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The ESOL Ambassador



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The ESOL Ambassador is a quarterly publication of the Sylvania ESOL Department. Essays are written by students at all levels of the program and submitted for publication by ESOL instructors.

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*Special thanks to all
ESOL instructors
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ESOL Level 1 Students Write About Famous People From Their Countries



His name is Jackie Chan. He is a movie star. He is the king of Kung Fu. He is from China. He lives in Hong Kong. He speaks Mandarin, Cantonese and English. He is married. He has a son. His wife and son are also actors. His wife is very beautiful. In the morning, he wakes up, takes a shower, and eats breakfast. He likes to eat vegetables. He doesn't like meat. I like Jackie Chan because he is a very good Kung Fu star!

Written by: Ping Chen



His name is Ricardo Arjona. He is a singer. He is from Guatemala. I don't know where he lives, it is a mystery. He is handsome and tall. He is divorced. He has 3 children. He speaks Spanish and English. He likes music. In the morning, he wakes up, takes a shower, and eats breakfast. He doesn't take the bus. He drives to work. He buys fruits and vegetables 4 times a week. In the evening, he watches TV and sings. He has a dog. He doesn't have a cat. I like Ricardo Arjona because he is a very good singer.

Written by: Katty Paz



Picture of Author: Katty Paz

His name is Gabriel (Gabo) Garcia Marquez. He is one of the greatest exponents of Latin American literature. He was born in Colombia on March 6, 1927. His greatest masterpiece is "One Hundred Years of Solitude." The book was translated into more than 50 languages. It gave him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982. He goes to bed very late and gets up very early. He has yuca carimanolas and hot thick chocolate for breakfast. He is married to Mercedes Barcha for 46 years. He is the creator of magical realism and his works are simply wonderful. That's why my favorite person is him. And I write in the present because although he died on April 17, 2014, his books continue to inspire and radiate life. The life of Gabo takes us to places as magical as Macondo!

Written by: Angela Maria Aquado



Picture of Author: Angela Maria Aguado



His name is Leoni Torres. He is a singer. He is from Cuba. He lives in Havana. He is handsome, tall and strong. He is married. He is 43 years old. He has 3 children. He speaks Spanish and English. He likes music and baseball. In the morning, he wakes up at 7:30am, brushes his teeth, takes a shower, and eats breakfast. He doesn't take the bus. He drives to work. He buys shoes and clothes every week. In the evening, he watches TV with his family and eats dinner. He has a dog. The dog's name is Luna. He doesn't have a cat. He likes to go for walks on Saturdays. I like Leoni Torres, because his music is romantic and he is an excellent singer. I invite you to listen to him.

Written by: Arelis Rodriguez



Picture of Author: Arelis Rodriguez

His name is Roberto Carlos. He is a singer. He is from Brazil. He lives in Rio de Janeiro. He is handsome and tall. He is a widower. He has three biological children and one foster daughter. He speaks Portuguese, English and Spanish. In the morning, he wakes up, takes a shower, and eats breakfast, and then reads the newspaper. He doesn't have a driver. He likes to drive. He has a dog. His favorite food is beans with rice and fried eggs. He doesn't have a cat. I like Roberto Carlos because he is a Brazilian singer and composer. He is considered "the king" of romantic music.

Written by: Terezinha Simpson



Picture of Author: Terezinha Simpson



His name is Guillermo La Rosa, also known as "El Tanque". He is a soccer player. He is from Peru. He lives in Lima. He is healthy and strong. He started to play in 1973 and finished in 1979. He has 2 children. He speaks only Spanish. He likes dogs and water. In the morning, he wakes up, takes a shower, eats breakfast and watches TV. He runs to work. He eats beef and vegetables in the evening. He reads the news and does yoga. He has two medals. He doesn't like chocolate. He is a good coach.

Written by: Alvaro Velasquez



ESOL Level 2 Students Write About Things They No Longer Do Since Moving to the United States

For a Better Life

I am from Guatemala, and I have been living in Oregon for three years. I love my country and the culture. I miss the granizadas of my country. I miss a lot of people and things, but here I have a better life. I like to learn another language in another culture. My dream is to return to my country with my goals accomplished.

Written by: Nayely Yadira Carbajal Mateo



My New Life in the USA

My name is Kirhiam. I have lived in Oregon for 4 months. This place has many trees. I study at PCC, no longer at the University of Chile. In Chile, I studied History, and in Oregon I love learning English. Now I work at Taco Bell. I don't work as a history tutor anymore. I no longer play with my old dog because he died recently in Chile and now I am in Oregon. I go for a walk with my new pet. I'm very happy with my new life in Oregon.

Written by: Kirhiam Grau



Life in America

My family came to America to reunite with my parents. I have one sister and one brother who is also in America. I couldn't speak English. I am learning at PCC with my two children. I have a six year old son. He is in 1st grade at Elmonica school. He loves going to school because he has many friends playing with him. My parents have been in the US for 12 years but they don't speak English much. We are happy to be here.

Written by: Hoa Le

My Happy Life

I have lived in Oregon for 1 year and my life was very different in Mexico. In Mexico, I worked in a bakery making different pastries. Here in the US, I work as a landscaper. I don't drive a motorcycle anymore but I do drive a car. I walked my dog everywhere in Mexico. I have little free time in Oregon but that makes me very happy.

Written by: Filiberto Hernandez

Different Life in the United States

My name is Fiona. I have lived in Portland for 10 years with my son and my husband. I study English in the United States because I just spoke Mandarin in Taiwan. I need to drive and send my kids to school so I study how to drive a car in America but in Taiwan I rode a scooter everyday. I really enjoyed doing this by myself. I'm a mom in America but in Taiwan I was single. I don't have any of my family in the United States. My family lives in Taiwan. Everything is a big change for me, sometimes it is hard and sometimes it is sweet but I'm so grateful for every change.

Written by: Fiona Ji



My Life in Oregon

Several years ago I lived in the Dominican Republic, but now I am in Oregon. I have different jobs and different friends here. I miss my family in my country, but now I am in Oregon and have a new family here. I know that we will all be together very soon and we will be one great family.

Written by: Eduard Acevedo Dicen

Things I Do and Don't Since I Moved to the U.S.

These are the things I have done since I moved to the U.S. Something I do now is go to PCC. I didn't take my kids to the pool, and I didn't do online school in Iraq. I didn't drive a car in Iraq, but I do now to take my daughter to school. I didn't speak English. I am happy in Oregon because it's calm and has a lot of nature.

Written by: Hanan Albadri

Life in Oregon

I am from Brazil. My husband is here in Oregon on business. I came with my children. I currently live in Portland. I really like autumn here, it's my favorite season since in Brazil we don't have all the seasons. I think we will soon return to Brazil.

Written by: Camila Martinez Vieira

My New Life in Portland

My life is different in the USA. I don't live in Guatemala, but I lived in Guatemala three years ago. I did a lot of exercise in the morning. I like Zumba. I traveled a lot in the interior of the country and I also traveled to other countries -- Colombia I loved, and San Salvador. I don't travel frequently. I am happy to meet and live in Portland now.

Written by: Priscila Cifuentes



ESOL Level 3 Students Write About Their Most Memorable Days

My Baptism

The day of my baptism was a special day for me. I was baptized on April 3, 2021. My parents had organized a small meal to celebrate this day. My friends and my brothers and sisters from the church were invited. It was a day filled with emotion because I had accomplished something important for me. That day, my aunts had filled me with gifts to congratulate me, for example, a pair of shoes and a bag. Everyone was happy for me. We had to dance, sing and praise the Lord for this accomplishment. And to finish the meal, my brothers and sisters of the church had to pray for me to end the day in style and to give thanks to God.

Written by: Davina Ondongo Morabandza

My Wedding

My wedding was the first gay wedding I ever attended. I arrived in America the first of January 2020 on a fiancé visa. I met my future husband in August 2011 in Egypt, and we got engaged in September 2013. The relationship was a secret from my family. That made it harder to come to the United States to start a new life, but my husband's family all came to San Francisco to celebrate our wedding. We got married at San Francisco city hall. It's a beautiful building that is famous for gay weddings. We all wore fancy suits and dresses. Then we had a reception with cake and champagne. At night, we had a dancing party. It was a lovely day.

Written by: Mohamed Salama Mohamed Gad



The First Date with My Wife

I won't forget this day in February 2009 because this day my wife and I connected. In February 2009, I went out to eat with some friends. That day a group of women came to the restaurant. One of my friends knew one woman and got up to greet her. When he went to greet her, I looked at the women's group, and my eyes focused on the woman who is my wife today. She had beautiful hair and a striking skin color. This is how I met her. I was able to get her phone number through my friend's friend. After four months of communicating, she accepted a date. For that date I made a reservation at the best steakhouse in Guatemala. The date was for lunch. Our conversation was so interesting, neither of us felt time passing. We didn't leave the restaurant until 10:30 pm. It was an unforgettable date. On that date I totally fell in love.

Written by: Rodolfo Campos

My Wedding

The best event of my life was my wedding. We celebrate our wedding both at home and at the wedding hall. All of my friends and family were at my wedding. I wore three types of dresses for three different ceremonies. Those dresses had different colors and different designs. My dresses were white, green, and Afghani traditional dress. The white dress is for saying welcome to guests at the wedding hall, the green dress is for the marriage contract (Nekah), and the Afghani traditional dress is for henna. There were seven types of different foods. Around six hundred people attended my wedding which is normal in Afghanistan. After finishing all ceremonies at the wedding hall, most of the close family goes for a drive around the city. It is called Shar Gasht. The bride and the groom's car will be decorated with flowers.

Written by: Nargis Latyfi



ESOL Level 7

The Hero of This Pandemic

Big data makes human life easier than before, especially with this pandemic because it makes online education more convenient and easy to attend. People use many applications to log into their online courses, but the most popular one is called Zoom. This application helps online learning to be more flexible in many ways because there are many advantages that the zoom application offers to people.

Zoom is the hero of this pandemic because it saves time and money simultaneously. People use this application to avoid infection from coronavirus because that virus is fast spreading. As a result of that, they take online classes, and they don't have to take transportation or pay for college parking. Additionally, the more money they save, the more classes they can afford. Besides, there are a lot of jobs that pay more for people who work from home. Thanks to Zoom, there are many employees that switch their offices from work to home. Consequently, people are saving a lot of money because they don't have to pay for the commute expenses. For instance, Google is allowing their employees to work from home until 2022. Another advantage of Zoom is saving people time. Thus, many families are able to spend more time with their kids because Zoom is connecting teachers with students. Some families don't need to take their kids to daycare.

Because of Zoom features, students can get a lot of benefits. People can share their screen with others, so it is very beneficial for PowerPoint, presentations, and academic classes, and they can review the recording of the class, so that is going to make it easy to take note. Additionally, zoom is allowing participants to see the name of each person, and that makes it accessible to remember the name of their classmates. In this application, zoom is very convenient because zoom users can mute or unmute themselves, and they can also start their video or stop it. In addition, there are many other things in that application like the chatbox, reaction, and there is a virtual background too because it is helpful especially if a person does not want other people to see their house or privacy.

Finally, online classes with the Zoom application make human life easier, especially inside this pandemic. Also, because of that people are experiencing a new social life through Zoom, and that is going to reduce the stress and fear about that virus. All in all, Covid 19 is jeopardizing our life, but the Zoom application is freeing us from this pandemic.

Written by: Hanane Bouramdane



Every Student's Dream

For some students, online classes are gifts from God. There are countless advantages for Zoom classes, especially for some students, like mothers and working people who don't have time to attend classes. Online classes are many student's dreams come true because they are not only convenient but also cheaper.

The first advantage of online classes is that they are very convenient for many students. Students can take classes on their bed when they are still in their pajamas or when they are cooking food in the kitchen in the park or anyplace they are. Even when the student is on a vacation, he or she can still take the online class. Even when students are in another country, they can still take the classes. There is no excuse for missing the classes because online classes mostly are being recorded, so the student can watch the class any time anywhere he or she wants. What the student needs is a one-click to connect the class. Learning in online classes is easier than anything because students have more time to do everything if it is homework or exams they will take their time to finish. There is no one looking at them because usually in the class it is essential the students give their full attention during the exam or when the teacher is explaining something but in online classes, there is nothing like that. Also, students can make progress because they are not stressed because sometimes when the students are under stress they will freak out and they will not be able to distinguish between the wrong or the right when they are doing the exam.

Another advantage when it comes to online classes is the cost. The biggest advantage is financial because the students can save a lot of money. For example, if a student is using the bus, they can save that money by taking online classes. Also if the student has a car, they can save money on gas and parking. Also, the student can save time for driving or time for getting ready. So online is very cheap, and students can save money on that. The other advantage is that students can learn new skills such as how to use the computer or another device. It is free education because students will learn how to do presentations on the computer and how to write easily and quickly. When it comes to online classes it is not only cheap for the students but also the institution saves because they will not pay much like the rent and electricity bills. Online classes are the easier classes any student can take at this time.

In conclusion, online classes are the best and very convenient for everyone. Also, students can save money in many ways and save time. Especially if the student is a mother or working person, it is very good for them in every way. They can learn to use a different technology which is free education. Online classes are a win-win situation for almost every student.

Written by: Aisha Mohamud



ESOL 230

Studying for TOEFL

Many students wonder if preparing for the TOEFL with an online class or with only books is more convenient. I usually prefer to take a class in person. However, in my experience, online classes are the best way to prepare for the TOEFL. At PCC, an online class means a class that is designed to be 100% online, with no regular zoom class meetings. I have been learning English by taking online classes at PCC since March 2020. Online classes are the best way to study for the TOEFL because of their convenience and work-life balance.

First of all, it is usually much easier and faster to ask the question to instructors. When the students have a question, students can ask directly via email or texting. Also, students can understand the sentence structures better by sending an email or text message to the instructor. In addition, previewing the class and previous classes are good advantages for students because some online classes have a fair amount of recording, so the students can watch it again and again whenever they want.

The second reason is that students can reconcile work and life when the students are taking online classes. Some students work during the daytime and need to take care of their family or children. In addition, online class students are able to make an appointment with their instructor through the zoom meeting when they have a question.

Above all, there are advantages to taking an online class. That's why I'm taking some online classes right now.

Written by: Minako Masuda



ESOL Level 8

Only Fear of Death Could Force Me to Change My Beliefs

When I went to college in the mid 90' Kate Moss and her androgynous thinness were in vogue. Nearly all girls wanted to copy Kate's looks wearing a tiny silk dress, I was not an exception. Overall I had a strong will in addition to a great desire to achieve my goals.

I did some research and found out that people could easily lose weight using a high-protein diet. It means consuming only low-fat proteins with green veggies. Also, the dieters should avoid sugars and carbs. It seemed easy to me, and I started my journey to being a slim girl. After 3 months of this diet, I lost about 10 pounds. All my friends noticed that I had become like Kate Moss. However, it was not enough for me and I decided to proceed with the diet. One month later, I looked exhausted and unhealthy. I was terribly proud of myself, but my family and closest friends were not. They began to notice that I had lost the common sense in the race for a new body instead of taking care of my health.

My mom felt that my diet had ruined my health. She decided to talk to me seriously. She said that everything is good in balance and during our life, the greatest great skill that we could possess is to understand how to find that balance in everything that we do. She told me that it's better to eat everything, but in very small portions, consuming fats, carbs, and protein in equal proportions. In her humble opinion, it was the way to always be slim and healthy. That day I argued with her saying that it was the silliest advice I had ever received. In spite of the fact that my mom was in great shape and looked way younger than her age, I couldn't see that as I didn't trust her way of life and her diet principles.

In the next two weeks, I completely changed my opinion. A couple of days after our conversation with my mom, I fell ill with a sore throat. As my body was exhausted with the strict diet, I had no strength to fight the disease. Even antibiotics did not help. I felt terrible. It was hard to stand up from the bed, I couldn't eat, my head was dizzy. It was scary. My mother began to feed me slowly. Spoon by spoon, little by little. She used her balanced diet. I ate everything with no complaints. I recovered in a week.

I realized how wrong I was. I completely reconsidered my point of view. I'm grateful to my mom for the most important lesson in my life. Through that experience, I realized how important it was to listen and follow wise advice and practice flexibility when making decisions. I understood that it is a strength but not a weakness to reconsider and change the point of view when necessary. It's better to think carefully and look at the problem from different angles before making a decision. Moreover, in that situation, my mom showed me that finding an inner balance is one of the most important life goals. Now I know that in spite of all life passions and temptations it's better to feel and consume consciously. Furthermore, it helps me to develop a self-assessment skill that allows me to set and achieve goals and enhance self-realization by serving other people with my talents.

Written by: Anna Verholantseva



The Watershed Moment in My Life

The defining moment in my life was when a thief put a knife on my neck and I almost died. It was in my apartment in Ukraine in 2011, when I went to study there. Moving to the Ukraine was a wrong decision, but my motivation and enthusiasm for studying was greater than my correct preparation for it. However, these obstacles and hardships I experienced may have been the key to open another door through which I entered a world I had never expected.

In 2011, I collected all my belongings and said goodbye to my family in Iraq. I took with me all the money I had saved. My goal was to study and get a good degree that would allow me to work in my country, but a thief's appearance turned everything upside down. I lost all my money in one moment. I collected my belongings again and went to the airport to return to my country. I had borrowed money to buy a cheap plane ticket that landed at more than one airport. Then the plane landed me at the Istanbul airport all alone. I sat at the airport waiting for my next flight to Baghdad. I was looking at the travelers passing in front of me while I was sitting. I felt that I was shackled, and I could not move. It was a difficult moment of disappointment and failure, but at this moment something flowed into me. I decided not to go back to my country but instead I would keep trying to reach my goal. So, I took a 30-day visa from inside the airport and left. I sat on that cold night on the street near the United Nations building. In the morning I was considered a refugee living in Turkey officially. I found an illegal job in a travel and tourism office and found a suitable residence. After three years, the plane flew me to the Los Angeles airport to enter the United States after years of fatigue and waiting. I started a new life in America. My goal was to extend a helping hand to everyone who needs help in the community: to build myself anew, develop at the same time, serve the community, and advance it. I do not deny that there are many challenges such as language and the lack of family and friends, but here I am, completing my fifth year. I learned English, and to drive for the first time. I learned to be patient and respect time. I also learned to be organized, persistent and go straight to my goals without wasting time.

Generally, the watershed moments in life are very important. They pass quickly, so we must be courageous to seize them and reach what we aspire to in the future. I have learned to seize these difficult moments and turn them into a good drive that changes the course of my life and the lives of others for the better. All of my experiences from the past few years have changed me to be more flexible, resilient and determined. I will achieve through my studies in college all the goals that will serve the college, society, and humanity. I hope to be accepted.

Written by: Shatha Al Salman

