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The ELI Student Voices

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A Message from the Editor



Thank you to all who contributed to this edition of the ELI Student Voices. First of all, thank you to all the students who wrote and were brave enough to share their wonderful writing pieces with us. Thank you to all the ELI teachers who encouraged, helped, and supported the students to develop and polish their writing skills. Also, thanks to Megan Forbes and the University of Florida Bookstore for arranging prizes for the winners and to our judges: Patrick Klager, Patricia Moon, Debbie Sakalla, Christine Voigt, and Zoe Witty who took time to read the submissions and select the winning pieces.

Have fun reading this edition and keep writing!

-Olga Moody

Winning Pieces

First Place

“Latin Revolution” by Yureidy Jimena Chinchilla Romero

Second Place

“Move From Your Comfort Zone and Grow”

by Rolande Yahano Pagoui

FIRST PLACE

Yureidy Jimena Chinchilla Romero

LATIN REVOLUTION

It all started one day when I went at Tate’s office. My only purpose was looking for the pineapple when Tate asked me if I was going to participate in Talent Show. My first answer was, “I don’t have talent,” but she told me that I could organize a dancing group. At that moment, I said that I was going to think it. The idea was in my mind for some hours, and I thought for a moment and started to ask some friends if they wanted to be a part of this wonderful performance. Some friends at the moment said Yes, and I continued to look for more people with the help of Paola, my classmate in LS. Among we two, we finished



collecting a big group of 16 classmates. The most fascinating part of this group was that it was comprised of people from; Brazil, Peru, Chile, Venezuela, Mexico, Saudi Arabi, South Korea, Colombia, Timor – Leste, Panama, Chad (central Africa), and the United States. Merengue, bachata, and salsa, music from Latin countries, made up our dance repertoire. We started with merengue in our first practice. Each person showed enthusiasm and willingness to learn, and we practiced for more than four hours. We finished with merengue dancing, and everyone finished so tired but joyful. Something that I want to explain is that some classmates are not from Latin countries but, regardless, they learned how to dance in an impressive way. I tried to guide our group the best way, but I must

say that sometimes it was difficult. Despite all the commitment of everyone, our group always tried to attend our days of practice, but it was not always possible to collect all the group at the same time, and sometimes some of them came late, and all these details sometimes made me feel tense and concerned, but at the same time, I had to understand their personal situations. Our talent show had some rehearsal with Tate, our coordinator of this event. I remembered that my first rehearsal, I felt nervous because I didn't know if it was going to be a terrific performance. Thankfully, Tate was amazing with our performance, and this encouraged me to do my best effort with the help of my classmates to present an outstanding dance.

We rehearsed many times; my classmates were committed to practicing more time than I expected, and this I honestly appreciate so much because I knew that I was with the greatest classmates to improve every detail of our dancing. Not only did we practice all the time, but we also had memorable experiences. We spent time talking and getting to know each other, discussing our future plans and hobbies. We celebrated a surprise birthday for Rubi, we were invited to share Ivan's birthday, we went to dance in a Latin club to practice more of our steps, and some of them played pool at Danei's house. When we had ELI activities, we took care of and joined each other. All these events brought us closer and made us feel like a family, so much so that some of them have expressed to me that they don't want to finish our practices because they find joy in every moment spent together. Before joining this group, some of them experienced feelings of isolation. However, nowadays they feel happier and more comfortable making new friends. Others have built a relationship so close, and they enjoyed every time that they practiced. Others learned and became awesome dancers and all could find many aspects that we didn't know much about each other initially, but it helped us improve personally.



I want to say we had more gratifying moments than stressful moments. For instance, I had people who have helped me in a marvelous way. I'd like to start with Danney and her husband Ivan; they were the best hosts. They always provided delicious food at every practice session, leaving us with tastes to remember for a long time. Sometimes,



our practices would end so late, and they were taking us to each one's house. They are a wonderful couple, and for these reasons, I am grateful for them.

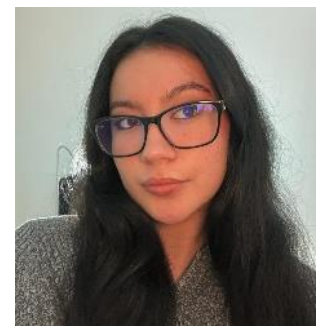


Another person that I'd like to mention is Aaron, the most exceptional partner that I have ever had. He was my perfect complement to dance, and I admire him so much because despite the fact that he is not Latin, he learnt so quickly and he helped me every time to coordinate our choreography. Whenever I needed extra practice time with him, he was always willing to

assist me in every step of our dance. Thank you, Aaron, for your time and excellent attitude.

The person who was responsible for creating the mix of our dance was Tomas. He was considerate, and he always was available coordinate changes in the music regardless of what time it was or how many hours, we spent discussing to organize the best music according for the dance. Thank you, Tomas, for your invaluable assistance.

My cousin Alejandra has always been in all my important moments, and in this time was not the exception. Despite her busy schedule, she made time to help me with salsa dancing. She taught Aaron and me some basic steps of salsa, and we were excellent students. We learnt very quickly, and with her help, we started to create the choreography for four hours. At the end of these hours, we were proud for our work.



The days before the presentation ended and the big day arrived. All our hard work and practice had paid off, and we were fully prepared to give our best performance. Before the event, we had a final rehearsal, and everything was organized. We were scheduled to perform last show. During that time, I felt nervous, but still, I was sure that my group would shine. When our turn came and we stepped onto the stage and presented our routine, each member gave the best and the audience was amazing with our presentation and clapped. I was so proud of my group and performance. I want to express my gratitude each of my classmates, thank you very much for being part of this great adventure, I'd also like to extend my gratitude to Tate for encouraging me to organize this wonderful group, in which I found happiness for all that we experienced together. I won't easily forget the moments we shared.



Thanks for all your support, discipline, responsibility and committed with this amazing performance;

Jake, Ali, Julio, Cynthia, Abdallah, Yuritz, Joao, Paola, David, Roland, Rubi, Aaron, Danney, Ivan, and Tere.

Second Place

Rolande YAHANO PAGOUI

RW 50

Move From Your Comfort Zone and Grow

Getting out of one's comfort zone is one of the scariest things in life. This is what we may feel when we have to travel thousands of kilometres and come to study in a country where we know no one. The fear of the unknown, the fear of finding ourselves living in a place we have never known or seen, of meeting people we don't know, of adapting to a new way of doing things, the pinnacle being to speak a foreign language... This is an unavoidable step for every student at the ELI.

This fear grows on the first day when we arrive and walk through the doors of the Reitz Union during orientation day. We experience an overwhelming feeling in this meeting when seeing different people from different part of the world: Latinos, Koreans, Chinese, Arabs a little lost until the voice of one of the wonderful ELI staff members welcomes us and reassures us. So, we remember our goal of being here and we are encouraged.

The first few days are marked by the solitude of an unfamiliar apartment, missing family, confronting new ways and cultures, new foods that disrupt our habits, until we start classes and discover the inner beauty of each instructor and each staff member ready to take us by the hand, to carry us like newborns, to pamper us, to love us and help us in everything. With a smile on their faces, every staff member welcomes us in the hallways and offices. The amazing Language Assistants immerse us in this new culture to which we were hesitant, and like a fish in water, we begin to swim and start to enjoy it. Their warm smiles make us feel at home, in our new home, and encourage us to participate in activities. We go, talk with other students, and start making friends. Then, after a few days, weeks, months, we identify with this big family. Each teacher helps us grow in their subject/class. A few weeks later, we realize that we have made progress in learning the language that scared us. Then, a new feeling arises... we start to fear another ambiguous feeling, mixed with joy and sadness: the moment to say goodbye...

This is the colorful adventure of every ELI student, unique and worth living.

Taeyi Kang

RW 41

My New Hobby

During the spring break, I went to New York and Chicago. In New York, I saw the Statue of Liberty and went to Time Square and Dumbo, where I can see the Brooklyn Bridge. In Chicago, I visited the Millennium Park, Riverwalk, 360 Chicago, an observatory, Starbuck Roastery, and Art Institute of Chicago. As I wrote above, I did a lot of activities and visited many attractions in two cities.

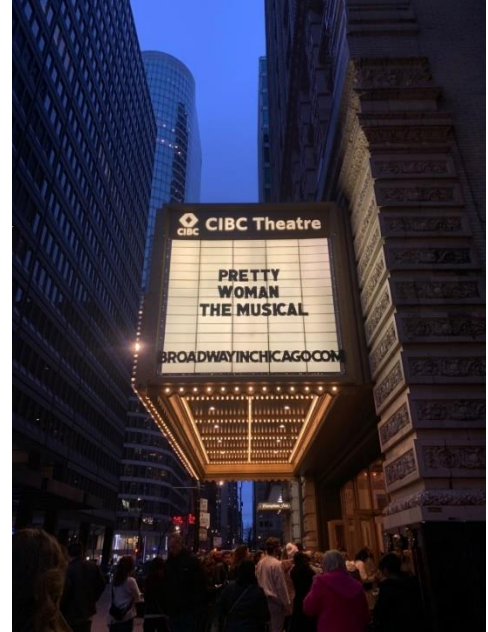
However, the activity that I liked the most was watching musicals. Since I was just making plans for the trip, I decided to watch a musical on Broadway. I watched musicals both in New York and Chicago. In New York, I saw 'Chicago' on Broadway. Actually, there were some other choices, such as 'Wicked' and 'Aladin.' However, I had already watched 'Wicked' when I was



young, and I watched the Disney movie 'Aladin' just few days ago before the trip. That is why I chose to watch 'Chicago.' It was totally new for me, and it is one of the incredibly famous musicals around the world. So, it was one of my dreams to watch 'Chicago' on 'Broadway.' The musical was quite fun, and I liked the Ambassador theatre.

After watching 'Chicago,' I really wanted to watch another musical again. As a coincidence, in Chicago, there were some theatres near my hotel. I booked my tickets for 'Pretty Woman.' originated from a movie, 'Pretty Woman.' This movie was a big hit so that even my parents saw that movie at that time when the movie was released in Korea. The musical was really interesting, and the musical numbers were good. At first, I felt sad when they did not play famous song from the movie, 'Pretty Woman,' but they fortunately sang that song at the curtain call.

As watching two musicals, my hearing skills improved. Usually, musicals are divided into the first part and second part of the performance based on intermission. During the first part of the performance, I could not hear the musical actors' lines much, but after intermission it was much easier for me to catch the line. Also, I liked the part that the actors interacted with the audience in real time. I felt like I was in part of a musical. For these reasons, I found my new hobby, watching musicals. I am happy to find a new hobby during the spring break. I will continue to watch musicals even when I go back to Korea.



Jeongmin Lee

RW30

Study at the ELI

Many people study at the ELI for several reasons. First, there are many people from other countries in UF. For example, meeting them is a good chance to be close because it is not easy to meet people from other countries in own country. Having friends from other countries is helpful because it makes easy to understand other countries' cultures. Second, many people study at the ELI to improve their English skill. For example, people can learn various English skills since there are classes of reading and writing, grammar, and listening and speaking. People can learn English more easily because of good teachers at the ELI. Third, there are a lot of activities. For example, people can communicate with many people due to CIP activities, such as coffee talk and playing soccer. People can experience various things because weekend activities always change every weekend. In conclusion, studying at the ELI deserves it for these reasons.

Areej Asiri

RW41

Riyadh Season

In 2019, the Riyadh Season began, which is considered one of the largest seasons in the city of Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This season opens its doors during the winter, and in 2019, at its beginning this season recorded around 10 million visitors from inside and outside Saudi Arabia. During each year, developments are made in order for this season to become international. In 2022, this season entered the Guinness World Record for launching the largest number of fireworks from drones. This season contains many areas, and each area is different by something from the other area, and one of the most famous of these areas is Boulevard World, which allows the visitor to explore the cultures of other countries of the world and live different experiences in each country. Also, the Boulevard City area contains a fountain, stores, restaurants and the largest cinema in Saudi Arabia. One of the features of this season is hosting the largest and most famous park in London, Winter Wonderland. This season is one of the seasons that I recommend visiting in my city Riyadh, it is a place truly worth visiting.



Diana Barragan

RW 60

Tuesday, April 2th, 2024

Gainesville, Florida

Dear Loved Ones,

Being here for the last months has taught me a bunch of things, and has shown me how life can be tough sometimes but always rewarding. Sometimes things don't happen as you expected, and in my case I wasn't planning to move here, I wasn't planning to start an English program, but even more crazy, I wasn't planning to find so many valuable people and truly connect with them during this journey. This time I want to write some words to express all my gratitude to the people who gave me one piece of their lives during these last 8 months -- the ones that made me laugh and forgot all my bad days. I am grateful for finding so many beautiful souls in this place, people with a lot of patience and love for their jobs, helping people all over the world to not just be better in English language skills, but be better persons; everyday they taught us how loving what you are and what you do you can impact positively people's lives with really different backgrounds. The ELI creates a big family with all the members of the community, but even better, they make you feel like home, and they make you feel supported and always give you some love when you are homesick. Friends became an important part of my life, and I wasn't aware of that. I never had time for a social life during med school, but today the ELI taught me how the friends that you choose can be your family and like my favorite movie states, *"Ohana means family, and family means nobody gets left behind or forgotten."* Thank you all for all the support and knowledge. I had such a great time that I am not going to forget. Thank you teachers, thank you LAs, thank you friends, thank you CIP staff and administrators. You all make this place a huge family and a good memory for all of us.

See you next time.

Diana Barragan.

Gianna De Genna Vera

RW30

Causes and Effects of Overweight Children

One of the first things is the unhealthy eating. Some parents don't have time to cook for them. For example, some parents work a lot and don't have time to do it. Second, the socioeconomic status it is very worrying and having enough money to buy food or be able to eat three meals a day. For example, the food in the supermarkets are very expensive. Third, and the most important thing is a sedentary lifestyle. Children and young people need to have a very active life. Playing sports is one of the most important things nowadays. As a result of having a sedentary lifestyle makes you have these types of consequences. Finally, childhood obesity lifestyle present urgent public health. Parents do not have the necessary time that their children deserve today.

Jeremy Schekler

RW30

Moving to Another Country

Moving to another country for studying English at the ELI is a new experience for several reasons. First, there is a new space. For example, if you move to another country due to studying, you will meet new people: European, Arabic, or Asian people. Since you experience a new culture, you will eat different food. Second, studying at the ELI is great. You will learn English language because it is very important for your future and more experience. For example, some schools ask for a good level in English for studying due to the importance of the English language in Business. Third, good motivation to study is important. You begin new chapter with more energy and good psychology because of your motivation is at its best to make the most of this experience. In conclusion, be motivated and you will achieve your goals at the ELI.

Clefton “33” SIMON**The other face of “Ayiti”**

Presented very often in the media as one of the poorest countries in the world or for the tragedy it is going through, Haiti is this country that unfortunately gets a lot of bad publicity. With a population of around 14 million inhabitants and an area of 27,750 km², it is one of the biggest Caribbean countries. What is really behind this country, whose initial name “Ay-ti” means “the land of high mountains?”

Historically, Haiti is considered the first black republic in the world, but in fact, it is more than that. In 1803, after about 300 years of slavery and occupation, this little nation faced and defeated the greatest army in the world at this moment and abolished slavery. After the proclamation of his independence on January 1st, 1804, Haitian ancestors didn't stop their fight against oppression. In 1815, the Haitian government helped Simon Bolivar by providing money, weapons, and soldiers in his fight for the liberation of several countries in South America, such as Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. Historic fact: it was at Jacmel, in Haiti, that Francisco de Miranda created and raised the Venezuelan flag for the first time March 12, 1806. This same country was one of the few that offered a home to hundreds of Jews when they'd been persecuted in the late 1930s.

Beside its glorious history, Haiti has extraordinary beauty and diversity that make it one of the most beautiful countries in the world. Haiti is the mother of *Konpa*, this sensational dance that connects your soul with that of your partner. Haiti is *Tabou Combo*, a 56-year-old mythic music band that stirred up crowds around the world. Haiti is the country that gave birth to Jean-Baptiste Pointe du Sable, founder and first habitant of the city of Chicago, the third biggest city in the United States of America by population. Haiti is the stronghold of *Voodoo*, this ancestral religious practice that unites people, guides them, and gives them oversized power. Haiti is home to *Labadee*, which is one of the world's favorite large cruise destinations (about 500,000 visitors each year), and *Citadelle Laferrière*, which is considered by many to be the 8th wonder of the world. Beside all of these, this atypical country offers the world's best food and the most welcoming people.

Maybe this is not the quietest place on earth, but this is the place where the *Rosinol* have the right to sing all day long, where the temperature is good all year, and where everyone who is oppressed because of these values can restore their freedom. My Haiti is all these mothers who give the best of themselves for their children; it is all these young people who make float **the**



Bicolore¹ with pride all around the world; it is all the people who make hard work and refuse to live by begging. My Haiti is *Griot, Tassot, Tonmtonm, Tchaka, and Pikliz*; it is hope, love, determination, passion, and resiliency. My Haiti is more than what people used to see on television; my Haiti is exceptional.

¹**Bicolore** is the surname of the Haitian flag

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Saoud Alsahli

GM1 (20/30)

My Future

Before the class finishes, I do my homework. As soon as I finish the class, I call my mom. When I finish the class, I will fly to UK. I will go to see football game. After that I will always fly to the beach to have fun with my family. Because I study English in the US and I improve it, so that is why we go to UK to have football fun there.

Nicole Abreu Bonet

RW30

Early to Class

There are many causes and effects of students who are early to class. First, there is sleep on time in the night. Due to students who go to events late night, they can't wake up. Consequently, these students go too tired to go to class early. Second, there is the transport in the morning. Due to horrible traffic from 7:30am-8:00am, many people go to work in the community. Consequently, students go to class before or after at this time. Third, there are many students very interesting in the school. Because they show interest, they are focused. Therefore, they will always arrive early and show respect. In conclusion these causes and effects show the priorities and steps that any student must follow.

Cássia Calais Silva

GM20/30

Grateful and always try

When I see where I arrived, I am always grateful.

The life is sometimes so difficult
that I need a breath.

While I breathing, I think, "You are in the right way"
because for me

is so hard be positive al the time,
like after I make a big mistake,
be positive is impossible for me.

It's ok be sad about that,
but the most important thing is
never give up and always try again.

Go Minseo (Leina)

RW 50

Recently, I read "Cell Phones Have No Place in the Classroom," an article by high school teacher Patrick Danz. In this article, Patrick Danz is worried about how phones have impacted his students and their learning. He wants schools to make strict rules about banning phones in the classrooms because his students are addicted to their devices, and he has noticed an important connection between classroom grades and phone usage. Additionally, Patrick thinks if we completely remove phones, students can learn how to appropriately interact with adults and develop social etiquette. According to Patrick Danz in this article, he believes that a school-wide ban on phones is the best option, and I agree with this opinion for three reasons.

Firstly, if cell phones are banned in school, students' grades may go up. Many things bother students when they study, and I think the biggest obstruction is cell phones. In my case, when I was in middle school, my teachers took away cell phones before class started. Then this rule changed my life because when teachers took away our cell phones, I was able to focus on my class and I got high grades in middle school. In addition, before they took my phone, I couldn't focus on anything and it was hard to complete my assignments, but after going through this rule, I could focus well and study more effectively. As a result, this achievement lifted me up from my lack of confidence in studying.

Secondly, students can have time to explore their curiosities by themselves. During in break time, normally students spend their time to using their cell phones. But if teachers forbid cell phones in school, students can use break time more effectively. For instance, in my middle school, there was a 10-minute break after each class and an hour lunch break. These times may seem short, but over a year they become very long. After my class, I usually went to the school library because my biggest reason for using my smart phone is to learn new information, thus I borrowed a lot of books when I couldn't use my phone. At first, it was little bit difficult because my mind wanted to see my cell phone because it is easier to find much information. But as time passed, I learned that the world of books was richer and it contained a lot of good quality information. In that time, I read more than 300 books in one year, so my world grew wider than before. Like my example, students can reflect on themselves when they cannot use their cell phones.

Lastly, Students can learn how to interact with friends and adults. After COVID – 19 hit, social etiquette became up serious problem because during COVID-19, the only way people could communicate was through devices and some people cut their communication with other people. Then after this period, when people met offline, they didn't know how to interact with each other. This is serious problem in school, because we had online classes for 2 years. For instance, I was affected by COVID-19 during my high school days. When I went to school after COVID-19, it was very hard to talk my classmates because they used their cell phones all day even during class hours. Shockingly, some students responded rudely to their teacher's request that students didn't use their devices during the class. And before, we talked and played in the

hallway during break time, but that was not now. Therefore, if teachers take students' cell phones, students are bored, so they talk to each other, and I think they can learn social etiquette on a small society.

Overall, I believe that teachers should forbid students' cell phones in the classroom because if students have rules about banning their cell phones, they can improve their grades, have time to explore their curiosities themselves, and learn social etiquette. Because of these three reasons, I agree with Patrick Danz's opinion, and I think giving our cell phones to teachers would be more beneficial for us.

Youngjin Jeon

RW41

Spring Break

During Spring Break, I went to Los Angeles, California. It was my first time that I traveled abroad alone, so I felt nervous and excited at the same time. I visited Hollywood, Santa Monica and Beverly Hills. On March 10, The Academy Awards was held at Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, so I could see the scenes of The Academy Awards. Also, I went on a Hollywood Sign Hiking Tour. It was amazing to see it in person because I had seen it on screen all my life until then. After the tour, I walked at the Hollywood Walk Of Fame. I saw lots of names of artists. Then, I visited Santa Monica. I found my favorite place in Los Angeles, it was a book store named 'Angel City Books & Records'. I liked it because it was not crowded, had various art books and records and the music made it all feel nostalgic. On my last day, I went to Beverly Hills before my flight back home. I ran out of time, so I only saw view of pink sky, but it was so beautiful and I was satisfied. It was my first time visiting Los Angeles, so I would love to go back again.

Jeongmin Lee

RW30

Being a child vs being an adult

Being a child and being an adult are different in several ways. First, there is time limit. Children should come back their home before it becomes dark. However, adults can go home anytime because they can live alone. Second, there are ways to earn money. There are no ways for children to earn money themselves. On the other hand, adults can earn money themselves because they can get a job or part-time job. Third, there is responsibility. If children make a big mistake, their parents solve the mistake. In contrast, adults should solve their mistakes themselves. In conclusion, being a child and being an adult have many differences.

Fengyi Liang

RW41

Looking for New Things

I love to look for new things. I have been in Gainesville for two months. These days, I have found two differences from China. I think they are very interesting. First, I saw some dustmen how to clean leaves. They will use some blowers to blow leaves onto the lawn. This way is different from China. In China, the cleaners just use a broom to collect leaves and destroy them. By contrast, I prefer the former, because this way is following the rule of natural development and being kind to the gifts by nature. Second, traffic rules have a different point. When I walk through a crossroad in Gainesville, I need to push a Button to cross the road until the light changes to white. Importantly, white light is prepared for people, not for vehicles. However, In China, we don't have this rule. We only have three colour lights. Sometimes, when the light changes to green, people and cars will cross at the same time. For pedestrians, we don't have a single light.

David Ariza Peña

RW 40

A U.S.A Experience

When I was thinking about how I can start to write this, I started to remember all the things that had been happening before joining the ELI. Now being here, the only word that comes to my mind is “thanks.” Before coming to the USA, I had high expectations about everything, but thinking about it is super different than living it. Definitely, this experience overcame my expectations and more.

“Unique,” I promise that I’m not lying when I say that every moment, experience, and memory that I have had here has never happened to me before. Having the opportunity to meet with people from different countries and learn their languages, customs and traditions doesn’t have a price; it is unique. Furthermore, having the opportunity to be able to teach the customs and traditions of my country, of which I am very proud, generates an indescribable feeling of happiness.

“Spectacular,” For me, the word spectacular and the experience I have had in the United States have the same meaning. I know that, like all countries, this place has many things to correct and to improve, but there are more positive aspects that make this a spectacular place. It is true that, in the ELI, all students have the same schedule every day, but every day feels different because of the fun activities that we can share with our friends, such as ELI weekly activities, ELI weekend activities, and the plans that we organize with our friends.

“Amazing,” To describe the word amazing, I have to mention all the people who are part of the ELI, like staff, students, CP, and all the people I have had the opportunity to meet to this day in the USA. When I just arrived in the USA My English was not the best, and it was difficult to be able to communicate with other people. However, every time I had to talk to someone, they

always did their best to be able to understand me and help me. For this reason and for the incredible attitude that these people have every day, I describe them as amazing!

My experience in the USA has been like the initialization of its name: unique, spectacular, and amazing. If I could go back to the past, I would make the decision to come here one and a thousand times more. I thank all the people who have been part of this beautiful process from the bottom of my heart, and I hope we can keep our friendship. Thanks!

Hyuna Jin

RW30

Studying at the ELI

There are so many reasons that studying ELI. First, one reason is studying English because we learn Reading and Writing, Grammar, and Listening and Speaking in the class. If we want to fix our English, we can ask our teacher for help. For example, if we don't know how can speak some difficult sentences, we can ask L/S teacher or LAs for help. Second, another reason is that we can experience culture from other countries because there are many people from different countries. For example, we can make each other's traditional food. Third, the other reason is that we can experience USA culture. We can compare own culture and USA culture. In conclusion, studying ELI can be various experience.

Gaeun Kim

RW 43

Dreams come true!

I started watching the American drama 'Friends' when I was 16. The background of "Friends" was New York, and from the moment I started watching 'Friends', I had a dream that I wanted to go to New York someday, and I achieved that dream in March this year.



I went to New York with my roommate for spring break. The city was full of tall buildings and many people. It was amazing to be able to see with my own eyes several tourist attractions such as the Statue of Liberty, 911 Memorial, Times Square, and Brooklyn Bridge. I don't know if it's because I've wanted to come to New York for a long time, but I felt new and happy about what I saw, what I ate, enjoyed, and everything in New York.



When I was young, New York felt like a city far from Korea and vast. So I might have felt that it was difficult to travel. However, I studied English hard and saved money with the desire to go. As a result, I went to New York and felt an accomplishment. I should do my best at the present time for my future dream with this success.

Nayeon Sim**RW30****Early to Class**

There are causes and effects of students who are early to class. First, students go early to class to do something before the class. They study English or read a book since they want to use their spare time. Therefore, they can improve their ability of English or anything that they do. Second, there is the bus time or traffic situation. Because of the long term distance, some students have to take a bus early. As a result, they are never late for class and they have time to talk with other ELI students. Third, students go early to class to prepare for the class. They can pay attention in the class because they have already prepared for the class. Consequently, they can get a higher grade than the other students. In conclusion, there are many important causes and effects for students who come to class early.

Nayeon Sim**RW30****Study at the ELI**

There are three reasons that people study at the ELI. First, they want to learn English. For example, students have to speak English and listen carefully because people who are at the ELI speak only English. Second, people come here to meet many people. For example, there are many people who are from different countries since they want to learn English, too. Third, one of the most important reasons is to experience another country. For example, we can see the different landscape, different architecture, and different food because of the different culture. In conclusion, studying at the ELI gives us the precious experience that we never forget in own life.

Nouriya Alsahli

GM1 (20/30)

Journey Around the World

Every day, as the sun rises,
I eagerly start my day with surprises.
Sometimes, I dance in the rain,
Bringing joy and washing away any pain.
Once in a while, I travel afar,
Exploring new places, no matter how bizarre.
Often, I meet friends for coffee and chat,
Sharing stories and laughter, just like that.
Whenever I'm feeling down or blue,
I turn to music, it helps me through.
Rarely do I miss a chance to sing,
Lifting my spirits, making my heart take wing.
At night, before I go to sleep,
I reflect on the day, memories to keep.
Occasionally, I dream of future endeavors,
Knowing that life is full of endless treasures.
Every summer, as the sun shines bright,
I crave new flavors, a culinary delight.
I try dishes from lands far and wide,
Exploring tastes that make my heart glide.

Dahyeon (Daisy) Kim

RW 41

An unforgettable city, Tallahassee

I have amazing terrible experience in the spring break.(haha 😊) I went to Olando to go Disney world that was such as exciting and wonderful experience but, the problem happened at the end. When I went back to my home in Gainesville, after enjoying Olando, I took a bus called redcoach to go Gainesville.

However the arrival bus stop was not accurate. The ticket said we will arrive on the UF campus, but the bus didn't arrive on the UF campus. The bus stop was different, so I just wait next bus stop. I thought the bus will stop on the another bus stop in UF, but the bus didn't stop. The bus keeps going to Tallahassee. We have to stay 5 hours in the bus at 4am.

I was very nervous, I had to find the way, how can I go back to my home. I got off the bus in Tallahassee, I asked the bus driver and I just waited next bus to go Gainesville. Finally I was able to get home in about 10 hours.

Abdullah Alrafdi

RW41

The Last Semester

I have been here for 2 semesters and that is my last one. I loved the ELI so much it felt like home even Gainesville is so beautiful. This spring break was one of my favorite break that I've had since high school. I went to the boys home we were playing fifa and cards and having fun and when it gets boring we go watch movie at the celebration point. But my favorite part when we went to Macdonald at 2:00 am to eat and all of us were broke we laughed a lot that day we didn't eat but we were happy and that is the important thing.

Danney Pamplona

RW60

The Pie That Paved a Nation

Do you know why apple pie is such an American idol. I'm gonna tell you about the hidden history of the United States. Where history intertwines with the sweet and spiced aroma of apple pie, the fabric of the United States is woven with threads of pastry and filling, crafting a nation where culinary delight shapes destiny.

Chapter 1: The Declaration of Deliciousness

As the Founding Fathers gather to draft the Declaration of Independence, tensions run high, and consensus seems a distant dream. Enter Benjamin Franklin, not with quill or parchment, but with a freshly baked apple pie. The aroma fills the room, and with each bite, a sense of unity and purpose takes hold. The declaration is signed with sticky fingers, and a new nation is born, its founding principle being the pursuit of happiness – and what brings more happiness than apple pie?

Chapter 2: The Great Pie Diplomacy

The story takes a whimsical turn during the Louisiana Purchase. Thomas Jefferson, facing skepticism at home, invites French delegates to a feast where the centerpiece is none other than an apple pie. The French, enchanted by the dessert's perfection, agree to the purchase, swayed by the promise of an annual apple pie shipment. Thus, the nation doubles in size, thanks to a pie.

Chapter 3: The Civil War and the Pie that United

As brother is pitted against brother, a mysterious figure known only as "The Baker" begins to traverse the battle lines, leaving behind an apple pie in each camp. Soldiers, weary and homesick, find common ground in their shared love for the pie, leading to secret midnight feasts between enemies. The war ends not with a surrender at Appomattox but with a grand pie-eating contest, where blue and gray unite under the banner of mutual respect and pastry.

Chapter 4: The Industrial Revolution, Powered by Pie

The story humorously explores how the advent of the apple pie assembly line fueled the industrial boom. Factories that once produced cannons now turn out apple pies at a dizzying

pace. The nation's economy skyrockets as America becomes the world's leading exporter of apple pies, symbolizing peace and prosperity.

Chapter 5: The Modern Era and Beyond

In contemporary times, the story reveals how every major technological innovation and cultural movement has been inspired by the apple pie. From the pie-shaped UFOs at Roswell to the secret pie recipes that fuel Silicon Valley's tech innovations, the story playfully suggests that apple pie is the ultimate source of American ingenuity and spirit.

Chapter 6: Recipe for Unity

In the annals of history, where feats and moments of unity form the backbone of a nation's identity, the humble apple pie stands as a testament to culinary diplomacy and shared delight. Thus, it is only fitting that we share the recipe that might have sweetened the palate of revolutionaries, diplomats, and visionaries alike.

Classic American Apple Pie Ingredients:

- 2 ½ cups of all-purpose flour, for a crust that holds the dreams of a nation.
- 1 cup of unsalted butter, cold, diced into small cubes – the building blocks of freedom.
- ½ teaspoon of salt, reminiscent of the tears shed for liberty.
- 8 tablespoons of ice water, as refreshing as the new world's opportunities.
- 6 to 8 large apples (a mix of Granny Smith and Honeycrisp), peeled, cored, and sliced – the diverse fabric of our society.
- ¾ cup of sugar, for the sweet victory of unity.
- 2 tablespoons of all-purpose flour.
- 1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon – the spice of life and diversity.
- ¼ teaspoon of ground nutmeg, a whisper of the exotic lands that fuel the American dream.
- A dash of ground cloves, the spice of mystery and intrigue.
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice, to preserve the fruits of our labor.
- 1 egg white, beaten, for a glossy finish that reflects the shining sea.

Method:

The Crust of the Matter: In a large bowl, whisk together 2 ½ cups of flour and ½ teaspoon of salt. Cut in the cold butter using a pastry blender or two forks until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Gradually add ice water, stirring until the dough comes together. Divide the dough in half, shape into disks, and wrap in plastic. Chill for at least 1 hour. **Filling the Dreams:** In another bowl, combine the apple slices with ¾ cup of sugar, 2 tablespoons of flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and lemon juice. Stir gently to mix. **Assembling the Future:** On a lightly floured surface, roll out one dough disk into a 12-inch circle. Transfer to a 9-inch pie plate. Fill with the apple mixture. Roll out the second disk and lay it over the filling. Trim excess dough and crimp the edges to seal the promise of prosperity. **Liberty's Glaze:** Brush the top crust with beaten egg white and sprinkle lightly with additional sugar. Cut slits in the top to release steam, like the exhale of a nation at peace. **Baking a Legacy:** Bake at 425°F for 15 minutes. Reduce the temperature to 350°F and continue baking for 45 minutes, or until the crust is golden and the filling is bubbly. Cool on a wire rack, allowing the flavors and history to meld.

As the story concludes, the legacy of apple pie in shaping the United States is a reminder that sometimes, the most powerful unifying forces come not from grand declarations or solemn treaties, but from the simple, shared pleasures of life. In the warm, flaky crust of an apple pie, we find the essence of camaraderie, hope, and the sweet promise of a united nation.



Hyuna Jin**RW30****Domino's and Papa John's**

Domino's and Papa John's are very similar restaurants. First, there are famous pizza restaurants in the US. Both restaurants sell various types of pizza. For example, there are cheese pizza, potato pizza, and pepperoni pizza. Second, there are many kinds of sides. Both Domino's and Papa John's have the same sides that are wings, breadsticks, and chocolate chip cookies. Likewise, both restaurants have the same sauces that are ranch sauce, hot sauce, and BBQ sauce. In conclusion, Domino's and Papa John's share lots of the same menu.

Andres Raposo Durr**RW30****Basketball and Soccer**

There are several similarities between basketball and soccer. First, soccer and basketball use the same size ball. The size of the ball depends about what category you play. Second, both soccer and basketball need score in the goals or net. In soccer, you need score in a specific zone is similar to score in soccer. Third, basketball have many tournaments. The tournaments depend in what country you play. In conclusion, soccer and basketball have many things to share with all the world.

Mobarak Alshemeri**RW30****Children and Adults**

There are children and adults. First, there is education in common. Both children and adults study at schools and work hard. A lot of children and adults study by online education. Second, there is technology in common. Both of children and adults using Ipad and self phones. They using modern devices such as washing machines and refrigerators. Third, there are food and drink in common. Both of children and adults eating fresh healthy food. As will as they drink juices and water. In conclusion, there are many huge compare between children and adults life.

Luciana Modica

RW 43

SHINE

Many people ask me why I engage in politics if it's so corrupt, if the leaders are so dishonest, if the system is broken. In a world that invites stillness, inertia, and complaint, Ana de Andrés' words are an *impulse* to believe that this world depends on people with new leadership.

Surrounded by so much violence, selfishness, and so many "selfies", Ana accompanies you to embark on your own revolution. To find your *cause*, which will be the force to influence others to discover how presence in this life, sometimes desperately uncomfortable, is profoundly more beautiful when everything makes sense. We need people willing to embark on the journey of transformation, which leads to a completely new way of being and existing in the world and generates a whole universe of possibilities.



If something in your life is starting to change, if you feel dissatisfied with something that is happening to you, if there are things in the world that bother you and you want to change them, if you are on a journey -real or inner-, this is the best time for you to read this book. Definitely, if you have come to this book - in its English or Spanish version- it is because you are in that transformation.

It is absolutely impossible for you to finish this book being the same person who started reading it.

However, SHINE is not a self-help book; I would say rather that it is a book that will connect many people who are making or want to make a great change in the world.

If you ask me again, why do I engage in politics? Because people like Ana inspire me to believe that this world can be fairer, more equal, and happier.

Minju Maila Jeon**RW 43****ELI Experience**

Every day in the ELI is a different experience from before. On the first day of arriving at Gainesville airport, I knew nothing about this country and culture at all. I just said awkwardly “Hi”, and “Thank you”, it was difficult to reply, “How are you”, I was so shy to different people and things around me. A few days went by, and meeting friends, classes, and teachers got comfortable. Especially, ELI’s classes were unique at first time. We have different levels of each other and learn English systematically, use English all the time during the semester, and communicate with the teacher and daily life. It was I can’t experience in South Korea. I thought my English would improve in a short time. Whereas it was not an easy mission. Creating a well-composed presentation requires detailed research, time, and knowledge of the right use of grammar. As a beginner in academic English, I felt frustrated. So, I asked help to the teachers gloomily for a bunch of unsolved grammar problems, our teachers helped pleurably. Then, I could finish my presentation happily. Also, ELI’s Saturday activity is insane. St. Augustine was one of the well-planned activities 2 weeks ago. I have never been to any city that has as much as history St. Augustin. Additionally, the manatees that I saw in Silver Springs were also a natural moment in my life. Now, semesters in ELI not that much left. I feel sad to say goodbye to my roommates and teacher and all the ELI’s staff and friends. Also, one discussion is coming soon. I want to spend left days in the ELI and Gainesville fantastically. Thanks to teacher Olga! For this remarkable moment!

Estefania Aristizabal Puerta

RW30

Summary of "Super Food: The Benefits of Genetically Modified Foods"

This reading is mostly about the beneficially genetically foods. This GM foods involves altering DNA through advanced methods, prompting the crucial question of its impact on our health. There are a lot of global debates on the longterm effects of genetically modified food and the need for mandatory labeling to provide consumer choices. Then despite the GM food debate, many scientists consider it safe, asserting it may be safer. In conclusion, in the future, modified foods have the potential to save many lives by addressing health concerns, enhancing nutrition, and ensuring food security for populations worldwide.

Paula Barragan

RW 43

The Magical World of Disney

When you were a kid you imagined incredible stories and watched your favorites cartoons on TV, but you grow up and the life becomes more serious. However, you have that inner child that appears when you clear your mind and don't have any worries. I had this felling of tranquility and happiness when I visited Disney World, this wonderful park made me feel like a child again and allowed me to enjoy all those places and characters it offers, here I saw people young and old who enjoyed every moment. This fantasy world where characters come to life manages to capture our hearts and transmit emotions, generating experiences that are impossible to forget. For me it is magical place that you love to know.

Udit Suthar**RW 52****First semester experience**

When I stepped off the plane and into the cloudy skies of America, I embarked on a journey that would shape my perspective and change my future. I walked through the crowded airport with a mixture of excitement and fear, my heart pounding. When I arrived on UF campus, I encountered a kaleidoscope culture where every face told a unique story. From the high-rise residence halls to the sprawling green campus, everything seemed larger than life and a testament to the beauty of America. As the first semester progressed, I was immersed in a whirlwind of empowerment and learning the culture. From commencement speeches to lively debates, each class offered a glimpse into the rich tapestry of the American university. Outside of school, I embraced campus life and joined organizations and organizations that reflected my interests. From study evenings to special occasions, every moment was an opportunity to connect with other students and form lasting friendships. As I wander through American culture, I am struck by its diversity and complexity. From tasting my first Christmas to cheering on football, the entire experience was a lesson in understanding and acceptance. But in the midst of joy and renewal came moments of homesickness that reminded us of the distance between the known and the unknown. But with the constant support of my new friends and mentors, I found solace in my home away from home in America. As the season drew to a close, I reflected on the transformative journey I've been on. Committed to sharing knowledge and discoveries, I left my first semester in America with a newfound sense of resilience, adaptability, and belonging, ready to embrace the emotions that awaited us.

Estefania Aristizabal Puerta

RW30

Causes of Water Pollution

There are many causes and effects of water pollution. First, there is oil spills due to the water is contaminate. Consequently, the fish die. Second, there is trash in the oceans or rivers. Because some community no save the trash. As result children or adults cannot enjoy this space because it is not clean and healthy. Third, there is disease because community drinking contaminated water. As a result, people get sick. In conclusion, there are many causes and effects for water pollution and significant for the world.

Perla Morales Chavez

RW30

Study English at the ELI

There are many reasons that people study English in the ELI. First, people learn the structure of English. For example, people learn to do grammar, read, write, listen and speak. Second, people can have a better job. For example, many people move to the USA due to more opportunities for Jobs and better salary. Third, people move to USA to study. For example, they have better opportunities to study some career or masters because the USA has advanced education system. In conclusion, many people study English in the ELI because it has a good Program to learn to speak English.

Solange Pierre Paul

RW30

Barcelona and Real Madrid

Barcelona and Real Madrid share several similar sports between their countries. First, there is the same sport in Barcelona and Real Madrid. Both countries share soccer game. Similarly, they rely on possession as the basis of their attacking play. Second, there are the same great players in common. Vinicius and Pedri Yue are the most popular strikers. Third, they share the same stadiums. Both stadiums take a lot of people. In conclusion, Barcelona and Real Madrid share similar sports in common.

Ameer Alasadi

RW 43

My beautiful experience

Last year, I had my first experience surfing in Bali, Indonesia. It was very enjoyable. At first, I did not know how to surf, but the coach helped me, and after an hour of training, I was able to surf. It is a beautiful sport, especially if the waves are high, the weather is beautiful, and the sun is shining.



Jeremy Schekler

RW30

Causes and effects of students who are early to class

Arriving early to class has several causes and effects for students. First, there is respect. Due to, arriving early to class means respect for the teacher and classmates. Consequently, this is a good thing for all students, for several reasons. Second, the student is serious. Due to, arriving before class starts show good organization. So the student learns better with good organization. Third, there is a concentration. Due to, arriving before classes start is good for concentration. Thus, students have time to concentrate before class, and they can talk to people, In conclusion, getting to class early has several important causes and effects that are very important for the student.

Meshael Alkhalidi

RW30

Comparing restaurants in your country

Freij Sweilah and Kashounat Albait are similar in many ways. First, these are places in Kuwait. Both Freij Swilah and Kashounat Albait are in the one mall. it is called 360 mall. Second, there is a lot of Kuwaiti food. Freij Sweilah has a Kuwaiti menu. Likewise, Kashounat Albait has a Kuwaiti menu. Third, they have highest prices. Freij Sweilah dishes are as expensive as Kashounat Albait. In conclusion, there are many things that are shared from Freij Sweilah and Kashounat Albait because they are both popular tourist sites.

Julio Dominguez

RW 52

The Metric System and the US

Over the past of the years, the metric system has commenced to gain popularity among most countries in the world. Presently, the US is one of the three countries that hasn't changed yet to the Metric system, and still uses the English system. Despite attempts of people from these countries to resist the shift to the Metric system, its advantages and benefits have proven undeniable. The US should switch from its conventional system to the Metric System.

First of all, if you want to succeed at the university, or comprehend the complexities of our world, you will need to learn how to use the metric system. Rooney (n.d.) stated in one of his articles that most scientist have started using the metric system because it is the international measurement system in every academia. That is why, being or not being an American you should absolutely understand how to use the Metric system. If the US switched from the English System to the Metric System, it will not only help their scientists but also their future professionals.

Another reason why US should switch its measurement system is that it is the most accepted measurement system nowadays. Based on the article Advantages the Metric System, one of the main advantages of using the Metric system is that almost every country uses it. Actually, apart from US the only 2 countries that don't use it are Myanmar and Liberia. So, if the US changed their system for the Metric System, it would facilitate them more to trade with the rest of the world. Changing to the Metric System wouldn't be a bad alternative system after all, because it would help the US to connect more with the world and with the worldwide trading.

Some people may say the English system has been used by American people for a long time, that we shouldn't try to change it or fix it if it works effectively for them. Although, Thompson (n.d.) in one of her articles stated that the English System has better divisible units. This is not true at all, because of the many factors that can divided their units. To show that, Rooney (n.d.) explained that if we used the Metric System, we would only have to remember the number 10. For example, 10 millimeters are equal to one centimeter, 10 centimeters are equal to a decimeter, and 10 decimeters are equal to a meter, etc. Which means that it is much easier to remember and convert from one unit to another. Switching to the Metric system will help

Americans at the time of doing simple task such as weighting their fruits and vegetables at the stores, or in professional task, such as drawing the blueprints of a house.

In conclusion, the US should transition its measurement system to the Metric System due to its integral role in academia and its facilitation of global connectivity, as well as its ease of conversion and comprehension. Thus, American citizens are advised to reconsider the Metric System and recognize the numerous astonishing advantages it offers.

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Fahad Almansour

RW 41

First Ramadan away from my family

Gathering with family, sharing the meals with neighbors and friends, the Spirituals atmospheres this is Ramadan vibes in my home country Saudi Arabia. But now I'm in ELI, attending classes, studying, and barely finding time to make food for Iftar (the breakfast) and Suhoor (the meal before fasting).

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Muslim calendar and the holy month of fasting. During the first days of Ramadan is difficult for me, my Circadian body it was changed because the sleeping time and my daily meals changed, I must wake up at 3 AM and make the food! It was hard to get enough sleep, but now it is better. One of the best things they help me to accept the situation my friends, especially from other religions and other cultures to help and support me and some of them was training to fasting and they did it.

However, fasting has a lot of benefits, such as, weight management Improved, blood sugar control, heart health, and boosted brain function.

I hope next year, I can fast with my family and i really missed that atmosphere.

Jesus Bucarito

GM1(20/30)

Games with my brothers

When I see the games with my brothers, I am excited because we have family time. While i see games, I cook something. It's a good time. When my team wins, I hug my brothers. But when the team loses, we are sad. I don't like it when my team lose. After the game, we talk about the players while drinking something. My big brother always said "The next time we are better!" I don't think so. Sometimes if we can win or lose but usually the team wins. Whatever, I don't care! I just wanna pass time with my family and friends.

Bader Alyami

RW 43

Studying English is very important new days to succeed in your live. When I arrive in America, it's like stepping into a new world. I hear different languages, see different people, and experience different cultures. Everywhere I go, I try to talk to people in English to improve my skills. From busy cities to quiet neighborhoods, I practice speaking and listening.

At English language Institute which is department in University of Florida , I take English classes that help me learn grammar, listening and speaking, reading and writing , and how to say things correctly. I also do fun activities with classmates to practice speaking and writing. Outside of class, I explore American culture with my new imazing friends by visiting cool places and joining events to meet new people. Farther more, we have daily activities with the institution like drinking coffee together , playing volleyball, playing soccer.

Sometimes, things are hard. I might feel frustrated or miss home. But I keep going, learning from my mistakes and getting stronger every day. After three months, I look back on my journey. I feel proud of how much i have improved. Not just in English, but in confidence and understanding different cultures. When I go back home to Saudi Arabia with new skills and a broader view of the world my parents will be proud of me.

At the end, my journey to America shows how learning a language can open doors and bring people together, no matter where I come from.

Duaa Albashri**RW41****Walking hobby**

Walking is a great hobby. Because has many benefits for our body and mind. We can enjoy ourselves and connect with nature. I like walking in the park and seeing nature, people, and the lake. Especially walking now in the spring season is so refreshing and beautiful, especially with all the blooming flowers. That gives us a clear mind, a relaxing feeling, and body fitness. I like to listen to music when I walk because that can reduce time. I recommend you practice walking and make a goal for walking distances to save your body's health. Don't forget to wear comfortable shoes and drink water.

Nicole Abreu Bonet**RW 30****Causes and Effects of Overweight Children**

There are many causes and effects of overweight children. First, there is a big reason of food. Children who become overweight like eating food. As a result, they overeat food, such as hamburger, pizza, chicken, and desserts. Second, there is another cause of physical activity. Most of children don't exercise since they want to play games or using their cellphone. Therefore, they can't use their energy as much as they eat. Third, there is very important reason of disease and medicine. Some of the children have disease including an effect of hereditary. Thus, children get fat because of the medicine of diseases or heredity. In conclusion, overweight children have to change their eating habits and lifestyle to become healthy.

Reina Tatewaki**RW 52****Design by Nature: Biomimetics**

Even the smallest organism may know something useful about our lives. According to MacIntyre and Bohlke (2020), a lot of researchers have been developing biomimetic engineering to solve problems in engineering, materials science, medicine, and other fields in our society by finding designs and features of organisms in nature and applying them to the human world. For example, Velcro is inspired by cockleburs, stickybot is inspired by gecko, the swimwear is inspired by the shark skin. Biomimetic engineering is especially integral to make our lives easier and help people in need. The information from this article obviously astonished me, and the potential of biomimetic engineering should be used as much as possible.

One of the points about organism securing water in the desert astonished me. This article says that the thorny devil lizard in Australian desert can collect water on its back in less than a minute, and then drink through its foot. We all know the desert does not have enough water, also it gets very hot during the day and very cold at night. Hydration is integral for people to live. The thorny devil lizard inspired system of securing water helps our life, especially people who live in the desert. The system may also save people from drinking contaminated water.

Another point about the bio-inspired robots impressed me. According to this article, these robots have potential to run up and down vertical walls and can go where it is too dangerous for people to go. Japan has a lot of earthquakes, so how to rescue people and animals is nationwide problem. On January 1, 2024, a major earthquake occurred in Ishikawa prefecture, Japan. A lot of buildings were destroyed, and sadly a lot of people were trapped under them. The people who came to their rescue could not go there and could not save people who got injured. If these robots were equipped with the ability to sense the heat of humans and animals, they could help people who effected by earthquakes.

The points in this article is astonishing and impressive. In fact, many people use products developed by biomimetic technology without knowing that they are inspired by living organisms. These products make our lives more convenient. Additionally, they can be used to help us in the event of a natural disaster such as earthquakes and hurricanes. I predict that a lot of people will be known to biomimetic engineering in the future and will realize the potential of it, and then more organisms inspired products will be developed to make our lives more convenient.

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Nicole Abreu Bonet

RW30

Causes and Effects of Air Pollution

There are many causes and effects of air pollution. First, there is very important cause which is the smoke from cars, trucks, and factories. There are more and more cars and factories in the world. Consequently, there is more pollution. Second, there is greater use of chemicals. Therefore, there are more chemicals in the environment. Third, there are many investigations that result in diseases, such as respiratory, cancer, and allergies being the cause of this contamination. In conclusion, there are significant causes and horrible effects of pollution that we need to change for our planet.

Sohyeon Lee

RW 52

Prompt: Is fast food safe and healthy?

Fast food is very convenient for busy workers and student however, it can be a virulent threat for overall health. Moreover, fast food around by us is more dangerous and unhealthy than our expectation. Bohlke (2020) suggests that fast food is exposed to conditions such as cutting boards, sinks and kitchen counters that poisonous bacteria can easily transfer to food or hands. Also, excessive fast food intake has negative impacts to our body like outbreaks some diseases or obesity. Harmful effects include possibility of bad bacteria, the dangers of biotech and unhealthy excessive fat and sugar.

One of the negative effects is contamination of virulent bacteria. According to Bohlke (2020) “Fruit and vegetables can pick up dangerous bacteria if washed or watered with contaminated water.” Especially, bacteria easily can contaminate ingredients in domestic kitchen cooking hamburgers, pizza, sandwiches and burritos because the fast food restaurant treat many kinds of inside ingredients for one dishes. If contaminated ingredients are served to customers, they will foodborne foodborne - disease even if they enjoyed the fast food. Unfortunately, We can ’ t realize and prevent infection because bacteria is obviously invisible and many infection processes occur before serve fast food to customers.

In addition, fast food has risk of biotech in terms of using GE foods. Bohlke (2020) suggests that in 1990s, altered soybeans using nut genes cause problems in humans who are allergic to nuts. In other words, something could be harmful and wrong in genetic modification process. Imagine what would happen if the lettuce made from biotech has other harmful proteins but wasn ’ t detected, many people would be with allergic reactions because of this.

Lastly, One of the prominent reasons why fast food is not healthy is an excessive consumption of fat and sugar more than daily recommended amount. Lipp (2019) indicates the calorie count for a specific fast food meal : Chipotle chicken burrito is 1115 calories, A burger with cheese is

790 calories and Honey mustard chicken sub is 830 calories. However, recommended fat allowances per day is 200 calories for women and 220 calories for men. Usually, already high calories intake notwithstanding people would get the soda, coffee, and some desserts. If a person eats fast food everyday, they will be consuming too many fat and calories than they expected. Consequently, fast food around us is not nutritional because they have more fat, sugar and sodium that cause obesity and some diseases.

Huyen Truong

RW 52

Prompt: The United States should adopt the metric system and get rid of the English system of measurement.

While the United States still uses their English measurement system, most other countries have already switched to the metric system. They realized the importance of this system and it is feasible to modify. Metric system is used in scientific and technological fields. It is prominent to incorporate international research and knowledge. While Thompson talked about the advantages of English system, Rooney also explained the advantages of metric system that showed us some factors why the United States should make the switch.

The metric system is the international standard for measurement. This can facilitate trade, scientific research, and collaboration with other countries. According to Rooney, 95% of people in the world use the metric system as the official system of measurement because the metric system is really useful. They want to change into this system to be more connected in the world, somebody might be lost the knowledge if they do not want to change the standard that people in the world adapted. Keeping the knowledge we know is good, we do not need more time to adapt but if people want to develop themselves, they should try to learn or follow the new standard that they have already known it is hard for them.

Because of the international universal, most scientists have also followed the metric system. It is used more in academic. Professors around the world already require the experience about this system. People who want to study in a university or college, they should have to know about the metric system. For example, in the USA, at school there are not only students from USA but also there has a lot of international students around the world want to study at USA. Professors cannot teach in the English system because some countries they use the metric system. It is very challenging for students who want to be more success, they need to learn the international standard that will be used in everywhere in the world.

Some Americans think it would confuse them if they change to the metric system. While it is true that it is complicated to change every application from the measurements to temperature to weights. However, this is only partly true. The United States should change their system to integrate into the world. Currently, the metric system is used in a lot of fields such as: immigration, education, and in the future it will be used more. It is just only 3 countries in the world use the English system that mean most countries in the world have already changed into the metric. They want to make the metric system become the official system, it could be easier if our world use only one system. It might not make the confusion for human. The United States should change to integrate into the world and help their people have more opportunities in education.

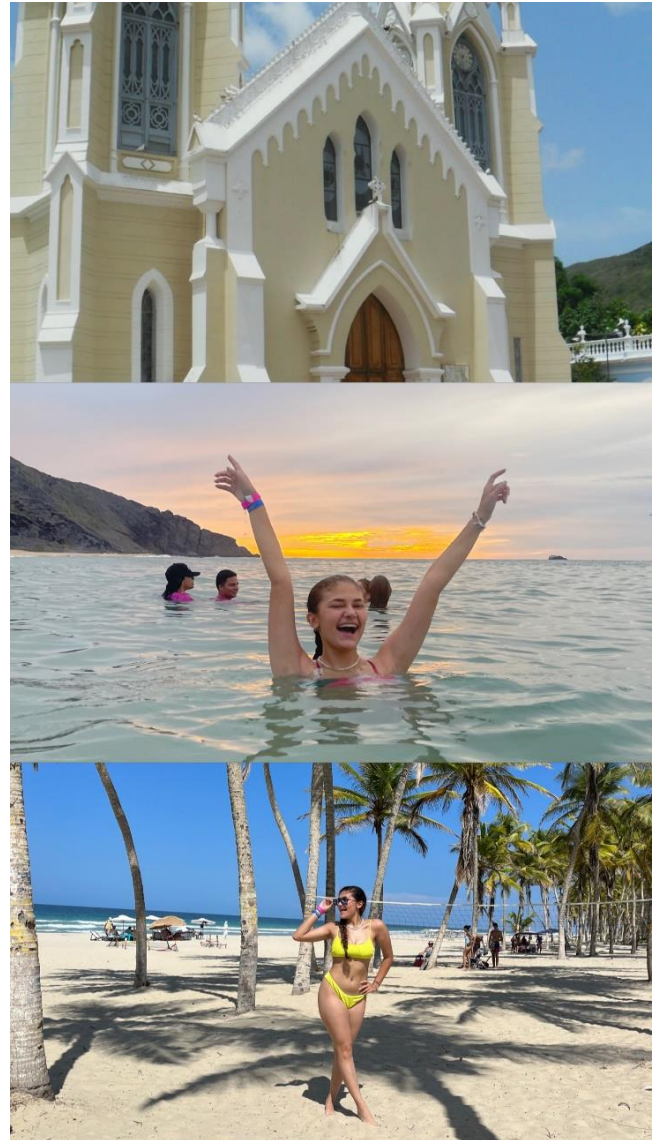
Our world has been developing, every country always wants to change better than the past. It has many challenges when we create and practice to use the new system. The metric system has many advantages for the world. Making the connection around the world to become only one system that means help people to focus on the only one system and avoid the confusion. It will be used more fields in the future and everyone also has the knowledge to study or opportunities to get more successful in their life. Sometimes stepping out of our comfort zone is also a good way to challenge ourself.

Isabela Planchart Contreras

RW 41

One Wonderful Thing About Venezuela

In Venezuela we have an island that has beautiful beaches and amazing sunsets. I want to share this place with Eli because Eli has many students with different cultures and nationalities and they need to know that place. For example, the salty and sweet food in the island is incredible, the empanadas that is a salty food (that is a mass of corn with cheese, beef, chicken or fish and is fried) or the Italian, Spanish or Arabic food is delicious and the desserts are too delicious like the todody that is a milkshake with chocolate (toddy) with milk and sugar other thing is the obleas than is a slim of waffle with dulce de leche and that is really common eat that on the beach. The restaurants are from different countries like China , Spain, Italia and Saudi Arabia. The beaches are clear with thin sand. The church of virgen del valle is really beautiful and the people sell amazing memories of the island, it was an amazing place to visit and take photos.



Soyeon (Sophia) Ryu

RW 41

My best experience through ELI

The best thing I experienced at ELI was the opportunity to make new friends. Meeting friends from different cultures and languages allowed me to learn new things by sharing thoughts and having conversations together. One significant difference I could feel while discussing cultures with friends was the food. So, we decided to share our countries' cuisines.

One of my friends came from China, she made 'malatang'. Malatang is a dish cooked by putting vegetables, meat, tofu, mushrooms, and dumplings into a spicy sauce. And I made 'kimchi pancake', which is made by mixing kimchi with pancake mix and grilling it. Since kimchi is made by putting peppers in

cabbage, it is thought to be spicy, but when made into kimchi pancakes, it can be eaten without being too spicy. So, although my friend initially thought kimchi pancakes would be spicy, after trying them, she said they were tasty without being as spicy as expected, even comparing them to malatang. One



thought that came to mind while eating these two dishes was the level of spiciness varies from country to country. I felt that Korean spiciness is similar to the spiciness of peppers, while Chinese spiciness has a unique flavor mixed with spices like capsaicin. Also, it was very interesting to see that even with similar ingredients, dishes are made and eaten in different ways. It was a great experience to share new things through food!

Luana Factor Diniz

RW50

Is it better study English in your country or in the United States?

English is a universal language that can be used to communicate with other people around the world. Most countries don't have English as a first language, and as a result, they choose to teach English starting in elementary school. It has been a great opportunity for children to adapt and learn a new language. However, English is not explored in schools as it should be; thus, when teenagers or adults, students choose to go to the United States (US) to take English classes. Therefore, people that studied English in their country or not, should go to the US because it provides and ensures a stronger immersive English environment, with American culture, personal growth and future opportunities in the US.

American culture provides several benefits, such as English practice in real life, American academic life, diversity of speakers and native teachers, which will help with better accent and pronunciation of the words. In Brazil, my home country, English in public schools has not been taken seriously by the Brazilian government. It results in a low-level of English speakers and many other disadvantages. That is why many Brazilians choose to go to the US to take Intensive English classes, with the purpose of learning the English language very quickly. In my experience, once I decided to come to the US, it provided me new amazing experiences in the American culture, which has many different things from my country. Brazil has less rules and punishments, which makes Brazil a dangerous country. Therefore, I am very happy about my choice to come to America to learn English and I strongly enjoy living in the US.

Another great point about studying English in the United States is personal growth. The biggest benefit of that is becoming more mature with more responsibilities after experiencing new things. It helped me with a faster improvement in every aspect of my life. I wasn't so familiar with housework in my country because I was living with my parents. However, since I came to the US, I learned how to cook, clean, shop for groceries, pay bills, be organized, etc. and I am enjoying it a lot. It has made me a better person, with a new vision about my life. I confess that

it wasn't easy in the beginning, but after a few weeks, I learned very well and quickly how to deal with certain situations in life. It has provided me a new window to the world, where I want to explore and learn more every day.

In many cases, students choose to study English in the US with the purpose of a future degree or a job in America. That is understandable because some degree programs require a specific exam to evaluate your English level. In addition, networking helps with building confidence, which create new opportunities in the future, such as a degree or job. My goal after the University of Florida English Language Institute (UF ELI) is apply for the Master's of Business Administration (MBA) and find a job in the US. The business area is extremely competitive and hard to get into. But after taking classes at the UF ELI, it has improved my application, allowing me to become more competitive to get into the MBA program, and more possibilities and attractive jobs in the US.

In conclusion, I highly recommend to study English in the US because it provides American culture experience, with immersive English environment. In addition, it allows personal growth, acquiring more responsibility and maturity. Additionally, studying English in the US creates new opportunities for degree or job in the future.



Justaquiu Lasi

RW 43

“Mystery Tree with Mystery Fruits”

In today’s reality who you may probably think that once a mother gives a birth in safe place like hospital, our umbilical cord carefully will be guard by the doctors or midwives. And yet we are



Photo Source: Facebook Antonio Serra in Timor-Leste

still questioning ourselves where they should put it-whether throw it carelessly into trash or bury. Astonishingly, if you travel to Timor-Leste, you will probably see something very unique. Yes, indeed, *the mystery tree and mystery fruits*, that’s where placenta hang on the trees everywhere on roadside. Particularly on the trees, we might glance at them on sidewalk, remote areas, municipalities across the Territory. It is mostly wrapped in plastic bag or a bucket but it need to add ash “from fire wood”. How does it appear upon the trees? Once mother labor, the medical team will cut the umbilical cord, however every family will take responsibility for placenta, and it will nicely manage and put on the trees. There are proven evidences of the trees which has had many branches, leaves, fruits and strong roots. The concrete examples like

Tamarind tree, Ficus tree, and Kusum tree. These trees vividly have important message from our ancestor belief system that, roots may preserve groundwater aquifers, used the leaves and barks for medical treatment, fruits was eatable for human or animals for survival during the hunger/war, others applied for cooking as seasoning specially Tamarind fruits & leaves”. The

traditional zodiac had significant meaning in cultural belief of your daughter/son of future mystical guess such as encounter fortune, bring lucky, and having many connections.

The *fortune* basically refers to leaves and shade that give fresh spirit, enthusiastic in doing something no matter how tired we are facing as well as working hard. The word '*fo matak malirin*' originates from our local language that has a sense of cherish, peaceful, we keep calm doing things, and good health to succeed in our dream like career or academic purpose

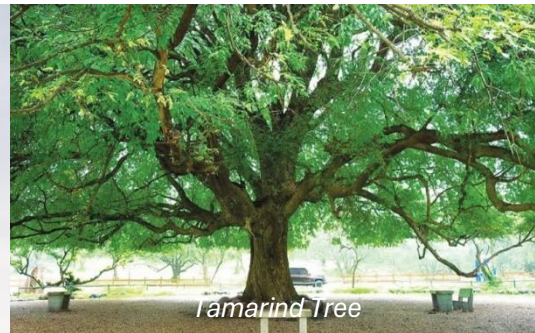
Another point is *luck* it talks about fruits where your daughter or son will get lucky in terms of financial stability. Even if you pursue your academic background or non-academic. But we still believe in luck. She/ he can acquire the financial stability regardless of if she/he had meager income or hefty paid that called lucky. The lucky she/he caught may full fill daily quotidian.

Finally, the *connection* stated for branches of the tree where the 3 trees have many braches that connect your daughter/son to have more friendship and unity both locally and internationally. It aimed where your daughter/son will go somewhere once she/he gets troubles will definitely help by random people or her/his friend from different family and different blood.

To summarize, *the mystery tree and mystery fruits* have powerful connection of human life specially Timor-Leste people who still trust in the culture ceremony and nature-based belief system. The trees symbolized the meaning of success or



Kusum Tree



Tamarind Tree



Ficus Tree

Photo Sources : Google;, Ficus, Kusum and Tamarind

hindrance of your daughter/son

face

in the coming days. Although, the initiative only for good intention toward her/his daughter/son future endeavor carrier, happiness, and friendship.

Elena Tobar

RW 51

The Border: Where Dehumanization and Hopelessness Collide

During spring break, I was in Dajabón, a municipality in the Dominican Republic where the border with Haiti lies: the Massacre River. Unfortunately, the name of this river gives clues as to what is experienced there.

Certainly, many have heard about the complex situation in Haiti. This Caribbean country has been suffering from a major political, security, and humanitarian crisis for many years, which has escalated considerably this year. Violence has reached an unprecedented point: hundreds of people dead, kidnapped, women and girls raped. This is compounded by the lack of employment, access to health and education, and basic services such as electricity, fuel, water, and food. In March 2024, the World Food Programme¹ indicated that currently "every other person is now hungry [in Haiti]," and that 1.4 million people are on the brink of famine.

I imagine that with this superficial description of the Haitian context I have just provided, many of us, if not all, would have decided to leave the country at all costs in search of refuge and better living conditions. This is what thousands of Haitian people have done. According to United Nations² data, just since the beginning of 2024, more than 35,000 Haitians have left their homes.

At the Dajabón border, I witnessed with pain and indignation how hundreds of Haitian people, who had fled their country to the Dominican Republic, were being deported (returned) despite the terrible situation of insecurity and poverty in Haiti.

¹ https://www.wfp.org/news/new-ipc-data-confirms-record-levels-hunger-haiti?_ga=2.265525449.731923688.1711474940-1241714540.1711474940

² <https://news.un.org/es/story/2024/03/1528312>

The deportation process begins with a violent capture of Haitian person found in various locations in the Dominican Republic. Police forces enter homes, schools, banana plantations, or construction sites to take away the Haitian individuals they find in each place. Many of these individuals try to flee regardless of the risks involved, because probably, many of those risks may be smaller than the consequences of returning to Haiti. I myself witnessed how a Haitian man, attempting to escape, got trapped in a spiked gate. According to accounts from humanitarian workers and Haitian individuals I spoke with, arrest processes often involve demands for money, cellphone theft, violence, and rape of women.

Once arrested, individuals are loaded onto a closed truck that only has a barred rear door and a small, barred window towards the cabin. In the truck, people must wait for hours and entire nights until the truck fills up, likely with more than 100 people. Those being deported must stand in the truck, they are not given water or food, and they also do not have access to a bathroom, even though many of these individuals are transported from distant cities to the border.

Every day, between 3 and 5 trucks full of Haitian people arrive at the Dajabón border to be deported. At a medium distance, one can distinguish hands gripping the bars of the truck. When the door opens, women start descending, some of them pregnant, others with newborn babies or small children, men and young people under the watchful eye of armed soldiers. And repeatedly, one hears: "How many?" And responses like these are recorded by migration agents: "23 children, 37 women, 44 men." And thus, it seems that each truck is a figure, not human beings who are being forcibly taken back to the place they fled from because their lives are in danger or their human rights are violated.

People must quickly get off the truck, some cover their faces with their hands, and begin to walk towards the entrance of Haiti. No one can stop. Deported Haitian people cross the Masacre River bridge. On the Haitian side, there are no hugs, no welcomes, no families or friends waiting, just a group of people trying to enter the Dominican Republic to get some rice, chicken or gasoline.

It's not groundbreaking to suggest that the current understanding of the border involves the loss of hope and the increase of *dehumanization*, that denial of the *other's* humanity executed through the attempt to erase their dignity.

Diana Carolina Barragán Caicedo

RW 60

*"It's not a book. It doesn't have a smell, you don't touch it . . . ,
you're plugged into the internet, you can't concentrate, it hurts your eyes,
and you lose the beauty of the words behind this screen."*

- Respondent to survey comparing on-screen with hard-copy reading

(Baron. N, 2013, p. 1)

The revolution of the reading era

Can you imagine a life without printed books? The creation of digital devices and the growth of sources with electronic information has driven a huge increase in the use of digital readings instead of on paper readings. Printed books have been involved in our lives for a long time. The Diamond Sutra, a Buddhist book, was the first printed book in 868 A.D (Sharma, 2023). Years later, the printing press made the production of books rise incredibly, they became popular and then successfully distributed all over the world. But, what is our concern now? Books are disappearing nowadays, books are being replaced by digital versions of books, and bookstores are closing at a faster rate than ever before. Some people might say that digital reading is the new norm, they assure that printed books are not more important or necessary because electronic devices can replace them. In addition, there is a misconception of the environmental impact of printed books, but the truth is that digital devices can be even more harmful to the environment. Nevertheless, on paper reading has shown to have a host of advantages related to longer periods of time without distractions, also related to better comprehension and memory retention. Furthermore, screen reading has also negative impacts, such as higher cognitive loading and the propensity to skim, which will never allow the reader to deeply connect.

Professors, librarians, and doctors are concerned about the negative effects of reading on screens, and there are strong points that support that getting used to digital reading could be a problem for children in the future. The *Annals of Library and Information Studies*, published an article in March 2022, comparing reading on paper and screens. Researchers stated that digital reading affects the cognitive processes of reading activity, leading the reader to focus on other distractions, ending in attention deficit and a preference for visual symbols (Lizunova I, et. al). Sharma explained how the new world order is the new generation that has a propensity to digital addiction. A recent study from *The Christian Science Monitor*, evaluated teens doing their homework, the time given was 15 minutes. The results showed that “the vast majority of students didn't make it past two minutes without texting or checking social media” (Sharma. P, 2023, 4:03). In other words, children are losing the capacity to focus on one task without distractions. Researchers from 30 different countries evaluated the impact of digitization (process of changing from physical material to digital sources) on the brain and they determined that reading on screens can be useful just in simple activities that don't require cognitive skills, otherwise, they showed how reading electronically is always going to have inferior results such as, poorer reader comprehension and even worse a big risk of get used to skim. The important variable is how we read because this affects our plastic brain circuitry, losing the ability to understand more complex information; ending in decreased activity and imagination. (Nils R., 2021).

A common myth related to this debate is that digital books are ecofriendly and help the environment. Some people might argue that digital books can help reduce the amount of paper and ink needed for the creation of on paper books, but it is a myth. Research in this field has shown that the carbon footprint of one printed book is 7.5 kg of carbon dioxide, versus 168 kg of carbon dioxide produced by the creation of one digital book. “If we examine the impact on the environment in terms of carbon dioxide emissions and water pollution, one e-reader is equivalent to 20-40 printed books” (Suhler & Shapir, 2023, p. 13). Given these points, producing digital books can result in 22.5 times more carbon emissions than those produced by a printed book. While it is true that when we think about natural resources, printed books involve cutting down trees and the use of water, the production of digital tools may also require natural sources; 15 kilograms

of mineral ores are needed, which produce cobalt and tantalum, which can be toxic. As we see the process causes pollution of approximately 300 liters of water, which can be 40 times more water than the required for a printed book (Suhler & Shapir, 2023). E-books can't be better for the environment, digital processes have shown the requirements of natural resources and the levels of contamination. Additionally, there is not an option of recycling electronic books and people tend to upgrade their devices to the latest version; electronic waste is toxic and pollutes every level of the environment that you can imagine. Nevertheless, printed books can last longer, can end up being used by hundreds of people, and the recycling process is easier.

Equally as important, on paper reading has shown to have a host of advantages related to longer periods of time without distractions, better comprehension and memory retention. Besides that, screen reading has also negative impacts, such as higher cognitive effort and the propensity to skim, which will never allow the reader to deeply connect, ending in shallower processing and affecting long-term memory. A study published in the *International Journal of Human-computer Interaction* in 2021, examined the effects of print vs. digital reading. Using the eye-movement, researchers evaluated the visual patterns, reading performance and reading attitudes. The analysis determined that "screen reading is related to higher cognitive loading and skimming, which may prevent the readers' ability to read in depth" (Jeong. Y, 2021, p.8). To sum up, there is evidently an impact related to the medium where you read, people who read on paper exhibited higher levels of fixation, better reading performance, higher levels of understanding and lower levels of fatigue.

Considering all perspectives and based on the evidence presented, it is unreal to think that printed books can be replaced by electronic reading, not just because of the benefits stated on the experiments mentioned, but also because it is a privilege to have the opportunity to live the blissful experience of feeling the connection between the real world and your book.

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