



The ESL Parrot

Your ARC newsletter for and by ESL students

Issue # 13

Spring 2007

Interviewing Ashley Kwan, a Printer at ARC

Could you tell us something about your background?

My parents are both Chinese: my father is from Hong Kong, and my mother is from inland China. They went to India for their business, and I was born in India. I am the youngest children of eight siblings, three girls and five boys. After I finished two years college in India, I went to Toronto, Canada. I've been living in the U.S. for five years.

How many languages do you speak?

English, three different dialects of Chinese, five different Indian dialects, French, Tagalog and a little bit of Japanese. I love languages.

With such an interesting background, did you have any language challenges in your schooling?

Although I was born and raised in India, my first languages are English and Chinese. Indian languages are my second languages. I went to a Christian school, and all people mainly speak English in the school. However, I had to take exams with Indians in high school and college.

How did you end up at ARC?

I had worked at Hallmark, Greeting Card Co., in Toronto, Canada for 20 years as a printer. When I came to the U.S., I was looking for a printer job, and found one on the Internet.

Could you explain what printers do, and how the

printing service works?

First, faculty submits a form, the Printing Services Requisition, with an original hard copy document or by the Internet. Second, I put the original paper on the press maker machine to make a printing plate, a light-sensitive plate. After putting chemicals on that plate, I turn on the printing press machine. That machine has very high technology. It can print 10,000 copies an hour while copiers print around 100 an hour.



What made you interested in becoming a printer?

I like colors. I used to like to paint and draw when I was a kid. I wanted to take art classes, but my father passed away when I was very young, and my mother had to take care of eight children — we were poor.

Therefore, I couldn't take any art classes. However, this job is the closest job to what I wanted to be. I got color. I don't only print black and white. I print brochures and catalogs that have color. My expertise is color. I'm a color technician.

Could you tell us what students need to do in order to

become a printer?

Printing is needed anywhere you go, for any business. There has to be printing, so printing jobs are very much in demand even though the pay is not very high. However, there is the satisfaction of being a printer. You can see the results immediately. I'd recommend that if somebody wants to learn printing, he should go to a printer to see how it works. If you like it and it is what you want to do, then you can take some printing classes.

How many people work for printing services?

Eight people including our supervisor.

How do you like working as a printer?

I love this job because I can see the quality immediately. It's easygoing. It's not very stressful, except during spring and fall semesters. Spring and fall are very busy. We print about 2 million copies a month. But most of the time it is not busy, very calm.

What's the most challenging aspect of your job?

Printing with color. Color has to be very simple. Also printing on different kinds of paper such as high-gloss paper and coated paper, which is very shiny, is a challenge. It's a good experience.

What do you think about ESL students? Do you have any specific feeling about ESL students?

Action may not always bring happiness; but there is not happiness without action.

Benjamin Disraeli



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I understand ESL students because I know how difficult it is to learn a second language. I've been through a lot. English is a universal language. I adapted easily to a western country because I went to an English school. But I'm very sensitive to other countries. I've been to many countries: Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, all of China, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, England, France, and Mexico. I'd like to visit more countries.

Many ESL students are unprepared for the cultural differences they encounter after they come to the U.S., and some students find it hard to adjust to a multicultural society. Can you personally relate to such ESL students?

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Student Chirpings

A Bitter Memory of Youth



“You’d better bring your wet suit.” My coach woke me up with a phone call, in the early morning, in the bracing beginning of fall. I hung up the phone and opened a window. The sun was gently rising, releasing temperate warmth. I had complete confidence for the race, and so I decided not to bring my wet suit. It made the first triathlon race in my life unforgettable.

Over two hundred tri-athletes were gathering at the stadium. A hanging banner read “BRIDGESTONE CUP,” at the gate of the stadium. The Bridgestone Cup is an annual triathlon race — a combination of swimming, cycling, and running—sponsored by Bridgestone Co., the biggest tire maker in Japan. There were three courses of the race: long, middle, and short distance courses. I entered the short course. First, I would swim 1 mile in the pool, next to the stadium. After that, I would rush to the transit point in the stadium about 110 yards from the pool and ride my bike and go around 25 miles outside the stadium and back to the transit point. Finally, I would leave my bike at the transit point and run 12.5 miles outside the stadium, and return to the track of the stadium to finish. I was familiar with the course because I had trained on the course several times with my teammates — twenty athletes, age 16 to 35.

After I left all my equipment at the transit point for biking and running, I went to the 50-meter pool (about 54.7 yards), and I saw most athletes were wearing their wet suits. “Feeble,” I muttered as I waited at the starting sign at the edge of the pool. My race began with the “Go” sign. I jumped into the pool full of confidence, and immediately I felt my heart harden. My arms and feet became three times heavier, and I could hardly

breathe. The temperature of the pool was so cold. The cold water froze my body instantly. It was like swimming in the bottom of the Mariana Trench. I panicked. It was so difficult to breathe, even when I put my face on the surface with my mouth wide open. I struggled to swim for 50 meters with almost no breathing. When I somehow reached the edge of the pool, I stood and cried out to my coach, “I’m going to give up!” My coach pushed my frozen body back into the Mariana Trench-like pool. I got really upset at what he did to me, and I started swimming obstinately. I could not understand why he did that to me. My eyes became warmed by my tears, and the tears made it more difficult for me to breathe. Nonetheless, my anger helped me to swim since I was driven by my anger. I was more upset than cold. Little by little, my body got used to the freezing water, and then I recovered my ability to swim. By the time I finished swimming,



my inside body temperature had increased, but I was last.

I rushed to the transit point to get my bike. Still, my arrogant confidence remained. I believed I could catch the top runner group. Soon, an athlete came into my view. I pedaled hard to reach her, but my wheel caught a rock, and I fell off my bike. When I looked ahead, nobody was there in front of me. I began crying. I had been a marathon athlete for six years and had never been a loser. I could not believe I was running very last in the race. I had had too much confidence, and I remembered that my coach urged me to bring my wet suit. “He was right.” Tears streamed down my cheeks. Meanwhile, the road ended. I realized that I had gone the wrong way. I suddenly felt it was over. I slowed down riding and returned the way I came. At the turning point, there was my coach

and some of my teammates. I told my coach I was done there. He replied quietly and warmly, “Even if you can’t win the race, don’t defeat yourself.” I could not understand the meaning when he told me that. “Finish up your race!” one of my older teammates exclaimed at me with a severe face. I felt obligated and reluctantly began pedaling my bike. I rode my bike with bitter tears. My self-confidence was completely lost. Somehow I finished the biking stage.

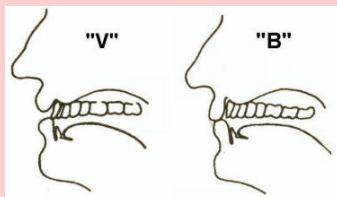
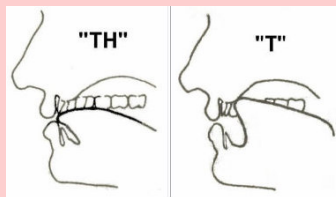
Finally, I began running. My feet were already numb. I was totally exhausted. I felt miserable. Again and again I wanted to give up, but I was encouraged by my teammates. After they finished their race, they came along to run with me so I could reach the finish line. There was only my coach and the rest of my teammates at the end. I had finally finished my race. My coach gave me a warmhearted hug, and my teammates gave me applause. I collapsed and cried.

That night, I was remembering the race. I thought that a race was like life. Life has a lot of obstacles, but people help each other. People don’t stand alone. I appreciated my coach and teammates, and I regretted I had been selfish and conceited, and then I thought I understood my coach’s words a little, “Even if you can’t win the race, don’t defeat yourself.” At the moment I felt that I had grown up. I was eighteen. Sometimes when I encounter a hard time, I remember that day, the bitter memory of my youth.



by Jenny Hole
ESLW 310

Parrot Warbling

Speak Like a Parrot**Mouth Positions and Exercises**
for V and B Sounds**Mouth Positions and Exercises**
for V and B Sounds**A. Practice saying these contrast:**

1. bet - vet
2. van - ban
3. very - berry
4. vase - base
5. vote - boat
6. vine - bind

B. Practice saying the following:

1. He wants to buy my boat.
2. He wants to buy my vote.
3. What's a bat?
4. What's a vat?
5. What's a vine?
6. What's a bind?

C. Practice the difference saying these words

1. they - tray
2. than - tan
3. clothe - close
4. clothing - closing
5. thin - sin
6. thought - sought
7. thank - sank
8. throw - sow
9. math - mass

D. Practice the following.

The teachers are quick to suggest
That we study quite hard for a test
It takes lots of thought
To learn what we were taught
But I think I prefer just to rest.


 An illustration of a cluttered attic with various items like a television, a chair, and boxes. The text "Idiom Attic" is written in a colorful, stylized font across the top.

ahead of time
- early
We started the meeting ahead of time so that we could go home early.

air one's dirty laundry/linen in public
- to make public something embarrassing that should be kept secret
The dinner party became uncomfortable when the host began to air his colleague's dirty laundry in public.

air one's grievances
- to complain (often publicly)
We spent the meeting airing our grievances to the new supervisor.

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www.arcoarena.com



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www.mapquest.com

Modals. Part 3

May and Might

May and might *sometimes* have virtually the same meaning; they are used to talk about *possibilities* in the past, present or future. ("Could" is also sometimes used). *May* is sometimes a little bit "more sure" (50% chance); whereas *might* expresses more doubt (maybe only a 30% chance).

May and might are used, then, for:

Talking about the present or future with uncertainty

She **may be** back in her office: the lecture finished ten minutes ago.

I **may go** shopping tonight, I haven't decided yet.

England **might win** the World Cup; you never know.

Talking about the past with uncertainty

I'm surprised he failed. I suppose he **might have been** ill on the day of the exam.

They can also sometimes be used for talking about **permission**, but usually only in formal situations. Instead of saying *May I open a window?* we would say *Is it all right/OK if I open a window?* or *Can I open a window?* for example. You might, however,

see:

Students **may not** borrow equipment without written permission.

May

Talking about things that can happen in certain situations

If the monitors are used in poorly lit places, some users **may experience** headaches.

Each nurse **may be** responsible for up to twenty patients.

With a similar meaning to *although*

The experiment **may have been** a success, but there is still a lot of work to be done. (= **Although** it was a success, there is still ...)

Might

Saying that something was possible, but did not actually happen

You saw me standing at the bus stop! You **might have stopped** and **given** me a lift!

TONGUE TWISTWER

Betty Botter's Better Batter

Betty Botter had some butter,
"But," she said, "this butter's bitter.

If I bake this bitter butter,
It would make my batter bitter.
But a bit of better butter,
That would make my batter better."

So she bought a bit of butter –
Better than her bitter butter –
And she baked it in her batter;
And the batter was not bitter.

So 'twas better Betty Botter
Bought a bit of better butter.

Dear Granny,

I'm trying to make out my schedule for the fall. I'm thinking about a reading class, a grammar class, and a writing class. I'm excited but I'm also a bit afraid because in my classes I have a hard time understanding the teacher's instructions. Luckily, until now, my girlfriend has always taken classes with me and translated for me. However, I think my girlfriend's strange now. At lunch in the cafeteria (I was eating a sloppy Joe), she said to me in English, "You have no class." I want a class. What does she mean?

Willing to Listen

Dear Willing,

How did you girlfriend sound? What did your girlfriend's face look like when she spoke to you in English? (Actually how did your face look?) I'm not really sure if your girlfriend finds you annoying and embarrassing or if she was trying to explain your schedule to you. The fact is, pal, you need to learn how to understand and react to English. Reading, grammar, and writing are all good classes, but they are all easier to take if you can understand what the teacher and other students are talking about (in English!). Listening class is an option that you and many students often ignore. Why? Language comes alive in a listening class! Learn to be an "active" listener. Sign up for a listening class! You can also get listening/speaking practice in ESL 97 at the LRC ESL lab. Here's what some notable people once said:

So when you are listening to somebody, completely, attentively, then you are listening not only to the words, but also to the feeling of what is being conveyed, to the whole of it, not part of it. -- **Jiddu Krishnamurti**

"The principle of listening, someone has said, is to develop a big ear rather than a big mouth." -- **Howard G. and Jeanne Hendricks**

We need a definite purpose, a specific reason for listening; otherwise we don't pay attention and don't really hear or understand. -- **Robert Montgomery - Listening Made Easy**

No one ever listened themselves out of a job. -- **Calvin Coolidge**, US president

Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen. -- **Winston Churchill**, British prime minister

There is only one rule to become a good talker: learn how to listen. -- **Source Unknown**

Ya know, I ain't used to talking to a closed door." -- **Sylvester Stallone - Rocky**

Granny



Word-finds



S Y E K N O D D S P B O R
G O G S W O C E R U S P E
B I S O N C F R F A O S S
B H S S P F S F E R B A T
E R I L A H A A C E R R N
A O S R E L E U L S D B A
V E I H O R P R E A G E H
E G S R E I R S S P O Z P
R A R O N E R I E E A K E
S O A E O O P A U E T S L
H S S B H M A O R Q S R E
O L W R A B B I T S S S E
L S O R E C O N I H R V S

- BEAVERS**
- BISON**
- BUFFALO**
- COWS**
- DEER**
- DONKEYS**
- ELEPHANTS**
- GIRAFFES**
- GOATS**
- HORSES**
- KOALAS**
- PORCUPINES**
- MOOSE**
- RABBITS**
- RHINOCEROS**
- SHEEP**
- SQUIRRELS**
- ZEBRAS**
- GOPHERS**

Word-finds Answers

S Y E K N O D D S P B O R
G O G S W O C E R U S P E
B I S O N C F R F A O S S
B H S S P F S F E R B A T
E R I L A H A A C E R R N
A O S R E L E U L S D B A
V E I H O R P R E A G E H
E G S R E I R S S P O Z P
R A R O N E R I E E A K E
S O A E O O P A U E T S L
H S S B H M A O R Q S R E
O L W R A B B I T S S S E
L S O R E C O N I H R V S

MORE STUDENT CHIRPINGS

Why I Chose ARC

The American Dream is often associated with immigration, as the dream of religious freedom, economic prosperity, and meritocracy, so it has historically driven immigrants to the USA. Most immigrant ESL students in ARC have their own American Dreams. As immigrants, most international students also have their own American Dreams, such as speaking English fluently, getting a better job in their country, and getting a degree from 4-year universities in the USA. The American Dream has been a reason why I decided to study in the USA two years ago, and why I have been studying in the USA for two years. When I chose where I would study in the USA, I decided to study in Sacramento. In my case, one of my friends' uncle lives in Sacramento, and my friend also decided to study in the USA. For this reason, I chose studying in Sacramento even though I wanted to go to a big city, such as San Francisco, Seattle, or New York. When some international students decide where to study in the USA, they choose where their relatives live. Others choose where their agency suggests. In my country, there are agencies which do the paperwork for the students. The agencies get admission letters and I-20 visas from overseas schools, prepare to get a visa interview, and book plane tickets, etc. They usually comment Sacramento is a good place to study because here not many

Koreans live here. For this reason, some students come to Sacramento.

Two years ago, when I came to the USA, I was nervous and excited. A lot of things are curious and different from things in my country. When I go to a grocery store, I always wonder how they have many different kinds of goods. For example, they provide different kinds of bottled milk: whole milk, 2% reduced fat milk, half-and-



half milk, fat-free milk, and added vitamin milk. In my country, however, we have whole milk and low-fat milk. When I first lived with my American host family, they helped me to be accustomed to the USA, to what is in Sacramento, how to get to places, and how to take public transportation. They were really good, and it was my luck. Then, I met some friends who came to Sacramento earlier than me. We exchanged information we knew, and I got information about ARC from them. Moreover, Internet communities in my coun-

try are very strong, so I got information about studying in the USA through the Internet. A lot of international students want to transfer to universities. However, many international students attend a community college and then transfer to a university because it is one way to save money. International students have the same concerns, so we exchange information and help each other.

I also want to transfer to a university, so I have been preparing. I have been in the USA two years, and this is my 4th semester at ARC. However, I will attend one more year or more than one year because it took time to finish ESL classes. This semester is my first semester taking English writing. It is a challenge and not over yet. English will have been a challenge while living in the USA, and even when I go back to my country. However, I will have tried to study like climbing a mountain. No one in ESL class differs from me even though they are immigrants. English is our challenge, and we try to climb the English mountain. Until we reach the top of the mountain called English, we'll go for it!!

by Eun Kyoung Hong

Continued from page 1

Ashley Kwan, a Printer at ARC

They need to try to make friends quickly, not to be close only to their own people. They should try to be open, try to adjust very quickly because people who don't speak any other language except English feel like they cannot relate or communicate with somebody who can't understand. A lot of people

speak only one language and that is English and they've never been out of the U.S. and they've never been to different countries so it's up to us immigrants and ESL students to put forth the effort. The words we don't understand we should write down and check in the dictionary. There is a lot of slang that's difficult for ESL students. It's challenging, but once you master English you go anywhere.

What effect does the population of ESL students and ESL faculty have on the volume of your work?

A small part. Printing for ESL is not a lot but it is the good part of our job.

by Jenny Hole



OUT OF THE CAGE

Thursday, May 3, 2007
[Music Event] 12:20 pm

Latin Jazz Ensemble

Join the ARC Latin Jazz Ensemble for a concert of instrumental Latin rhythms during the college hour. The concert will be held in room 513 of the music department portables.

Admission is free to this event.

For more information, contact

Wednesday, May 9, 2007
[Career Center] 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Internships: A way to your Career

Did you know that nearly 58% of students who had an internship with a company were offered full-time jobs by that same company? And did you know that employers would prefer to hire a student with experience through internships than a student with a degree alone? This workshop explains why internships are such an important step towards your career. The workshop will also explain how to get an internship through the Co-op Work Experience & Internship Program. Open to all majors, don't miss it!

* Facilitated by the Cooperative Work Experience & Internship Office

Monday, May 7, 2007
[Career Center] 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Interview Success Workshop

This workshop includes information on researching the organization, reviewing anticipated questions, specific strategies, assessing your skills, making a professional presentation, and body language and presenta-

Tuesday, May 8, 2007
[Career Center] 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Resume Development

Your resume reflects your uniqueness. This workshop focuses on the physical appearance of a resume, including different types of formats and the kinds of information that should be included. Tips on writing an effective cover letter to send with your resume and formatting scanner friendly resumes will also be discussed.

Tuesday, May 8, 2007
[Career Center] 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Stress - Balancing Work, School, & Life Workshop

Stressed out? Struggling to keep up with the demands of school, work, and a personal life? You are not alone. Life in the 21st century has brought in a whole new set of stressors we all must deal with. Although stress is a normal part of life, it can take a toll on our health and ability to succeed if it becomes excessive.

In this workshop you will learn about the nature of stress, some of its causes and how it often surfaces in physical and emotional symptoms. You will learn experiential ways to cope with stress in your daily life. Life can't be stress-free, but we can change how we relate to stressful situations so we are not as adversely affected.

Even More Student Chirpings

Childhood Impressions of the U.S

W310

Victor Magurean

I grew up in a communist country and in our schools teachers taught us only things not so good about the U.S. I thought that the U.S. was a bad country and people who were living in this country were not so happy because they had to work a lot. Children in this country, I thought, had to work too with their parents around ten hours per day.

In a few words I was afraid of the U.S. because I knew the U.S. was a strong country with a strong army and many soldiers.

I am very happy that my thoughts were not true.

Myanh Quach

When I was a child, I always guessed that the U.S. was a wonderful country. When I watched T.V. the U.S. appeared with many great things. I remembered that when I was 5-6 years old, I often prayed to God that I could visit the U.S. in my future because my friend's parents had been in the US for a long time and one time, when he came back to Vietnam to visit his parents, I saw him and he told me something about the U.S., that it was a paradise country and the U.S. is the best country about education. That's why I chose the U.S. for my future. I feel very happy and confident because I am here and I study at ARC.

Hye Phan Kim (Helen)

" Please, give me chocolate!" Have you ever heard it in Korean-War movies? It's a part of sad Korean history, which reminds me of the poor generation in Korea and the wealthy U.S. Small boys who are wearing clothes looking like rags run to the U.S. Army in the Korean-War movies. The hungry boys want to get some chocolate, chewing gum, and candy from them. When I was in my childhood, my Kin who lived in the U.S. gave me American candy that was colorful and incredibly delicious when they visited Korea.

Besides, one of my mother's friends used to present me with very pretty American dolls ever I had never seen before in Korea. At that time, I thought the U.S. was the heaven of material, so I hoped.

Stephan Marble

What were your thoughts about the U.S. when you were a child in your native country? My thoughts about the U.S. were always positive because when I grew up in Germany my Dad was living in the U.S. I had already lived in the U.S. when I was a baby but I couldn't remember much about it. I had no idea that the U.S. was that big. I

always wanted to come to the U.S. since I can remember. When you see it on TV, everything looks so big — buildings, cars, etc.. When I was a child, I spent a lot of time reading and watching stuff about the U.S. I always wanted to come to the U.S.

Galina Merkushev

I'm from Ukraine. When I was a child I heard about the U.S. but not very much. At that time people didn't move to the USA very often. I thought about other countries. I was so interested in living in another country. I asked my mom every time "mom, can I visit another country and only see how people live there?"

But my mom answered me "No, you can't. You can't visit even as a tourist because our country is a closed country. In addition we are religious people and the government doesn't permit going to any other countries."

After that I only imagined about other countries. I thought that the U.S. was a big country. People were rich there. They could work and earn a lot of money. Kids could have a lot of toys and favorite food, as much as they wanted. People could visit every country if they wanted and they could rest because they had enough money for that. I thought the US was a very beautiful country.

UT Forrest

When I was a child, I didn't know anything the U.S. I still remember when my oldest brother told me he wanted to go to the U.S. with his friends, by boat. I was so excited and I asked my brother could I go with him, but he didn't let me go. Later he told me that in the U.S. the weather is very different and the way people live are different too. So my brother left me in Vietnam and he came to the U.S. about three months and he sent letters for me, he told me many things and he said he would take me to the U.S. if I still wanted to come.

Raul Jaime

I don't remember if I thought about the U.S. when I was a child. I thought that the U.S. would be nice with a lot of huge buildings because I saw cartoons on the T.V. where children were playing on the streets. They did a lot of different things. For example, I saw the cartoons called Arnold and I thought that everything of the cartoon would be the same thing as in real life because I saw children playing soccer, baseball, football, or any other games in the streets, and also I saw this cartoon a lot of huge building. Maybe because this cartoon was supposed to be in Los Angeles but in that place everything is different.

Even More Student Chirpings

Claudia Calderon-Ott

When I was a little girl I frequently heard about Disneyland on TV. I would watch these wonderful commercials about this place and ask my parents where it was. Their answer, "in the neighboring country up in the north." That answer didn't make much sense back then, but for me it was clear that possibly that country had a lot of fun and magic places to enjoy because of all the advertising on TV and the cartoons. I also had a friend who moved here and she sent me postcards of big cities like Chicago and New York with all those tall buildings, so I thought it was an enormous big place for a little girl to be.

Yuliya Huzovatyy

When I was a child in my native country, I didn't know anything about the U.S. I started to think about America when I was 15 years old. Then my first uncle went to the U.S. He called us and sent many pictures. I heard many interesting things about America. He told us how nice life is here. And I imagined the U.S. like a paradise on the earth. All people here could work and had good money. Everybody had a car and a nice house.

Oleg Tkachuk

I remember, when I was a child I read a book about the U.S. It's a country of peace and independence and the place where a lot of different people and nationalities live. I remember the pictures from the book were white, black, Asian, and Indian people staying together and everybody was happy and smiled. I never thought I could live in the U.S. so right now I live in the U.S. and I like it so much.

Martha Santillan

Back when I was a child, I remember that I liked the U.S.A. I didn't know too much about American history, but I liked all the American clothes and shoes. I even remember myself and my friends. We really loved to wear Levi Jeans and Nike shoes, All-American style.

Years later I remember seeing the U.S. like a country with a lot of technology, a very smart country, with people on the moon and all kinds of computer programs. So I really admire a country like this.

Now, I still think that the U.S.A. is a great country, with a lot of opportunities for everyone.

Oksana Petrash

I thought that the U.S. didn't have a lot of immigrants. I thought that the U.S. didn't have a lot of immigrants. I thought that the U.S. had a lot of a tall, beautiful buildings and that most American people are stars. I thought that all (most of) American people are so rich. I thought that America is the best country in the world. All my friends, including me, wanted to visit America. I had the best thoughts about America. We watched a lot of movies about America. We thought that America looks like it shows in movies.

Dora De Dios

Well, first of all when I was a child I never was told about the U.S.A. until I was about 11 years old. When I was about 11 and 12 years old my family used to say "el Norte", which meant north. For me and my friends el Norte was a big city far, far away where life was beautiful and people were rich. One of my older brothers went to el Norte and stayed there for many years. When he came back, he told us that it was beautiful like in the movies. From then I started imagining and thinking about the U.S. specially in the movies. I thought that in the U.S. people live more happily then back home. When I was growing up, I was always wishing to go to El Norte and earn money, go back home, and live a happy life. Another thing I used to think about the U.S. was that the city, towns, and village were very, very beautiful, with lot of animals and lot of vegetables and fruits. One of the most exciting thoughts I had was that I always wanted to go to Disneyland and Las Vegas as I also wanted to meet the superstars and actors. My conversations with my friend about the US were that once you came here, automatically you became rich and we used to think about that because the few people from my village who used to come back those years used to say that in El Norte life was the best, but it was really like that. Another thought I had was I wanted to learn English so I could understand the Disney movies. But honestly I never thought that learning English was that hard. In other words, when I was told about the U.S., I wanted to come just to work, to earn money, and go back home.

Even More Student Chirpings

Vitaliy Kuflik

When I was a child, my thoughts were dreams about the U.S. They were coming from movies and news. My imagination about the U.S. was very big. I always wanted to visit the U.S. and see how life is different from life in my country. I was impressed about the skyscrapers, tall buildings with shiny windows, and wide roads with a lots of cars. My dreams were to visit New York, L.A, Hollywood and Disneyland.

Tina Loc

Everyone wants to come to the United States. Like everyone, when I was a child, I dreamed that I could come to the U.S.A. My parents and other people talked about the U.S.A. I thought that it was very cool to live in the U.S.A. Every month my grandparents called me from the U.S.A. They told me everything. At that time, I really wanted to go to the U.S.A and live with my parents. I was ten years old and I was confused about the U.S.A. I wondered about it. When my grandparents moved to the U.S.A, I was seven years old. The first time they called me I cried because I missed them very much. Then they told me that they lived in the U.S.A. and they felt better. They said that they had to live in an apartment and the weather was different from the weather in Vietnam. They didn't have to work on the farm like the farmers. I thought that that was very cool and they were so lucky to live in the U.S.A. I thought that living in the U.S.A. was like living in heaven. People didn't have to worry about food or anything else.

Natalia Zubareva

When I was a child in my native country, my thoughts about the U.S were kind of scary. I thought that the U.S. was like a jungle. I remember once my mom told me that we were going to move to the U.S. and asked me if I wanted to. So you can't believe it but my answer was "No". "Why?" she asked, and I said, "There are too many snakes, and I'm afraid of them". Of course she started laughing from my answer and I am doing the same thing right now when someone reminds me about that day! But when I arrived in the U.S., of course I changed my thoughts!

Gaby Paz

When I was a child, to be honest, I didn't think about any other countries. I don't know why. All I thought about was playing, eating, and playing more with my friends. But I remember one day, when I was 4 years

old, my mom told me that her best friend was going to leave Guatemala and move to the U.S. After that my aunt moved also and I started to think about the U.S., questions like how do you get there? How's the people? But I never thought about the language until my aunt said that they speak English and it was hard for her to communicate with others. But when I started school, I learned a little bit of English and I said I don't know why my aunt say that it was hard to speak it if I already knew it... I think I was something funny. After that, I became more interested about because I remember all the movies that I used to watch with my family and I always wanted to be either Disney or Hollywood. That was very exciting!

Ivanna Skybuk

When I was a child, I did not know a lot about countries of the world. I was a happy girl in my very friendly family. I was the third kid and I remember only a great love from each member of my family and from all my neighbors and friends. That was really the best time in my life. I knew that I lived in the best place. Later at school I was taught that I lived in the best country of the world. And it was a truth for me because it was a great time of my life. We were told that U.S.A is a capitalist country and working people should work hard. They are exploited by rich people. So when I was a child I felt sorry for poor people in the U.S.A. Later on when people of my country watched on TV "Santa Barbara", many of them started thinking that all people in the U.S.A. lived like the heroes of this film. And in general, people in my country and I thought that the U.S.A was the richest and best country in the world.

David Ngoseck

My thought was the U.S. was a big country and it's true. And I thought that all the country is rich with infrastructure (buildings and roads) and not much land for the forest remaining or much big protected area left. The other thought of mine was the people. Many people who are in the US are white and no black people as it used to be in characterized by white people. Another thought was the availability of water (wells, springs) Due to the infrastructure more places have been damaged and there is no good and clean water at the springs so US people must have the purification of water so that they can have clean water. I thought that each and everything (I mean vehicles and other ornamental things) come from the US. If you were interested in having a vehicle, refrigerators, airplanes, and the making of money it is all from the US.

Cinco de Mayo

The holiday of Cinco De Mayo, *The 5th Of May*, commemorates the victory of the Mexican militia over the French army at The Battle Of Puebla in 1862. It is primarily a regional holiday celebrated in the Mexican state capital, Puebla, and throughout the state of Puebla, with some limited recognition in other parts of Mexico, and especially in U.S. cities with a significant Mexican population. It is not, as many people think, Mexico's Independence Day, which is actually September 16.

Setting The Stage

The battle at Puebla in 1862 happened at a violent and chaotic time in Mexico's history. Mexico had finally gained independence from Spain in 1821 after a difficult and bloody struggle, and a number of internal political takeovers and wars, including the Mexican-American War (1846-1848) and the Mexican Civil War of 1858, had ruined the national economy.

During this period of struggle, Mexico had accumulated heavy debts to several nations, including Spain, England and France, who were demanding repayment. Similar debt to the U.S. was previously settled after the Mexican-American War. France was eager to expand its empire at that time, and used the debt issue to move forward with goals of establishing its own leadership in Mexico. Realizing France's intent of empire expansion, Spain and England withdrew their support. When Mexico finally stopped making any loan payments, France took action on it's own to install Napoleon III's relative, Archduke Maximilian of Austria, as ruler of Mexico.

Mexico Confronts The Invasion

France invaded at the gulf coast of Mexico along the state of Veracruz (see map) and began to march toward

Mexico City, a distance today of less than 600 miles. Although American President Abraham Lincoln was sympathetic to Mexico's cause, and for which he is honored in Mexico, the U.S. was involved in its own Civil War at the time and was unable to provide any direct assistance



Marching toward Mexico City, the French army encountered strong resistance near Puebla at the Mexican forts of Loreto and Guadalupe. Led by Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguín, a smaller, poorly armed militia estimated at 4,500 men were able to stop and defeat a well outfitted French army of 6,500 soldiers, which stopped the invasion of the country. The victory was a glorious moment for Mexican patriots, which at the time helped to develop a needed sense of national unity, and is the cause for the historical date's celebration.

Unfortunately, the victory was short-lived. Upon hearing the bad news, Napoleon III found an excuse to send more troops overseas to try and invade Mexico again, even against the wishes of the French populace. 30,000 more troops and a full year later, the French were eventually able to depose the Mexican army, take over Mexico City and install Maximilian as the ruler of Mexico.

Maximilian's rule of Mexico was also short lived, from 1864 to 1867. With

the American Civil War now over, the U.S. began to provide more political and military assistance to Mexico to expel the French, after which Maximilian was executed by the Mexicans; his bullet-riddled shirt is kept at the museum at Chapultepec Castle in Mexico City. So despite the eventual French invasion of Mexico City, Cinco de Mayo honors the bravery and victory of General Zaragoza's smaller, outnumbered militia at the Battle of Puebla in 1862.

Today's Celebration

For the most part, the holiday of Cinco de Mayo is more of a regional holiday in Mexico, celebrated most vigorously in the state of Puebla. There is some limited recognition of the holiday throughout the country with different levels of enthusiasm, but it's nothing like that found in Puebla.

Celebrating Cinco de Mayo has become increasingly popular along the U.S.- Mexico border and in parts of the U.S. that have a high population of people with Mexican heritage. In these areas, the holiday is a celebration of Mexican culture, of food, music, beverages, and customs unique to Mexico.

Commercial interests in the United States and Mexico have also had a hand in promoting the holiday, with products and services focused on Mexican food, beverages and festivities, with music playing a more visible role as well. Several cities throughout the U.S. hold parades and concerts during the week up to May 5th, so that Cinco de Mayo has become a bigger holiday north of the border than it is to the south, and being adopted into the holiday calendar of more and more people every year.

<http://www.mexonline.com/cinco-de-mayo.htm>