phrase: "Do not dream to be what you want but you have to what are you want". This is one of the best idioms that my parents taught me to achieve my goals.

Science of Sleep And Dreams: What Makes Them More Interesting?

Serhat Burmaoglu
Grammar for Writing

.....
*I have been happy, tho' in a dream.
I have been happy- and I love the theme:
Dreams! in their vivid coloring of life,
As in that fleeting, shadowy, misty strife
Of semblance with reality, which brings
To the delirious eye, more lovely things
Of Paradise and Love- and all our own!
Than young Hope in his sunniest hour hath known.*
Dreams by Edgar Allen Poe

Dreams! In their vivid coloring of life... As described by Edgar Allen Poe, dreams are the reflection of the life and have some contrasts in its nature. According to the researchers, humans spend one-third of their lives sleeping. However, there is no scientific or literary consensus on the function of sleeping and dreaming. For conceptualization and achieving a common understanding, not only researchers, but also poets and writers are inspired of dreams. As can be seen above both of the poets are trying to give the different perspectives about dreams and their impacts on one's life.

Moreover, dreams were an important part of life in ancient times also. Before handling dreams as scientific subject, dreams were often written about as presentiment or as guides for action in classical times in the World (Empson, 1989:6). For instance, the Epic of Gilgamesh can be a special example for this. The Assyrian poem, The Epic of Gilgamesh, is regularly accentuated by the dreams of both the hero and his great friend Enkidu. They foretell events, providing a sort of rationale for the extraordinary exploits, the failures and the

tragedy of Gilgamesh. This ancient topic is a good example to show a different usage of dreams as forecasting and from that time to now, different meanings have also been installed to dreams for understanding the spiritual characteristics of dreams.

Indeed, all of these legendary and ancient phenomena pointed out efforts of people to understand the concept of dreams in the pre-scientific thinking era. Even today, there are various issues not understood exactly in relation to dreams. So, dreams and the functions of the brain have been an emerging subject for psychologists and dream scientists. Let's hear about dreams from the mouths of scientists.

Sleep is a common behavior and it represents an important moment that all people need sleep to rest. When the historical progress of sleep studies are examined, we can see that major contributions to understanding the nature of sleep were accomplished at the beginning of the last century with the pioneering studies of Russian physiologist Pavlov (1928) and later with the development of neurophysiology in the western countries (Halasz et al., 2004). What emerged from these initial studies was the sequence of events that rules the cyclic alternation between sleep and wakefulness.

Before the first studies were conducted by some of the scientists, it was believed that brain activity was greatly reduced or absent during sleep (Hobson, 2005). However, this belief changed with the exploration of Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep in 1952. In addition, it was a great surprise to discover that the dynamic brain activation of REM sleep occurred at regular 90-minute intervals and occupied up to 20% of sleep. This fact alone invalidated the belief that sleep was caused by and associated with a cessation of brain activity (Hobson, 2005).

This exploration ignited dream scientists to find and discover the stages of sleep. In a normal seven to eight hour sleep period, scientists find that there are five sleep cycles of approximately 90 minutes' duration, each of which contains different sleep stages. Stage 2 is a comparatively light sleep and Stage 3 or 4 also known as slow-wave sleep or deep sleep. During the REM sleep as another stage, the sleeper is almost conscious and apparently dreaming. At last, the deep sleep is concentrated in the first two cycles, while the lighter stages, Stage 2 and REM, control the later cycles. During each cycle, the sleeper goes through stage 2 on the way "down" to slow-wave sleep and then again on the way "up" to REM sleep (Dotto, 1996). Basically, sleep stages can be divided into two main stages as REM sleep and Non-REM sleep. Non-REM sleep contains the other four stages.

Because REM sleep is the most aroused brain state during sleep, it has been the subject of a large number of basic and clinical studies. But it does not mean that the brain is not functioning in Non-REM sleep. According to the studies, percent recall of dreaming is much higher after REM sleep (an average of 80%) than after Non-REM sleep (5–74%) (Oudiette, 2012). These differences were researched by McNamara et al. (2005) and they posited that REM and Non-REM sleep reflect different brain activation patterns and the level of aggressive interactions would be higher in REM than in Non-REM dreams. According to their findings, the

aggressive social interactions were more characteristic of REM than Non-REM and vice versa. In addition, dream scientists assert that while one is in REM sleep, the Amygdala, which is the part of the brain responsible for negative emotions, is active. Indeed, studying sleep science helped researchers to understand human brain deeply. These studies also push the researchers working on dreams which are significant outcomes of sleep.

Dreams can be considered as a more complex issue than sleep and sleep stages. The production of dreams during sleep is largely unexplained, and its underlying brain mechanisms are mostly unknown. From the sleep studies it is known that 80% of dreams are in REM stage. However there are more questions not to be answered. Why are we dreaming? What do dreams change in our mind and memory? Why don't we remember what we dreamed? These are some of the research questions which dream scientists have tried to find.

In this essay I want to answer the fundamental one of these questions. Why do we dream? The first explanation came from the distinguished psychologist, Freud. Freud used the term 'day-residue' to refer to elements that connected with experiences of the previous day and that he identified in all of the dreams he scrutinized. His detailed descriptions of day-residues in his patients' dreams describing their transformation from memories into dream elements became central to psychoanalytic theory. In short, he thought that one live the day and transform his/her daily observations and emotions to his/her dreams. When one experienced bad events, he may possibly dream badly at night. According to Angier (2007), 75% of people had bad dreams and when it is asked to people to recall how many nightmares they had in the last year, they might say one or two. If they are asked to keep a dream diary, they will report nightmares once or twice a month. So, it can be said that bad dreams and also nightmares are more frequent than what is expected.

Survey and diary studies have also shown that nightmare frequency varies by age. Again, according to Angier (2007) preschoolers are relatively immune to the nightmares, but not so their elder siblings. Approximately 25% of children ages 5 to 12 report being awakened by bad dreams at least once a week. The rates of nightmares climb through adolescence, peak in young adulthood, and then, like so much else in life, begin to drop. The average 55-year-old has one-third the number of nightmares as the average 25-year old. Even though dreams are very frequent in our daily life, the importance of dreams will be an issue in future as Nietzsche forecasted at 1882 with reflecting a different perspective.

"We have no dreams at all or interesting ones. We should learn to be awake the same way — not at all or in an interesting manner." (Friedrich Nietzsche, 'The Gay Science', Third Book, aphorism 232, 1882)" (Original Reference is Perogamvros and Schwartz, 2012)

According to these studies conducted in the literature, it can be said that the mystery of dreams has been tried to solve by researchers, poets, and philosophers since ancient times. However, even though the experimental techniques over the last years allow more direct and systematic investigations on the neurobiological features of dreaming, it is hardly to say that every aspect of dreams and sleep are well known. Because of these on-going efforts, it can be easily forecasted that the sleep and dream studies will be conducted in the future and the secret of human brain will not be a mystery.

Have a good night!
Have sweet dreams!

References

- Angier, N. (2007) "In the Dreamscape of Nightmares, Clues to Why We Dream at All" *The New York Times*, October 23, <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/23/science/23angi.html?pagewanted=print>
- Dotto, L. (1996) "Sleep Stages, Memory and Learning" *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, Apr. 15, 154 (8), 1193-1196.
- Halasz P., Terzano M., Parrino L., and Dodiz B. (2004) "The nature of arousal in sleep" *J. Sleep Res.*, 13, 1-23.
- Hobson, J.A. (2005) "Sleep is of the brain, by the brain and for the brain" *Nature*, 437, doi:10.1038/nature04283.
- McNamara P., D. McLaren, D. Smith, A. Brown and R. Stickgold (2005) "A "Jekyll and Hyde" within: Aggressive versus Friendly Interactions in REM and Non-REM Dreams" *Psychological Science*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 130-136.
- Oudiette, D. Dealberto M.J., Uguccioni G., Golmard J.L., Merino-Andreu M., Tafti, M., Garma L., (2012) "Dreaming without REM sleep" *Consciousness and Cognition*, 21, 1129-1140.
- Pavlov, I. P. (1928) *Lectures on Conditioned Reflexes*. International Publishers, New York.
- Perogamvros L., Schwartz S. (2012) "The roles of the reward system in sleep and dreaming" *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, 36, 1934-1951.
- Schwartz S., Arnulf I. (2012) "Dreaming without REM sleep" *Consciousness and Cognition*, 21, 1129-1140.

Poetry

R/W40

Nestor Chavez

You and me here
like a strong wind in December
The time goes fast

Yosef Alattas

big dream came from big mine
keep going to get what you need
hard work hard work

Luis Mejias

Love for sports cars
many ideas inside my head
is like having a new toy

Ana Silva

Time to work in Fall
and waiting for Summer
to take some rest

Arianna Monico

beautiful girl
white like the snow on my town
and red lips like a rose

Pedro Pico

Love in the air
Our lips really close
should I kiss you

people getting warm
having a perfect dinner
winter's coming

Serkan Gümiş

Corner on the street
Lonely man cold
which way is true

Butterfly on the air
with limited time
watch your step

Maria José Ballesteros

love in the winter
like a freezing storm
would disturb my soul.

Jorge Canas

Feel the winter on my shoulders
cold and white as snow
but without seeing any more than a cloud on my hope

Da Mi Kim

A beetle is climbing the wall
It tried its best but suddenly fell down
Like our future can't expect.

Jasser Alharbi

The dreams make us close
even if you are so far
to see you every night

The Importance of Money

Amal Abdulrahman

R/W41

The magnificent world has been created for people. Everything around us makes the life great and gives value to it: organisms, plants, sciences, and technology. However, a lot of people think that money is the supreme demand of the world. Is this true? As a matter of fact, I am one of the people who believe that money is not the main focus of life, but it is one of many things which help to give satisfaction to people. Perhaps people have converse opinions, but they can all agree that the money is important.

Money is analogous to weapons because both can be beneficial and harmful. Money is beneficial if it used to protect. People use it to protect themselves from many perils, such as hunger poverty. On the other hand, money can be harmful if it used to ruin others and sometimes themselves, even if people do not realize it. For example, when people use money to get drugs or swindle others.

In general money is important, but its importance differs among people. Some of them fight to have a little; simply to survive. Others think that money is very important in order to have essentials; such as food, a small house, or a car. Others want money to have luxuries like many mansions, many cars, to take many trips, and some of those people is that they never think about others who really need money. They can be the most selfish and spiteful people in the world.

Depending on the importance of money, there are many kinds of people. The first kind is Misers. They do not goals in life except making money and storing it. They never have a realistic way of thinking about the importance of money at least for themselves. They can be ugly and obnoxious even to their own families. Others waste money; these people spend a lot of money on things they do not need. They never think about helping others. Usually they die before they find what really gratifies them. There are some altruistic individuals. They spend much money to help others. They are very lucky in the world, because the effect of their helping often continues even after they die!

Everyone has many goals and dreams he hopes to achieve. Does money seem like a good solution for the problems in the world? Is it the only thing that people need?

There is a great saying that states:

"You can buy a house, but you cannot buy a great family.

You can buy a bed, but you cannot buy sleep.

You can buy a watch, but you cannot buy time.

You can buy a book, but you cannot buy knowledge.

You can buy a position, but you cannot buy respect.

You can buy medicine, but you cannot buy health.

You can buy a candle for a romantic dinner, but you cannot buy love."

So, money is not the only thing to achieve goals. In addition, it can be a hindrance. Many studies infer that many rich people are the most miserable and cheerless people if they don't help others even if they achieve their goals. They are poor in their relationships because most of their focus is on

self-interest. However, poor people can be the most good – hearted, and they are rich in their relationships because of their sincerity.

At the end of life, everyone will be forgotten, except from what he does to others. For example, if he built at least a room for someone who did not have one, his volunteer will continue even if he died. So we should join kindness and mercy with money together. We should not forget that money is a device but it is not a goal. Money can help achieve great things, but only in the hands of people who want to achieve great things.

Time of Justice

Saeed Alahmari

R/W 60

Most societies around the world are treated fairly, get their rights, and have religious freedom. The West countries are the best example of that. However, Iran is totally different and much hidden than what Media has revealed. The society is divided into many religious monotheistic groups. However there are many controversial topics between them which create enmity between each other. Historically, Iran used to be almost Sunni Muslims until the 16th century when Iran changed to be Shiite Muslims. After the Othman empire had ruled the Iran regions, the Sunni Muslims pushed to the borders of the Iran, where they are right now distributed close to Pakistan and Afghanistan and Turkey and Arab Gulf. There are about 15 Millions of Sunni Muslims in Iran. Ali Rıza Gafuri said that "Since the Islamic revolution of 1979, Sunnis have been perceived as a national threat". Consequently, there are many problems have been facing the Sunni Muslims in Iran. The Sunni Muslims are considered by Shiite Muslims that they are not Muslims, not cultural, not civilian (Gafuri, 2012). The violence and discrimination between Sunni's Muslims and Shiite is stemming from a controversial believes and religious historical ideas.

The Shiite discrimination in Iran toward the Sunni is in many types which control their lives and change Sunnis' life to misery. "Systemized governmental discrimination towards minority groups results in a wide socioeconomic gap and fosters an uneven distribution of power, resources and socio-cultural status" (Susman, 2009). Sunni- Muslims are not allowed to name their children as they want, but they forced to name them according to a book contains some of Persian poet even though they are Arab. This book does not provide some names of the leaders whom followed Prophet Mohammed such as Abo- Baker, Omer, Othman, and Aisha the wife of Prophet Mohammed. If the Sunni Muslim names his child by any of these names or others from outside the specific names in the book; the civil registers will not register this name in the ID this take the Sunni Society back to the slavery era, However, the Shiite's societies in the surrounding regions are live in peace without any restrictions in their freedom. (Ali Rıza Gafuri, 2012).

The Sunni Muslims are allowed to work in military, but they are not allowed to be officers at all. Therefore, the

Sunni- Muslims are facing a lot of discrimination and offends even if there are at their works. Moreover, most the applications for employments contain the question” Are you Sunni or Shiite?” (Gafuri, 2012). This clearly apply that the government which is totally Shiites are trying to take the control over the county and the region. Moreover, the Sunni Muslims are not allowed to be leader of most critical positions in the country such as Minister. This means that the Shiite has all the control of the entire country, and they are rejecting any Sunni progress.

It is true that education in Iran has been progressing for the last two decades. However, this improving emerges with a discrimination of the government toward some sectarian groups like Sunni Muslims. The education in Iran intentionally has been given and taught Shiites’ believes and insult the Sunnis’ believes. (Gafuri, 2012) said that the courses given in the schools are mostly about the Shiite believes, and the Sunni believes are mostly ignored; which mainly targeted to praise the children and student to believe in Shiite even though they are Sunni. However, this totally conflicted with the religious freedom. Moreover, the printing of Sunni books is not free which is leading to reduce the publishing of Sunni Books. In schools curriculums, the Sunni languages are not tough, the Sunni Muslims are not allowed to wear their traditional clothes, and those whom changed their belief to Shiite will get a change in the treatment.

In the religious fairs, the Iranian government imposes all kind of discrimination and insulting against Sunni Muslims. Sunni Muslims’ Mosques are demolished and not supported by the state but supported by the Muslims community; however, the Shiite Muslims’ Mosques are supported from the states. Moreover, there are many restrictions in worshipping in these Mosques. For example, in Tehran “the capital of Iran” there is no single Sunni Muslims’ Mosque, where 2 Million of Sunni Muslims are living there. Muslims are used to do Friday prayer in Pakistan Embassy or Indonesia Embassy but right now they are not allowed to do so. Surprisingly, The Sunni Scholars are not allowed to meet together or travel abroad; however, most of the movements of those scholars are monitored. This applied that the government are opposing intentional punishment toward Sunni Muslims (Gafuri, 2012).

Sunni Muslims are insulted by the Shiite Muslims in TV and the journalism; when the Omar, Othman, and Aisha are attached by the unfair, respectful Shiite Muslims, while they are taking control of the media in the county. Moreover, the Sunni Muslims have no a single TV channel, newspaper, and radio station, while others groups are have such as Armenian, and Zoroastrian. Moreover, many of Sunni Muslims scholars are suffering from a lot of punishment in the prison, most of them are executed unfairly by the government. While others are arrested, assassinated, and others are missed.

This discrimination among these two sectarian groups in Iran is facing by the peaceful and fair treatment of Shiite and Sunni Muslims in the surrounding countries in the Middle East. However, Iran is intervening in the surrounding countries fairs and claims that they are unfair in their treatment such as Saudi Arabia. Moreover, Iran is supporting

other Shiite Muslim in Iraq, Bahrain, and Lebanon. In recent year when Iran has been trying to get nuclear weapon this is going to worsen the sectarian violence in the country and the neighbor countries. Iranian policies toward their nations unbearable and required the United Nations, and Human Rights control the populist Iranian government, therefore, the entire world should justice and take action against Iran policies.

Memory Poems

R/W21

Awwad Aldera in the USA

24 years old
Going to Jacksonville
Buying things for my family

Khalid Alfahad in Riyadh

15 years old
Playing soccer
Listening to music
Talking with my family

Afnan Alhejaili in London

15 years old
Shopping in the mall with my family
Getting lost
Crying

Isliany Araujo Yopez in Guri

17 years old
Walking on the street
Talking with my friends
Enjoying the moment

Jenia Kovaleva in the Philippines

21 years old
Traveling with my mother
Learning how to scuba dive
Taking photos underwater

Juan Mejias Stabilito in Orlando

18 years old
Learning about a new city
Enjoying Universal Studios and Theme Park

Maria Jose Moncada Vergara in Florida

17 years old
Traveling with my family in the US
Dancing and playing with my sisters

Miguel Mura Higuera in Coro

15 years old
Driving an ATV
Driving in the Venezuelan desert
Having fun with my friends

Antonix Quiaro Fuente in Venezuela

13 years old

Driving in my father's SUV

Listening to my father say "Drive your sister to school."

Driving my sister to school (illegally!)

Mikhail Yacoub Yacoub in Florida

17 years old

Learning English in Gainesville

Learning about Florida

Huiye Zhu in China

22 years old

Doing business with my family

Learning new things all the time

Analyzing Data from World Facebook: Differences among 5 Countries

Soo Wol Kim (Gloria)

Advanced Informal English

The World Facebook shows a lot of information on the history, people, government, economy, geography, communications, transportation, military, and transnational issues for 267 different countries in the world. My data shows a correlation between the areas and population among 5 countries: South Korea, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the US and world. Among the countries, the US has the largest area and population. The smallest area is South Korea, but Saudi Arabia has the smallest population even if though it is much bigger than South Korea. It means that there can be a positive correlation between a country's area and its population but not always. In other words, the relationship between population density and habitat size can be considerably connected, but recent reviews of the topic have revealed that there is a great deal of variation. A variety of different mechanisms have been offered to account for the variation. The different mechanisms include climate condition, immigration rates, methodological problems and increasing amounts of non-habitat.

My data also define the notion of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and mention a relationship between GDP and different factors. What is the difference between GDP and per capita GDP? GDP takes into account all of the goods produced and services made available in a country over a specific period of time. GDP is a number that will ultimately indicate the overall economic health of the country. However, GDP per capita is a measure that results from GDP divided by the size of the nation's overall population. It means GDP per capita is the amount of money that each individual gets in that particular country. A country with a high GDP but with an extremely large population will cause a low GDP per capita. The GDP per capita provides a much better determination of living standards as compared to GDP alone. Actually, some living conditions in many countries are strongly correlated with the level or growth rates of that country's GDP and GDP per capita. For example, when a country's level or growth rate

of GDP increases, its average literacy rates, the health of its population, internet users and military expenditure also increase. These different conditions are connected to human rights. We can talk about different elements related to GDP one by one. First, a higher GDP per capita means usually more investment in education. Better educated people have better educated children and so on, and this cycle of education has long-lasting benefits for growth of the countries. Second, wealthy countries have a lower Infant Mortality Rates (IMR) because they have the ways to invest in healthcare, sanitation, drugs etc. The Infant Mortality Rates (IMR) is the ratio of the number of deaths among children less than one year old. The death of an infant is often subject to external factors, especially in developing countries. Poor water quality, an improper food supply, low quality of health services, and a high level of infectious diseases such as malaria have an effect on a high IMR. The IMR is therefore considered a good sign of the level of health in a community. The current worldwide average is just under forty per thousand live births. All the countries I chose, except Iran, have a lower level than the world average level and the case of Iran can be mentioned as a surprising one in the latter part. Third, the Internet made an Industrial Revolution in the 18th century and is causing economic growth across the world. According to a new report by McKinsey, Internet use has created a GDP growth of 3.4 percent in 13 countries (Sweden, Germany, France, U.K., U.S., South Korea, Canada, Italy, Japan, India, China, Brazil and Russia). Most of the countries which have high GDPs have many internet users. The internet had an influence on the web industries and has created new jobs. Finally, military expenditure is also closely related to GDP. Saudi Arabia is one of the world's most armed nations and it has an oil-based economy with strong government controls over major economic activities. This economic power can cover expenditures on public security and police. Overall, previously mentioned conditions are associated with GDP and GDP per capita. One of the surprising things was that even if Iran's economy is the eighteenth largest in the world by purchasing power parity (PPP), Iran's literacy rate is relatively low and its Infant Mortality is quite high. Due to the possibility of the correlation with external factors, the rate of literacy and infant death rate can vary, but finding the solution to the problems will be necessary for the people's welfare. One more surprising thing is the rate of unemployment in Korea. It is 9.8% and it ranks 104th in the world. Objectively, it's not so bad, but unemployment is one of the biggest social problems in Korea and almost all the students who graduate from universities have a hard time finding jobs. The society will have to look for reasonable ways to employ them in the right way. GDP gives important elements as to how well a country is doing. However, well-being and standard of living are only partially a matter of financial or monetary wealth. Some argue that higher income is positively associated with happiness and life satisfaction but that the positive connection cannot be perfectly established. There are more important things to consider -- like happiness, for example. The most important thing is people's real contentment in their lives. It's time to admit that there's something more to life than money, and it's

time we focused not just on GDP, but on GWB - general well-being or GNH – gross national happiness. Well-being can't be measured by money or sold in markets. It's about the love of our surroundings, the quality of our culture and, above all, the strength of our human relationships. Improving our society's sense of well-being is the shortcut to make their people feel secure and pleased. Therefore, to be a true high GDP country, the government and the people will have to strive for what they really want to have and they must be cooperative and harmonious.

References

http://www.indexmundi.com/iran/infant_mortality_rate.html

http://wiki.answers.com/Q/What_is_the_relationship_between_GDP_and_literacy_rate#ixzz2AIahdd2P

Thanksgiving Day

Asma Abdulrahman

R/W 30

There are many holidays in American culture, but most of them prefer Thanksgiving holiday because they meet their family and friends and give thanks together. There are many things in my life that deserve thanks. Firstly, I am thankful for Allah because he gave me many wonderful things. For example, he gave me a best family, health, happiness, a good job, and a beautiful life. Secondly, I am thankful for prophet Mohammed, he died, but I still learn many great things when I read books about his life, such as the meaning of true love, patience, honesty, and sincerity. Thirdly, I thank my parents for giving me everything that I want in my life. They helped me to achieve my success when I study and when I got my job. Also, they have provided many sacrifices for me to achieve my goals, for example, my father retired from his work. He was director of high school and a teacher of English just to help me and my sisters to complete our studying in other countries. Fourthly, I am thankful for everyone who has taught me. Also, I am thankful for my friends. I always find them when I need them, and I benefited from their advice. Finally, I thank Allah every day and ask him to help everyone who has taught me anything. Thanks is a simple word, but it has great meaning .it is positive word either who is kindness or impolite.

The Neuroscience of Dreams

Ruqayyah Althubayani

Grammar for Writing

One day I was flying among a great number of twinkling stars, which were shining like diamonds. They were grouped together like a shape of a dolphin. Suddenly, I heard my mother's voice calling me, "Wake up! You will be late for school." I stayed at bed for a while saying to myself, "What a wonderful dream?" I felt so happy all that day. Every one of us definitely sees dreams that take him or her anywhere to see

anything while they are lying in their beds. Dreams can be defined as a series of actions and images that happen involuntarily in our brains during sleep. A great deal of research in the neuroscience of dreams has been conducted by many scientists for many years. Sleep is a natural case in which humans or even animals close their eyes and lose their consciousness and body motion. During this process, there are three phases during which dreams and nightmares, as well as some physiological changes in the brain, can take place.

Neuroscientists have found out that people pass through three stages of sleep which are deep sleep, the non-REM sleep, and REM sleep. The brain is being mostly passive during the deep sleep. In recent years, dream scientists have discovered that dreams can occur in all these stages; however, the nature of the dreams in most cases might be diverse. During the REM stage, unpleasant dreams can occur since the amygdala, a small structure in the brain which controls our emotions like extreme fear and anger, becomes highly activated. As a result of the activity of amygdala, people can see bad dreams. At Boston University, Dr. Erica Harris and Prof. Patrick McNamara conducted an experiment on a nineteen-year-old boy whose name is Ross to study how we dream. Before he went to sleep, the researchers stuck little wires on his face and head to observe the movement of the muscles of his eyes and chin. Besides, that helped Dr. Harris monitor the waves of his brain through the night. Prof. McNamara asserted that there is no technology that shows if the person is dreaming or not. He added the best way to know is to wake up the person and ask him. Despite all these limitations, Dr. Harris made the experiment on Ross. He went to sleep at 11:00 p.m., while the two researchers were monitoring the waves of his brain. During the phase of deep sleep, Ross did not dream as he reported to them. Dr. Harris noticed when Ross turned into non-REM sleep, the shape of the brain's waves became very close to each other. After this stage, he woke up and wrote positive words about himself like "hope" and "excited" in the questionnaire the researchers had given him to fill out. At 5:00 a.m., he reached the REM stage after which he wrote negative words about himself like "arrogant" and "inexperience". According to Prof. McNamara, the negative impression attributes to the high-activated amygdala as mentioned above.

During the last decades, dream researchers have been able to use brain scanning equipment that has helped them study the activity and inactivity of the brain during dreaming. The number of hours that ordinary people spend in dreaming is about two hours (25%) of their sleep every evening. During the REM stage, discovered in 1952, neuroscientists have found that a great deal of the brain is active while the activity of other parts of the brain dwindles. The active centers are emotional, visual association (visual metaphors), learning and solving problems. The rational thinking, vision, motion, and consciousness are inactive centers in humans' brains during dreaming. Based on Dr. David Van Nuys and Dr. Robert Hoss 's discussion, there are certain functions of dreams; for instance, dreams help people process their emotional issues, learn and solving different problems.

It has been found in many studies that the majority of our dreams are bad dreams. A nightmare can be defined as any bad dream that is bad enough to wake someone up. People can recall few nightmares in a year when they are asked about them, but they report about one nightmare every month when they are asked to write them. Nightmares are more common among children who are five years old or older, while younger children don't see nightmares. Dream scientists don't know exactly why children at the age of five see nightmares. However, scientists attribute seeing nightmares at that age to the development of their brains. Also, there is a relationship between fear tendency in waking life and nightmares. Generally Speaking, nightmares rise between the age of five and the early adulthood, and then they plateau before they begin to decrease. The number of people who see nightmares is massive; approximately 99.99% of people all around the world in all cultures have nightmares. Nightmares are considered as a universal case that everyone in the world has experienced.

To sum up, during sleep, people pass through three stages of sleep in which dreams, that have functions, and physiological changes in the brain occur. Moreover, there is a correlation between nightmares and age. If dream scientists invented a device that can record our dreams, would it be interesting to watch them with friends when we wake up??

Using the Technology in Class Room

Saeed Alahmari

R/W 60

Since the early centuries, the education systems have been improving gradually to eliminate the illiteracy and scatter the knowledge. The tools were primitive, which steadily shifted to the technology that we are using today. These technologies are facilitating the education system such as the projector, computer, email, smart board, scanner, printer, and emails. The using of technology in classrooms is a controversial topic which depends on the needs and thought about the advantage of these electronic devices. Technology should be applied in all classes because their role in ease the work of the teacher, interest the student in learning and focusing in class, and save the time and information.

The using of technology in class play a significant role in the teacher work, and also in his interesting in convey his courses in an acceptable way that gives the students the information in acceptable method. The teacher is able to print the class agenda for each student, write in the computer and pull it up in the board to show the student his writing with colors and graphs. Moreover, the teachers are able to prove the theory or the complicated idea using the internet search engine that provides the information and data in incredible amount of time. Using the technology in each classroom makes the teacher achieve his work in accurate way to reach the goals of the course. However, some people rejected including the technology in classroom, they claim that these

technology weaken the teacher, and the teacher become totally depending on the modern technology.

The students interest for the graphics and the picture that pulled up on the screen is much greater that reading from the book. For example, there are some courses that need to be explained accurately such as computer programming which needs the teacher to pull up the explanation throughout the projector to show the student how the code implemented, processing, and what is the result expected?, class of geographic of the USA which need the map with color to clarify the lesson, simulation shows how the planet rotate in the astronomy class. The scientist proved that the student's mind are concentrating and accepting the information from the picture that the written pages with all details. It is common natural in the human to accept the thing that seems more attractive. Therefore, the technology is one from the attractive equipment in classroom that should be used in the classroom in the educational purpose. However, some believe that the classical way of teaching is more effective in the educational system. They claim that our ancestor learned from the charcoal and the wooden board with the complicated hand writing and they succeed in their life. However, each time has some conditions that control the entire person life. There was neither technology nor advanced and acceptable way in the learning and their ways in learning is no more acceptable in our modern world. And thus, the education is related to the surrounding circumstances of the person life.

The technology in today's classroom is essential thing to save the time and effort. Using technology the teacher and student are able to save about 20 minutes in each hour, when the teacher type the agenda, comments, rules, explanations and others in the computer while it appears in the screen and the students will be emailed copy of the class work. In this way, technology provides a plenty of time for the teacher to explain and for the student to focus and understand the lesson. However, some believe that the class without technology is more saving in time; they claim that the time is almost same of typing on the keyboard or on the chalkboard, and might any problem in computer typing bring the disaster to the classroom such as deleting the text or the computer hanging during the class time. However, most the classrooms are equipped by computers that save the lesson typed and have the antivirus programs that protect the computer and the electronic devices from any electronic viruses which hinder the technology work.

In conclusion, technology in classroom is essential equipment that inclines the efficiency of the education system, save time and effort for each student and teacher, and interest the teacher in the giving his duties and the student in understanding and questioning any problem that he has later. Therefore, the technology should be implemented in all classrooms which could be for educational purpose or security purpose like camera, or others purposes.

Butterfly Bodies

Serkan Gümüs

R/W40

Do you want to change a butterfly's wings using plastic surgery? This operation is very dangerous and expensive for the butterfly. At the end of the surgery, will the butterfly still be beautiful and healthy? It has just one day on the earth. Are we going to take all the beauty in the world using surgery? Everyone is a butterfly in the life, and everyone has a different beauty. Why do we want to change our nature using artificial materials or operations? These are dangerous--harmful for the body and expensive.

One of the major negative effects of artificial procedures is the danger to the body. Surgery is always risky for the body even if it is necessary. After surgery, no one knows exactly what the body will be. For example, I read a magazine article, which was written about a famous singer who had a surgery on her lips. They showed a photo of her after surgery. That scene was totally awful. After the operation, the singer's lips were worse than previously. Then she tried a couple more operations to correct the first one, but these operations failed. This leads to asking ourselves an essential question: is it worth the risk to be temporarily more beautiful?

Even when the procedure goes smoothly, it harms the body. For example, have you ever met a person who has used Botox? His/her faces muscles are frozen. Because of this, they don't control their facial expressions. No one can predict that person's feelings--when he/she is upset or happy. Therefore, they lose an important part of communication. At the same time, this is a health problem. These artificial processes are hazardous not only physically, but also psychologically.

Have you ever researched the cost for skin oils, Botox, or making your face more beautiful? You will find that all of these are also detrimental for your pocket. Money notwithstanding, many people choose these ways. Even if you are rich you can find better things in the world than having surgery and taking such risk. For example, how about giving money to save a child who has a lymph cancer, or how about providing a monthly meal to hungry people instead of temporarily looking beautiful.

Clearly, artificial changes are not only dangerous and hazardous for body but also expensive. Life has a limited time. Don't take the risk and expense for a temporary change. You don't need to touch your butterfly wings in your short life.

Voice from the Heart

Kristian Legcevic

R/W 60

There are some things that belong to the soul itself. Some things awake when they meet series of feelings, which makes cloudy the consciousness and enhance the hopes of an ageless part of the heart. Those that make one to dream awoken that makes one to give away sentiments to whom one

dedicate his present day, most of which only words couldn't describe the entire situation of love and suffer. Because what makes us human is not the tendency of being masochists, but to be perseverant in our desires and wishes, put humanity in the spotlight of many discussions about morals and ethics. A subtle greed of having the possibility to give love without any other interest other than the same love back; it is what makes us vulnerable to disappointments and frustration, but also is what makes us feel happy.

Succumb to those things that us undecided and push us to risk losing our reasoning may be frightening, but I believe such things are the ones to live for. A free falling to whatever it takes to achieve the real purpose of existence seems to be just the right way to surrender to these feelings. At the end, over my head there will be no fatality that can stop my soul falling into an endless depth. Embracing the reality that makes life an untouchable lover is what gives 'human feeling' a new definition.

Thanks from the Editor

Thank you for sharing your writing with everyone. I hope you enjoy reading your fellow students' writing. Also thanks to Megan Forbes and the University of Florida Bookstore for arranging the gift certificates, to Melina Jimenez for publicizing and compiling this issue of Student Voices, to the Reading/Writing, Advanced Informal English, and Grammar for Writing instructors for supporting their students in their writing, and to Todd Allen, Nate Bloemke, Valentina Komaniecka, Karen Owens, Tom Ratican, and Maya Shastri for reading and evaluating the entries.

Thanks everyone!

Steve Flocks



English Language Institute
PO Box 117051
315 Norman Hall
Gainesville, FL 32611-7051, USA
Phone: (352) 392-3354
Fax: (352) 392-3744
StudyEnglish@eli.ufl.edu
Facebook.com/UFLELI
www.eli.ufl.edu