

# The ELI Weekly

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## Out and About: The Mystery of Tea

by Lu Huang, RW 60



Recently, I learned a new word: “tea.” It’s an interesting word because it has multiple meanings. Today, I want to share this mysterious word “tea” with other English learners.

I usually hear people talk about tea as a drink. For example, this week, sometimes my Saudi Arabian classmates brought tea to our weekly activities. They are very kind and always ask, “Do you want some tea?” I can understand the meaning of the Tea very quickly and I really appreciate their generosity.

However, sometimes this word confuses me. One day, I asked my friend, “When will you eat?” and she replied, “I’ll have tea at 7 p.m.” At that time, I thought she meant drinking tea.

I also watched an American English video which the conversation wasn’t about tea at all. But at the end, the creator asked, “Which is the tea?” This left me puzzled.

After looking into it, I discovered that “tea” can mean more than just a drink. In some cultures, people use “tea” to refer to a meal, particularly dinner. So, when someone says, “I’ll have tea at 7 p.m.,” they probably mean they will eat dinner, not just drink tea.

Additionally, in informal spoken English, especially on social media, “tea” can mean gossip or inside information. When people say, “spill the tea,” they are asking for juicy gossip! And when people say, “which is the tea?” means which is the gossip or the truth?

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## Joke of the Week

**What gets wetter the more it dries?**

A: a towel!

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## CIP Weekday Activities

### Monday, February 17<sup>th</sup> – Coffee Talk – 6:30-9:00pm



Socialize with LAs and ELI friends at the **Panera on Archer Road**! Play games, speak English, and drink a coffee or get dinner at the restaurants nearby. Take bus 1, 12, or 34.

*Address: 3443 SW Archer Rd Suite 1A, Gainesville, FL 32608*

### Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> – Volleyball – 6:30-9:00pm



Play volleyball and hang out at **Lexington Crossing Apartments Phase 2 Volleyball Courts**! No experience necessary. You can also watch, socialize, or play games on the side if you're not interested in playing volleyball. Take bus 35.

*Address: 3700 SW 27th St, Gainesville, FL 32608*

### Wednesday, February 19<sup>th</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Food Park – 6:00-8:30pm



Try some amazing restaurants at this fun outdoor location! It is a Gainesville staple, with pizza, tacos, outdoor games, and a converted bus to eat dinner in! Check out to fun souvenir shop at Square House pizza! Hang out with your ELI friends at this favorite local spot. Bring \$10-20 dollars if you'd like to buy dinner. Take bus 46!

*Address: 409 SW 4th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32601*

### Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup> – Soccer—6:30-9:00pm



Come play soccer at **Flavet Field** on campus! No experience necessary. You can also watch, socialize, or play games on the side if you're not interested in playing soccer.

*Address: Woodlawn Dr, Gainesville, FL 32603*

### Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup> – Reitz Game Room – 6:30-9:00pm



Hang out with friends in the **Reitz Game Room**! You can go bowling, play pool, and play board games. Bring your Gator1 ID for cheaper rates.

*Address: 655 Reitz Union Drive, Gainesville, FL 32611*

### Weekend Event

#### Saturday, February 22nd – Strawberry Festival at Amber Brooke Farms – 9:30am to 1:30pm

Celebrate the spring season at a local farm full of fun farm activities! Pick fruit and flowers, try yummy food, play farm games, and get your face painted at this picturesque farm! Entry is 20 dollars and the location does not accept cash. Meet at Norman Parking Garage.



You must sign up to attend this event:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0C4BA9A823A02-55092726-strawberry>

### Other CIP Reminders

#### Complete CIP Passport

Thank you for all your involvement in the CIP! Congratulations!

- Lu Huang

#### Conversation Partners (CPs)



Want to meet with a fluent English speaker and make a new friend? Sign up for a CP! If you choose to sign up, you must meet with your partner for one hour a week. It can take up to two weeks to get a partner from when you sign up. Please [sign up here!](#)

Please email Joey at [conversationpartners@eli.ufl.edu](mailto:conversationpartners@eli.ufl.edu) for any issues, questions or concerns or visit her in the CIP Office during office hours.

#### CIP Passports

Don't forget to get your CIP Passport hole punched from the activity leaders at the event (not after). **We don't hole punch passports after the event.** Redeem your completed passport for a small gift, a photo for the ELI Instagram, and your name published in the ELI weekly!

Need a new CIP Passport? Stop by the CIP Office



## Find the Pineapple

Remember the CIP Pineapple is hidden in a new place every Monday in the CIP office. Stop by and find it for hole punches!

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## Notes from the Office

**People out:** Christine is out of the office on February 20-21. Please plan around these dates if you need to talk to Christine.

**New Students:** B Term is about to begin, and you will see new students coming to the main office, in the hallways, in your classes, and at activities. Please welcome and help new students as they begin to settle at UF and in Gainesville.

**Course Evaluations:** Soon we will be doing midterm course evaluations. This is your opportunity to provide feedback for your classes. Please go to this link <https://bit.ly/4048gmH> to review the evaluations so that you know how to fill them out when they are distributed in class. Your teachers and Language Assistants will use this information to plan the class for the rest of the semester.

**No classes:** Friday, February 21 is an instructor workday. There are no ELI classes, but the main office will be open and there will be a Friday CIP activity.



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## US Federal Tax Forms for International Students

International students that were present in the U.S. in 2024 have a responsibility to file tax forms with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Tax forms are due on April 15<sup>th</sup> this year. They are filed for the previous calendar year, which in this case is 2024.

You must provide required tax forms *even if you did not earn any money* in the U.S. in 2024. **All F and J visa students (including dependents) must submit [IRS form 8843](#). You can get the form 8843 from the ELI main office.** Instructions for completing the form are also in the main office.

You cannot submit this document electronically. You must physically mail it to this address by April 15<sup>th</sup>:

**Department of the Treasury  
Internal Revenue Service Center  
Austin, TX 73301-0215**

Come talk to us if you have questions about how to mail the form. You can get an envelope from the ELI main office.

If you had on-campus employment in 2024 as an international student, you will receive a form from your employer reporting your income and tax withholdings called a W-2. **Because you earned reportable income, you must submit a federal tax return to file your W-2.** Talk to Daryl if you had on-campus employment last year and have questions about filling your taxes.

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## Student Voices



Every semester, we have amazing student writers, so we take your writing and publish it in an online collection called Student Voices. In past semesters, students have written paragraphs, essays, creative stories, recipes, letters, obituaries, poetry, and more. You can see past editions of Student Voices (<https://eli.ufl.edu/news-publications/>, scroll to the bottom of the page) for inspiration.

We encourage you to submit anything of your work that you wish to see published. It can be from any class or something you have written on your own but ask your teachers for help editing! You can email it to Olga Moody ([omoodu@ufl.edu](mailto:omoodu@ufl.edu)) or to your teacher. Please include your name and class on your submission. The deadline for submissions is Friday, March 28.

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## Birthdays!

### Students:

- Alisson Poveda Gutierrez, 2/18
- Nouriya Alsahli, 2/23

### Staff:

- None this week



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## Grammar

### **Q: Why do Americans ignore the grammar rules when speaking?**

A: Nearly everyone does, to some extent. This is how we create slang and idioms and how language evolves over time. Language is not a static, unchanging thing. It lives because it's spoken by a nearly infinite variety of people with a nearly infinite variety of thoughts and ideas. Think about it: when you speak in your native language with your friends, does it sound exactly like the language you are taught in school? Does it sound like the same language that your grandparents or even your parents use when they speak to their friends? Learn the rules and then learn how to break them, so you understand the English around you.



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### Photo of the Week: Volleyball Night



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### Manners & Culture

**Q: Why do students walk into class late? In my country, this would be very rude. Going out of class is also rude in my country.**

A: This behavior is also rude in the US. Students should not be walking out (and in, and out, and in) once the class has started. Such behavior is acceptable only in emergencies. So in a US classroom, a student might walk out and back in only once in the semester. It is also very rude to walk out while your instructor is talking to the class.

**Q: My bus was late, and I arrived to class late. I knocked on the door politely and waited to be let in. I thought I was being polite, but my teacher was mad. Why?**

A: If you are late, and your instructor has already started class, come in quietly (no knocking and no talking) and sit down. Listen to the instructions and when your instructor has finished talking, then you can say you are sorry for being late, ask questions, and greet your friends.

**Q: I walked into my friend's class to get my book. The teacher got mad at me. Why?**

A: In the US, students are responsible for keeping their own books, pencils, paper, and other supplies. It must seem very strange to the instructor when another student has your book, AND you are being rude by coming in after the instructor has started class!

**Q: I walked into my teacher's office. She wasn't there but another teacher got mad at me. Why?**

A: Was the door to the office closed? When the office door is closed, you should always knock. If they open the door or say "come in" then they are available to talk to you. If they do not answer, do not continue to knock, and do not open the door. They might be on the phone or a Zoom call. You should come back later.

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## Notes from the Editor



- Write a paragraph about your experiences this semester. You could write about an ELI activity, a Gainesville event, a fabulous local restaurant, or tell us about a place or event in your country that we should visit.
- Send me grammar questions for me to put in the *Weekly*.
- Send me manners and culture questions for me to put in the *Weekly*.
- Send me jokes to put in the *Weekly*.

I need students, LAs, instructors, staff, and administrators to help me write the *Weekly*!

Send your paragraphs and/or questions to Maya ([mshastri@ufl.edu](mailto:mshastri@ufl.edu)) Use the subject heading: ELI Weekly.