



# The Parrot

Your ARC newsletter by and for ESL, multicultural, international students, new Californians, and, well, anybody really...

Issue # 130 Fall 2018

## Mr. Lahey's Self-Assessment

**The Parrot:** First, could you please introduce yourself?

**Mr. Lahey:** My name is Jerome Lahey, and I am the Assessment Center Testing Coordinator at ARC.

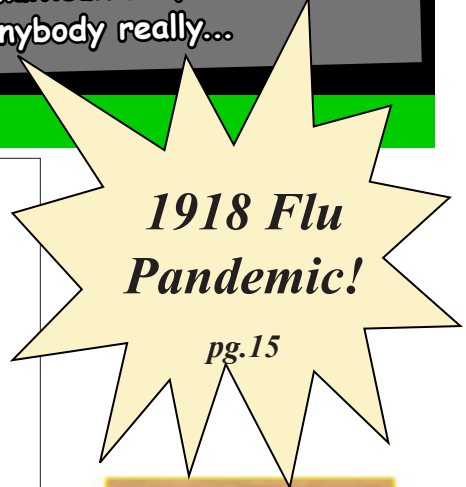
**The Parrot:** How does the ESL assessment process work?

**Mr. Lahey:** ESL students come to the Assessment Center, according to the designated ESL times on our blue



Testing Calendar, which is available at our counter or on-line. They start with a writing sample, which is timed for thirty minutes. They then take three untimed multiple-choice tests on the computer: Reading, Listening, and Grammar. The testing process usually takes two to three hours. The essays are then retrieved by ESL faculty members and scored. Students can pick up their

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**1918 Flu Pandemic!**

*pg.15*



*A man who uses force is afraid of reasoning.*

*Kenyan proverb*



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## Magic or Math? The Appeal of Coincidences and the Reality

Magic.

That's what it feels like when you bump into your childhood friend on the first day of college ... or meet someone at a party in Paris, only to discover she lives in your dad's childhood home in Pough-



A woman wins the lottery not once, not twice, but four times. What are the odds? According to mathematician Joseph Mazur, it depends on how you ask the question

keepsie, N.Y. But mathematician Joseph Mazur says these coincidences are not as extraordinary as we might think.

"People think that their address book

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## Student Chirpings

### My Dream Ring

Many girls and women want to get married. I wanted to marry and have children, like any other woman. It was August, 2011. My lovely husband asked me to marry him. I had been waiting for this moment for a long time. I said yes!!!! He had to give an engagement ring to me but I did not get it. My husband and I decided to buy a ring together. I could not wait. The next day we went to buy my dream ring.

It was a hot summer day. I was so excited. We decided to drive to the city to shop. We did not have any shops in our small village in Moldova. We found a big jewelry shop. I tried many rings. There were a lot of styles and gems. My husband patiently waited and kept silent. It took a couple of hours for me to make a decision. It was a big decision in my life. Finally, I found the best one.

My husband put the ring on my finger. It looked fantastic on my tiny finger! My size is a six. There was a variety of base metals: gold, silver, platinum. Mine was a yellow gold ring. It was Russian gold. My ring had a round cut shape and had a diamond. It was a perfect shape with a sparkling stone. The ring was the most beautiful in the world and it was my ring. It was the most precious gift in my life!

After a day, I lost my beautiful ring while cleaning my mother-in-law's house. It was a terrible day for me. I felt guilty. Soon after, we moved to the USA but I could not forget my dream ring. The USA has a lot of jewelry shops. Many times I tried to find a similar ring. However, I could not find one. One day I got a call from my mother-in-law. She had found my ring in the kitchen! It was so shocking for me. It had happened four years earlier. My most beloved gift was found in my native country, Moldova.

In conclusion, an engagement ring that is given is a sign of love. My gold ring is the most important gift from my dear husband. I will

try to keep my ring forever. I will forever wear this ring, ever when cleaning in America!



*Ivanna Tucan  
ESL W50  
Descriptive/narrative  
essay*

## Native and Foreign Languages

Have you ever had to speak another language? Language is a tool of human communication. Today, millions of people all over the world learn foreign languages. The most popular foreign language is English. These days, we can meet more and more people who are bilingual or multilingual. People who know more than one language have many benefits such as better jobs or more interesting travels. Like a native language, a second language gives people the opportunity to communicate and share information.

However, there are some differences between the way you speak your native language and a foreign language.

The first difference between the way you speak your native language and a foreign language is a sense of comfort. When I speak my native Ukrainian, I do it without thinking. I do not think how

to build sentences correctly or how to pronounce different words. When I speak my native language, I feel comfortable, and I just enjoy talking with other people. In contrast, when I speak English, I always think about how to construct sentences correctly. Sometimes, I say some words incorrectly, so I have to repeat them again and again. Sometimes, I have to find another way to say it. Therefore, when I speak English, I feel more discomfort than when I speak my native language.

The next difference between speaking a native language and a foreign language is a sense of fear. When I speak Ukrainian, I can express my opinion more directly and without any stress. On the other hand, when I speak English, I am afraid that people might misunderstand me. Especially when

I talk to my doctor, I am afraid that my doctor will not understand me correctly. Therefore, it may have a bad effect on my treatment. In contrast, when I speak my native language, I can express my health problems deeper and more openly because I know how to explain everything in Ukrainian.

The third difference between communicating in the mother tongue and a foreign language is a sense of confusion. When I speak my mother tongue, I can use some idioms in my conversations.

Also, I can joke with my friends, and I can always feel “in my own plate”. In contrast, when I speak English, I cannot use jokes because it can confuse people. In order to use some jokes or idioms, you need to know the culture of the country. However, when you communicate in your mother tongue, you can avoid many puzzles and confusion. “Choosing the right key you can

open the door.” Therefore, the right words can help solve a lot of problems.

In conclusion, language is a very important tool for communication. However, there are some differences between communication in a native language and foreign language because of the feeling of discomfort, the feeling of fear, and the feeling of confusion when using expressions and jokes. Despite these differences, I will always feel better when I practice foreign languages more.



*Nataliya Parylyak*  
*ESL W50*  
*Comparison/Contrast essay*

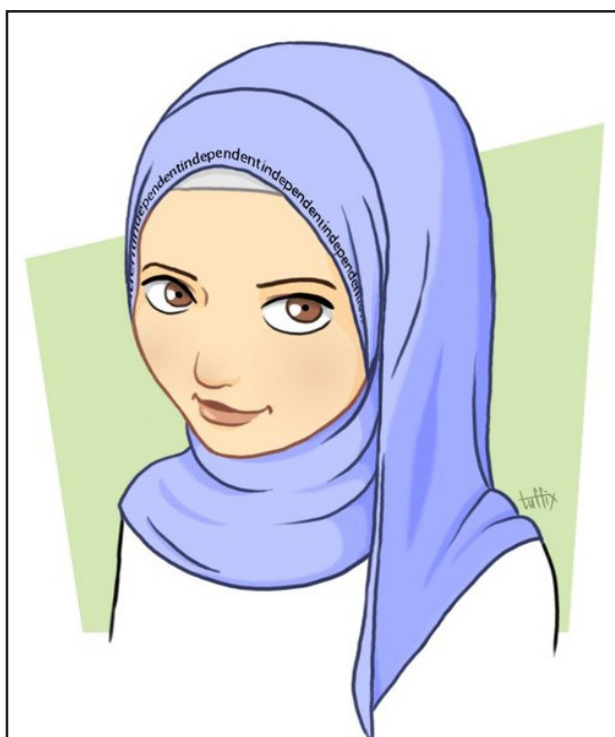


## In the Fitting Room

I am a 34-year-old Muslim immigrant female, a two-year American resident who finally got a job at a clothes store in the fitting room. I started this job during Christmas season when most stores are busy and crowded. Because I was working in the fitting room, I couldn't leave my work area like other associates who worked as "floor associates". They could move everywhere around the store. I will never forget that evening shift.

When I was working in the fitting room, a man came with his wife, and he stayed outside waiting for her. I was arranging the clothes when the man stunned me with his question, "Why are you wearing this on your head? [he pointed to the Hijab on my head]" A hijab is a fabric that should cover the hair and the neck of a woman. It's a religious rule that most Muslim women follow. I answered, "I'm wearing this for religious reasons", but he kept asking me in an insistent way as he wanted to refute what I believed in. He asked me again "But why? What's the idea of covering your hair?" I told him that covering my hair, my neck and wearing decent clothes are to hide the charm of my body and make me less attractive, and prevent the indecent gaze of men, but he was unconvinced and said, "What's wrong if men look at you?" I said that if men look at me as an attractive woman that may generate a sensation that may push them to try to flirt or insult me. Besides that, our religion and culture demand us not to show the beauty of our bodies for the public and for anyone without our permission, so that's why we cover ourselves because we decide who can look at us and who can't. At that moment, an associate entered the fitting room to say hi to me; she was an American girl and the man didn't waste the opportunity to

engage her in our conversation. He asked me, "Is she now more attractive than you because she is not covering her hair?" My friend looked at me and whispered that you don't have to answer him, but it was completely normal for me to face such situations, so I calmed her and turned back to the man and told him that I mentioned at the beginning that's it our religion and cultural rule and it is also a personal belief. My cousin is a Muslim girl but she doesn't wear "Al hijab". It's her responsibility to obey



the rule or not, just as in the Christian religion the women who work in a convent cover their hair and neck and they choose to wear a similar outfit; no one forces them to do so. It's a personal freedom. I'm not going to say that this cover will protect me from these kinds of accidents, but it's a religious rule and I believe that the rule is for my sake. Then he said, "So why don't you tell her to wear this cover just like you if that is the right thing, as you said?" I started to

feel tired of all these questions and had a sensation that he wanted to humiliate my religion's rules and my beliefs, but I tried my best to be patient, and answered him that I learned from my religion not to force people to follow my religion, but that I should treat people in a proper manner that reflects my religion's aspects and my humanity. At this point, he returned to my friend and asked her how I treated her and if I talked with her about my religion, and tried to convince her about Islam, but she told him that I never tried that before and we both respected each other's religions and beliefs. Finally, he asked me, "Why didn't you try to convince her about your

religion? Are you ashamed of it?" I said of course I'm not, but I showed my religion's aspects and my ethics through actions, not talking. There are a lot of people who talk a lot but without doing any useful things, neither for themselves nor for others, while for me I will let my actions talk about my religion and me.

At the end, the man smiled and said that he was testing me, and he knew a lot about my religion and he appreciated its values, and thanked me for being patient with him.

*Hala Abass  
ESL R320  
Narrative essay*

## Should Students Clean their Classrooms?

The college is a huge world of learning! It is a big place where students receive not only knowledge. They also learn how to be respectful, responsible, and prepared for life. In many countries, classroom-cleaning is considered the student's duty, which teaches him how to be a member of society. It is considered that cleaning the classroom at the end of the day helps the student to appreciate his environment more. Is the cleaning process the only thing that can teach us how to be responsible??? Is it so necessary to clean our classrooms to show how much we appreciate what we have??? Should I take the cleaner's job and breathe all those chemicals to demonstrate that I am a real member of society? Is that the only way I can show it? My answer is definitely "no"! I strongly disagree with the idea that ESL students should clean the ESL classrooms!

The first reason why students shouldn't clean their classrooms is that college is a learning place, not a cleaning place. It is not easy to study at college. I need to do my homework, to be always prepared. I must attend all the classes without absences. I need to be always focused on what the professors say. I can't imagine myself cleaning the

classrooms after that! This is unreal! I chose to get a profession. And this profession is not "cleaning-lady"! I don't need special education for this job! I want to be a psychologist and I need to study hard. Cleaning classrooms is distracting and it is



enough for me doing it at home. In Moldova, when I was a school student, we often mopped the floors and wiped the seats. Once, I was late to the next class because our teacher made me clean the floor. I was furious because I got an absence. So was my mother! She came to my school and had a serious conversation with the school's principal. She said to him that her daughter attended school for studying, not for cleaning! I didn't clean the classrooms anymore.

Another reason why students shouldn't clean their classroom is the risk of allergies and harm for health. Wiping with Clorox can seriously damage our health! I have had a terrible allergy since my cleaning time at school. I use organic products only. I need to be very careful! Touching dirty water and mops could have an impact on our health! The presence of microbes and bacteria could cause chronic health problems. Is that what we want to study at college??? To be sick? Why? I think it is too much.

The most important reason why students



shouldn't clean their classrooms at college is that everybody has to do his own job! Cleaning is for the cleaners! Yes, the cleaner's job is hard and ungrateful sometimes. But, the cleaner signed up for that job, or not??? He took responsibility. He is paid for his work. Nobody should do his work for him. The college designates money to pay the cleaners. So, why should I pick up the trash? This is not my job. Off course we do not have to litter. We are all responsible for our environment. But we can't be responsible for doing others' duties! College is a place where we educate ourselves. There it also is

a lot of staff who earn money doing its job. If I do somebody's work, that means that I I take his work. This is not fair!

ESL students shouldn't clean the ESL classrooms. The college is a place where people must study, protect their health from chemicals, and do their job. I can't imagine myself cleaning the classrooms instead of preparing for the next quiz.

*Alina Baciu*

*ESL W50*

*Argumentative essay*

## The Key to my Childhood

When I was five years old, my parents and I were walking at a city fair in Pskov, Russia, my hometown. I was delighted by this event. I went for a pony ride, visited all the children's carousels, and ate a lot of ice cream. I still remember this cheerful, warm summer day that I spent with my parents. But from this day I have not only memories. Since then, I have kept a large metal key with the inscription "Pskov". This key means much more to me than just a children's toy or a souvenir.

I remember that I chose this key myself among many other fair souvenirs - notepads, magnets, boxes for jewelry, toys, mugs with funny inscriptions, etc. I immediately noticed my key; it was like it was from a fairy tale. It's big enough - about five inches in length. The key is quite heavy; it is made of a dark brown metal. The key has a non-uniform color. The protruding parts of the key look lighter, as if the metal lost its color from old age. The head of the key is a square on which the coat of arms of Pskov is engraved. There is a leopard on it. The leopard stands on the ground; water is visible in the background. A blessing hand descends from heaven. The crown of the key, which is inserted into the lock, looks like the letter "P". The other letters follow



from left to right. The letters form the word "Pskov".

I can't say that this key was my favorite toy, but when I was a child, I tried to open every door in our house with it. Even when I stopped playing with toys, I didn't throw out the key. I know its metallic smell and taste; I can recognize it by touch. It's hard to believe, but I've had the key for 26 years. I keep it as a memory of childhood, of my happy and young parents, and of me - a little girl. Looking at this key, I always remember my father's laugh and my mother's kisses, our joint walks and family holidays. I remember all the warmth and care that my parents gave me. The key travels with me wherever I live. My husband thinks that I'm overly sentimental, but my parents are pleased that I so carefully keep this key. They see this as

a sign of my love for them. When I flew to America, my parents told me, "Take your key with you. Let it remind you of the house and of us." I did so. I don't look at this key every day; I don't keep it in the most honored place in the house. But in moments when I miss my parents, I like to think that I have this key. It is like a key to my childhood.

*Nadia Orlov*

*ESL W50*

*Descriptive essay*

## Look Out!

"A dog will look down when they have done wrong, but a snake will look you right in the eyes." My grandmother used to say that about one of my aunts, Nora. Yes, she is a snake, and believe me, she knows that about herself! She got this nickname because of her way with people, especially with her family. Unlike snakes, my aunt has legs. Of course she has; she is a human being! While there are some differences, there are far more similarities between a snake and my aunt.

The first similarity between a snake and my aunt is that they both can change in a second. A snake changes its skin often; it can look like a whole new snake when changed. Nora does that too. She can change her personality and the way she is talking in a second! She can act like a new person in front of other people, especially in front of my grandmother. My aunt turns into this cute person no one saw before! Once five years ago she was yelling at my little brother Mohanad for nothing, but when she saw my grandma she hugged him and kept asking Mohanad why he was crying!!!!

The second similarity between a snake and my aunt is that they can both bite you! The thing that reminds me of my aunt the most is when I just hear the word snake bite! Some people like to keep snakes in their house and play with them; they think snakes are cute and safe! Unexpectedly,

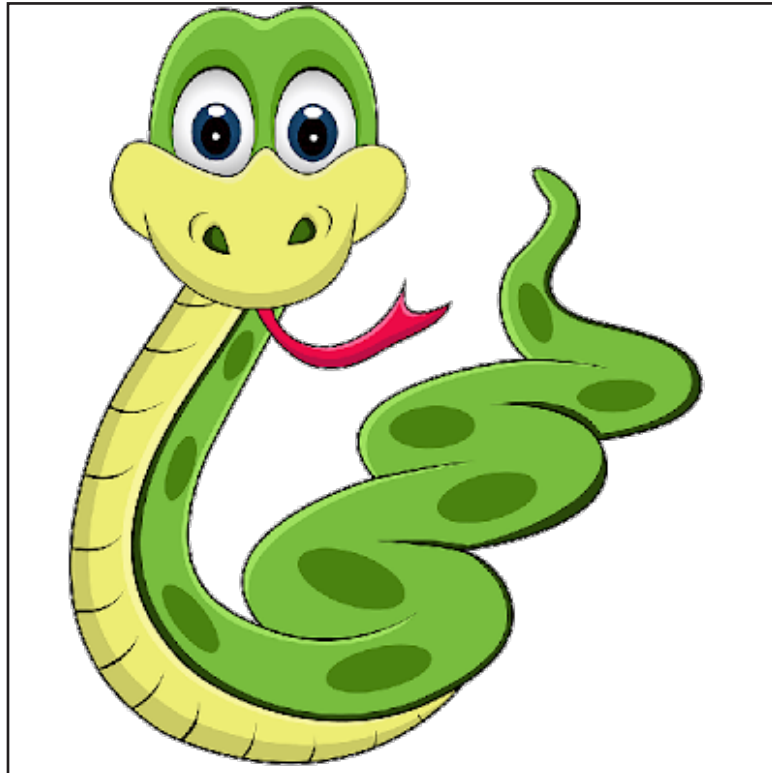
a snake bites you without warning; much like my aunt. She tries to be your friend or a real family member, but she would bite you when you are not expecting it. She will say a bad thing about anyone nice to her for no reason! I remember that one summer my mom took my aunt with her to a birthday party for one of my mom's friends. It was the first

time my Aunt Nora saw that woman. She never ever saw her before in her life! The next day, my aunt started to tell lies about that woman!! Why? Because she is a snake and you have to look out for her!!!

The third similarity between a snake and my aunt is the way they both move. A snake moves slyly toward you, exactly like my aunt. You don't know she is there with you until you see her face! She comes behind you without letting you notice her. I can't forget that day when she tried to come into my room

and listen to my phone call with grandma!

People are so different, so be careful who you let into your circle. You might let a snake in! Each one of us has that animal side of him, but keep in mind that not all animals are cute and strong!



*Hibo Djama*  
*ESL W50*

*Comparison/Contrast essay*



## A National Holiday

Every country in the world has traditions and national holidays. Many people like to celebrate a national holiday. It is a good opportunity to spend time with parents, relatives, and friends. In every country, people celebrate a national holiday differently. August 27th is a national holiday in Moldova. It is Independence Day. This holiday is one of the most important holidays in my country. People do the following three important things to celebrate Independence Day.

First, people have three days to celebrate this day. Some people like to celebrate at home, and some people like to celebrate downtown. If people celebrate at home, they cook, feed, and invite their relatives and friends. Some people do not like to celebrate at home, and they go downtown. (There are a lot of interesting forms of entertainment.) Also, people can buy food and drinks. National actors give them wonderful concerts. In brief, people feel free and happy. They like to celebrate Independence Day at home and downtown.

Second, some people do not like to stay in the city on these days. They organize a mini-vacation and go to a village to visit their parents and relatives. In the village, they have a great opportunity to spend time together and relax. Also, they can help their parents. People choose different ways to relax, like having a barbecue, going to breathe the clear air in the forest, and going fishing. In short, organizing a mini-vacation in their village is a good opportunity to see and have a good time with parents and closerelatives.

Third, I think some people like to celebrate this holiday in other ways. Some people like to go to the theater to see a play, musical, opera, or ballet. Also, people like to go to museums and different expositions. People like to go shopping, also. On this day, people can buy a lot of things on sale and save money. They can go a cinema and see an interesting movie. Indeed, people like to go to the theater, cinema, museum, and stores. They can see a lot of interesting things and be in a good mood.

In conclusion, people always look forward to Independence Day. They feel special and unique on this day. They feel happy and are in a good mood. There are three ways people can plan to celebrate Independence Day: celebrating at home and downtown, organizing a mini-vacation to a village, and going to the theater, cinema, museum, or shopping malls.



*Natalia Vilcu  
ESL W40  
Expository essay*





## Look Out!

Food is one of the most important sources for body maintenance. To survive, the human organism needs a big variety of food rich in vitamins, proteins, minerals, and other components. Therefore, all shops and supermarkets offer people a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, dairy, meat, bakery, prefabricated food, etc. When you enter a store, your eyes fly in all directions because everything is attractive. Beautifully decorated boxes beg you, "Come here!" and usually we buy too much food because our eyes see and our hearts require. As a result of buying too much food, people must eat more than their body needs, which can have negative effects. There are several effects of eating too much.

The first effect of eating too much is an uncomfortable feeling. After eating heartily a few kinds of food, you feel that your stomach has to explode. After a while you will have stomach pain. For example, when I eat a bowl of soup and I start to eat a second one, I feel a light stomach pain. I understand that this is a signal of my body trying to stop me from eating too much. Additionally, as a result of mixing a few kinds of food, you feel your tummy starting to bloat. It will be OK if you are alone at home, but if you are in a public space, you will be in trouble. Mixing a few kinds of food stimulates stomach acid secretion, and it causes heartburn, which is a very unpleasant feeling. For example, I went to my relatives for Thanksgiving dinner, and they had a huge variety of dishes, beginning with turkey, potatoes, a few kinds of salad, and ending with cakes and a lot of sweets. I ate very much on that holiday as if it were the last time in my life. After a while, I felt a big discomfort in my tummy, pain, bloating, and also strong heartburn. I felt so bad that night. I couldn't sleep well and I thought that I would go to the emergency. So, as a result of eating too much



food, you have very big discomfort.

The second effect of overeating is the increase in obesity. Eating too much leads to weight gain, a problem faced by a lot of people in our day. As a result of obesity, the risk of health complications increase; you can have high cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other illnesses. Excess weight provokes difficulty in breathing and also bad sleeping. The body becomes heavy, and it affects the respiratory system. For instance, my neighbor suffers from obesity and she told me that she has problems with breathing and insomnia. A few weeks ago, she went to the doctor for a

checkup. The doctor said that her obesity was the cause of all her health problems. Furthermore, she found that she had diabetes too. Now she is supposed to take insulin every day. As a result of obesity, people have mental and emotional

consequences. Usually, they feel isolated from the entire world, and they feel shame because of their body image. In lots of cases, it results in depression. For example, I have a friend who suffers from obesity. He stays locked in the house for days because he doesn't have the desire to communicate with anybody. He feels that he is ugly. He doesn't want to get married even though he is only twenty-three years old. All these consequences are the effect of eating too much food and it causes obesity.

The third effect of eating too much is the lifestyle changes. If people start to eat more and more, they will need to buy more products which leads to spending more money than usual. For example, people who are on a diet buy only strictly necessary products but those who eat without measure will spend a greater amount of money. People will also start to gain weight and will need new size clothes. Then they start to spend money



and of course their expensive time to go shopping. Even more, they need to change furniture, their sofa for example. I remember that we had a friend in our village in Moldova. She was a big woman. When she came to our home, she liked to sit on a small sofa, and one time when she sat, she broke it. After that we offered only a chair to her. When people eat too much, they become lazy. They don't have the desire to go walking or to exercise in the gym. For example, after my husband eats, he wants to lie down but not to play with the kids, or to use the opportunity to have a good time with friends or family. Little by little people become less active and they change their lifestyle. From active and sociable persons they became retired persons. Because of eating too much, people will change their lifestyle.

If people abuse food, the hospitals will be overcrowded with sick people. If at the beginning it looks as if a piece of cake won't destroy, later you realize that without cake, you can't live. The end is usually very painful; people end up with diseases, depression, and isolation. The negative effects of overeating have a strong impact on our lives. So there are several effects of eating too much food: an uncomfortable feeling, an increase in obesity, and lifestyle changes.

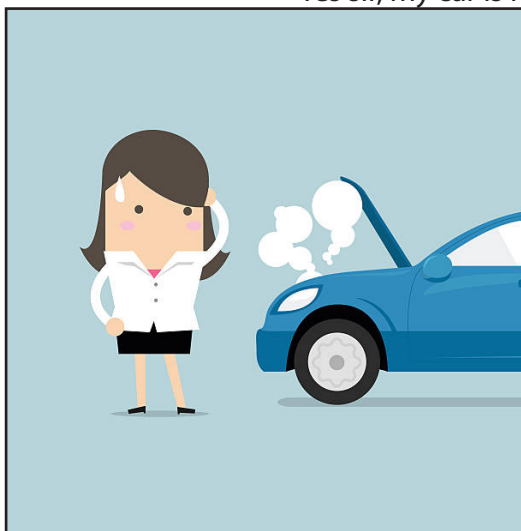
*Lenuta Musorivshi*  
ESL W50  
Cause/effect essay

## A Bad Event That Turned Out To Be Good!

You don't always know if what is happening to you is exactly good or bad! Sometimes an event in your life seems bad but finally turns out to be good. I'll never forget that day my car broke down on the road when I was going to the work on a summer day but this turned out well.

I woke up early on a nice and sunny day. I took a shower and ate a big breakfast because I remember I was so hungry on that day. Then I wore red and beautiful clothes that in my country (Iran) are called "manto" and pants. After that, I got in my car and went to work. I was driving and thinking to myself that it was a beautiful day and was so lucky and fortunate and also thanked God because I was healthy and happy. I had a good job and had a car so I could go

to my work easily and not have to wait for a taxi or a bus or a subway. While I was thinking and driving to my work, my car suddenly stopped on the road. A few minutes later, two men helped me and pushed my car to the side of the road and then went. Oh, my God! They left me and now I was alone with a broken-down car and I didn't know what to do. I was so sad and angry. I had to be at work on time because I



had an important meeting on that day but unfortunately I didn't have a cell phone at that time. However, fifteen minutes later I suddenly saw that a blue car stopped and a handsome, young man got out of the car and came to me. He asked me, "Is there any problem and can I help you?" I answered instantly, "Yes sir, my car is not working and I don't know why!"

He smiled slowly and said, "Don't worry. I can help you now. Let me see it." Then he went back to his car again and brought a small black box with him. Finally, he fixed my car after one hour. I was so happy. I thanked him. He said no problem and went.

I should say that although on that day I missed an important meeting about my job in my office, instead of that I found my handsome husband. He had followed me and realized the

location of my work and then contacted me. Finally, after a year, we were married. Yes, in conclusion, you don't know sometimes if what is happening to you is good or bad.

*Shahla Zarei*  
ESL W50  
Narrative essay

## Do Me a Solid

We all need help and sometimes ask our friends or relatives for favors once in a while, both large and small. Everyone has different needs, and, therefore, we ask for different favors from our friends or relatives. There are many types or categories of favors that people ask for. While asking and receiving a favor can generate good feelings on both sides, not everyone will grant you the favor, depending on the type of favor asked. The three most common type of favors are financial assistance, personal help, and work-related favors.

The first type or categories of favors people usually ask for is financial favors. This type of favor is very common and happens every day of our lives. When people have financial problems, they often ask their families or friends for a favor, such as asking to borrow some money. This type of favor is very difficult to ask for because money is a sensitive issue and not every person has money to lend, including your relatives or friends. However, when people lose their jobs or are behind in their bills, or need money to buy food, they would ask someone they know for this favor. Borrowing a large amount of money is a huge favor to ask for. For example, I used to ask my parents for money when I needed to pay some bills that I was behind with, and they were fine with it. Another example is sometimes my husband's friend asks him to lend some money for gas until his next paycheck.

The second type of favor people ask for is personal favors. This type of favor takes place very often because it involves daily things in our lives. For example, most people would ask to use their neighbor's car to jump start their car when the battery dies. Other people might ask their friends to let them use his or her car to go places when their

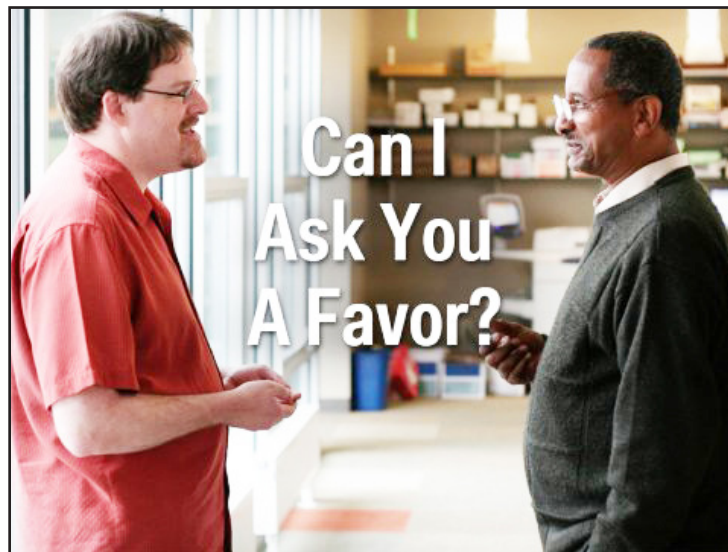
cars break down. My husband went over to our neighbor's house and asked the neighbor to loan us a ladder to clean the gutter because we didn't have one. The neighbor was happy to let us use his ladder and even assisted my husband cleaning the gutter. Asking to use someone else's personal items such as a car, a phone, or some kitchen utensils can be easily granted because you can return the favor some day.

A final category of favors people ask for is business-related favors. These types of favors often take place in a work setting, stores, or a place of business. People often do these kinds of favors to

smooth things over or gain more business in the future. When at work, people usually ask their coworkers for help when they need something to be done or even outside of work. For example, my co-worker sometimes asked me to help her purchase some supplies for our office because she was busy, even though that was her

responsibility. I always helped my co-worker because we worked together, and she could return the favor when needed. Another example would be when you open a business, such as a retail store, you will have random people come into your store and ask for a favor. You might not like it but you will grant them the favor they ask for anyway because it is good for your business. For instance, I had a guy walk inside my office where I work and ask to use the phone. I let him use it because it is a way of promoting my customer service. My co-workers who work at Panda Express usually ask me to cover their position when they need to go to the restroom or to clean the lobby.

In conclusion, almost every one of us has asked our friends and relatives for a favor once or





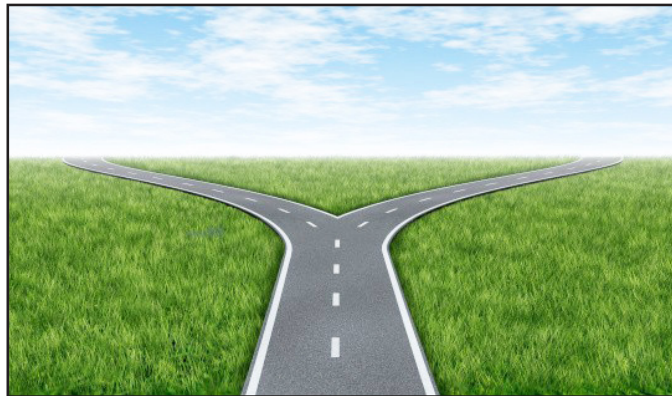
twice in our lives. We may ask for a small favor or a big favor, and there are different type or categories of favors that people ask for. A lot of people would ask their families or friends for a financial favor, such as borrowing some money when they needed it the most. Some people ask for small favors such as using their neighbor's phone to make a call. A work-related favor occurs when your co-worker asks you to assist them with a project or something related to work. Some people may go above and beyond when you ask them for a favor while others simply decline your request, whatever that might be. Doing someone a favor might be inconvenient for us, but it is helpful to someone else.



Dao "Jenny" Nghiem  
ESL W50  
Classification essay

## Bad Roads in Nizhniy Novgorod

Everyone wants to live in the best place ever. However, it is not possible, because we all live in an imperfect world. I love one Russian proverb: "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." We may dream that somewhere else is better than where we are, but in fact there are the same or there are other problems. We do not need to run away from problems. It is better if we try to solve them. It is not very easy, but people have to try again and again to make changes in places where they live. I remember well the problem that was bothering everyone in my city. The problem in Nizhniy Novgorod, Russia, is bad roads. There are three solutions to the problem of bad roads in Nizhniy Novgorod: increasing funding, regularly carrying out preventive work, and stopping corruption.



The first solution to the problem of bad roads is increasing funding. Governments should

increase the budget for road maintenance. Very often the roads in Nizhniy Novgorod are not repaired because workers do not have enough materials. I remember that one of the main roads in my city had a big hole. It wasn't repaired for two weeks just because the administration of the city didn't provide enough materials for repairing the road. A lot of cars in the next two weeks fell into the pothole and were damaged. In addition, the administration of Nizhniy Novgorod didn't consider the quality of materials. For that reason, all new roads were in need of repair within five or six months.

For example, the new road near my apartment was the cause of many accidents because of the big holes in it. One car that drove into the hole was completely damaged. Only a lifting crane could pull it out. In addition, the administration should increase the salaries of workers. If workers had better salaries, they would do better work. My relative's friend who worked as a road worker said that he got the minimum salary.

He explained that workers hurry because employers paid them not for quality but for quantity. That's why on the streets of Nizhniy Novgorod there are many bad roads. Good financing for city roads can change their quality.

The second solution to the problem of bad roads is regularly carrying out preventive work. Road services should regularly check the condition of the roads. For example, it reminds me of how we take care of our cars. If I regularly check the condition of my car, it can prevent a lot of problems with the car. I also noticed how important it is to resolve

issues on time. For example, when I eliminate all the problems that appear right away, my car works better and will last longer. It is the same thing with roads. If road services regularly check and eliminate the problems that appear, the roads will remain in good condition for a long time. In addition, the city administration should provide some training to improve the skills of the workers. There workers can learn some innovations. For example, the winter weather in Russia is very cold and snowy. Then in the spring time, when the snow is melting, all the roads in my city are cracked and ruined. When I moved to the USA, I didn't see the same problems because I noticed that the road services use different and modern materials for the roads. They are trying to do something new to solve the problem of bad roads. Bad roads are still a big problem for Nizhniy Novgorod, but the problem is solvable. Road service should regularly carry out preventive work to improve the quality of roads.

The third solution to the problem of bad roads is fighting against corruption. It is the most difficult solution to this problem but people shouldn't give up. To fight with this problem, the government needs to do a regular inventory of



materials and other supplements for road work. It helps to control the budget. I remember when I worked as a salesperson in a store, my supervisor made an inventory every three months. It helped her to keep control of the whole store. Workers knew it and were afraid to steal or do something bad. It is also important to eliminate bribing the workers and employers. In Russia, if you have money, you can do what you want. As people say, "All doors are open." In Nizhniy Novgorod everyone knew that employers took bribes and it was normal. No one wanted to do something to change

it. For example, I heard just one time that some employer was caught because he took bribes. Possibly, if the city administration checked on bribery, corruption in Nizhniy Novgorod would decrease. In addition, the government should increase the punishment for bribery. It can scare dishonest leaders. No one wants to sit in jail for half of his or her life. For

example, one politician in Moscow was caught and condemned to fifteen years for bribery. After that case, bribery diminished in Nizhniy Novgorod. Such changes help to save money for a road budget. Of course, it is easier to say than to do. However, people shouldn't give up and should continue to fight corruption.

In conclusion, we all want to have a quality life. Good roads are an important part of our comfortable life. The safety of roads makes residents' lives safer. Bad roads may be the cause of harm to property and the health of residents. People can make good changes in this situation. They should increase funding, regularly carry out preventive work, and stop corruption.

*Anaida Aleksanyan*  
*ESL W50*  
*Problem-solution essay*



## Nestscape -- Articles from The Web

### Continued from page 1

is essentially the people they know, and it turns out any address book is about one percent of the people they know in some way," Mazur explains.

In other words, the odds of bumping into someone you know are greater than you might think, because you know many more people than you realize.

Understanding these odds can help us wrap our heads around stories of people who seem inexplicably fortunate. People like Joan Ginther, who won the lottery not once, not twice, but four times.

What are the odds?

"The odds are about 18 septillion to one against it happening," Mazur says. A septillion is 1 followed by 24 zeros.

But if you reframe the question, and calculate the odds that anyone — not just you, or Joan Ginther — will win the lottery four times, you get much better odds.

"It's about 5 million to one," Mazur says. And that accounts for the number of people playing the lotto, the number of lotteries in the world, and the fact that most lottery winners use some amount of their "house money" to increase their odds of winning again.

For better or worse, this sort of number-crunching can demystify even the most tantalizing coincidences. But that doesn't diminish their quirky serendipity.

Take, for example, one of Joseph Mazur's favorite coincidence stories, about the 19th-century French poet Emile Deschamps.

As a teenager, Deschamps meets a man with a strange name, Monsieur de Fortgibu. De Fortgibu is an immigrant from England, and he introduces Deschamps to a very English dessert: plum pudding.

Ten years go by. One day, Deschamps passes a Paris restaurant that has plum pudding on the menu. He goes inside, only to be told the last of the plum pudding was just sold to a gentleman sitting in the back.

"And the waiter calls out loud, 'Mr. de Fortgibu, would you be willing to share your plum pudding with this gentleman?'" tells Mazur.

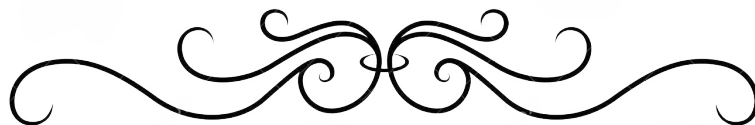
Years pass, and Deschamps is at a dinner party with some friends.

The host announces that an unusual dessert will be served. You guessed it — plum pudding. Deschamps jokingly says that one of the guests at the party must be Monsieur de Fortgibu.

"Well, soon the doorbell rings and Mr. de Fortgibu is announced," says Mazur. "And he enters, he's an old man by now, but Deschamps recognizes him. And Mr. de Fortgibu looks around and he realizes that he's in the wrong apartment." He was invited to a dinner party — but not there.

This sort of coincidence defies mathematical explanation. There's only one way to describe it — magical.

The Hidden Brain Podcast is hosted by Shankar Vedantam and produced by Maggie Penman, Jennifer Schmidt, Renee Klahr, and Rhaina Cohen. Our supervising producer is Tara Boyle. Follow us on Twitter @hiddenbrain, and listen for our stories each week on your local public radio station.



<https://www.npr.org/2017/05/08/527442620/magic-or-math-the-appeal-of-coincidences-and-the-reality>

## What We Can Learn 100 Years Later From the 1918 Flu Pandemic

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the great influenza pandemic of 1918. Between 50 and 100 million people are thought to have died, representing as much as 5 percent of the world's population. Half a billion people were infected.

Especially remarkable was the 1918 flu's predilection for taking the lives of otherwise healthy young adults, as opposed to children and the elderly, who usually suffer most. Some have called it the greatest pandemic in history.

The 1918 flu pandemic has been a regular subject of speculation over the last century. Historians and scientists have advanced numerous hypotheses regarding its origin, spread and consequences. As a result, many of us harbor misconceptions about it.

By correcting these 10 myths, we can better understand what actually happened and learn how to prevent and mitigate such disasters in the future.



### 1. The pandemic originated in Spain

No one believes the so-called "Spanish flu" originated in Spain.

The pandemic likely acquired this nickname because of World War I, which was in full swing at the time. The major countries involved in the war were keen to avoid encouraging their enemies, so reports of the extent of the flu were suppressed in Germany, Austria, France, the United Kingdom and the U.S. By contrast, neutral Spain had no need to keep the flu under wraps. That created the false impression that Spain was bearing the brunt of the disease.

In fact, the geographic origin of the flu is debated to this day, though hypotheses have suggested East Asia, Europe and even Kansas.

### 2. The pandemic was the work of a 'super-virus'

The 1918 flu spread rapidly, killing 25 million people in just the first six months. This led some to fear the end of mankind, and has long fueled the supposition that the strain of influenza was particularly lethal.

However, more recent study suggests that the virus itself, though more lethal than other strains, was not fundamentally different from those that caused epidemics in other years.



Much of the high death rate can be attributed to crowding in military camps and urban environments, as well as poor nutrition and sanitation, which suffered during wartime. It's now thought that many of the deaths were due to the development of bacterial pneumonias in lungs weakened by influenza.

### 3. The first wave of the pandemic was most lethal

Actually, the initial wave of deaths from the pandemic in the first half of 1918 was relatively low.

It was in the second wave, from October through December of that year, that the highest death rates were observed. A third wave in spring of 1919 was more lethal than the first but less so than the second.

Scientists now believe that the marked increase in deaths in the second wave was caused by conditions that favored the spread of a deadlier strain. People with mild cases stayed home, but those with severe cases were often crowded together in hospitals and camps, increasing transmission of a more lethal form of the virus.

### 4. The virus killed most people who were infected with it

In fact, the vast majority of the people who contracted the 1918 flu survived. National death rates among the infected generally did not exceed 20 percent.

However, death rates varied among different groups. In the U.S., deaths were particularly high among Native American populations, perhaps due to lower rates of exposure to past strains of influenza. In some cases, entire Native communities were wiped out.



Of course, even a 20 percent death rate vastly exceeds a typical flu, which kills less than one percent of those infected.

### 5. Therapies of the day had little impact on the disease

No specific anti-viral therapies were available during the 1918 flu. That's still largely true today, where most medical care for the flu aims to support patients, rather than cure them.

One hypothesis suggests that many flu deaths could actually be attributed to aspirin poisoning. Medical authorities at the time recommended large doses of aspirin of up to 30 grams per day. Today, about four grams would be considered the maximum safe daily dose. Large doses of aspirin can lead to many of the pandemic's symptoms, including bleeding.

However, death rates seem to have been equally high in some places in the world where aspirin was not so readily available, so the debate continues.

### 6. The pandemic dominated the day's news



Public health officials, law enforcement officers and politicians had reasons to underplay the severity of the 1918 flu, which resulted in less coverage in the press. In addition to the fear that full disclosure might embolden enemies during wartime, they wanted to preserve public order and avoid panic.

However, officials did respond. At the height of the pandemic, quarantines were instituted in many cities. Some were forced to restrict essential services, including police and fire.



## 7. The pandemic changed the course of World War I

It's unlikely that the flu changed the outcome of World War I, because combatants on both sides of the battlefield were relatively equally affected.

However, there is little doubt that the war profoundly influenced the course of the pandemic. Concentrating millions of troops created ideal circumstances for the development of more aggressive strains of the virus and its spread around the globe.

## 8. Widespread immunization ended the pandemic

Immunization against the flu as we know it today was not practiced in 1918, and thus played no role in ending the pandemic.

Exposure to prior strains of the flu may have offered some protection. For example, soldiers who had served in the military for years suffered lower rates of death than new recruits.

In addition, the rapidly mutating virus likely evolved over time into less lethal strains. This is predicted by models of natural selection. Because highly lethal strains kill their host rapidly, they cannot spread as easily as less lethal strains.

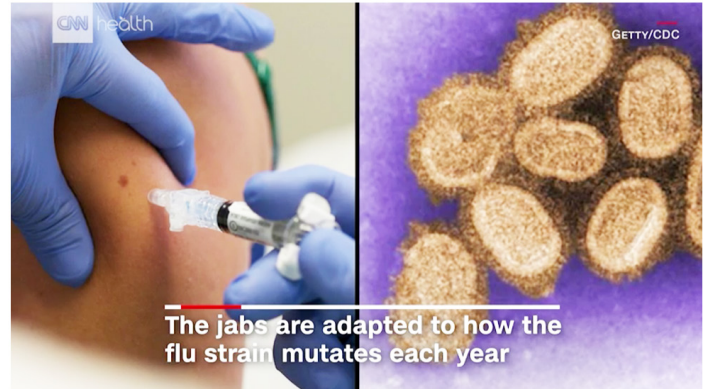
## 9. The genes of the virus have never been sequenced

In 2005, researchers announced that they had successfully determined the gene sequence of the 1918 influenza virus. The virus was recovered from the body of a flu victim buried in the permafrost of Alaska, as well as from samples of American soldiers who fell ill at the time.

Two years later, monkeys infected with the virus were found to exhibit the symptoms observed during the pandemic. Studies suggest that the monkeys died when their immune systems overreacted to the virus,

a so-called “cytokine storm.” Scientists now believe that a similar immune system overreaction contributed to high death rates among otherwise healthy young adults in 1918.

## 10. The 1918 pandemic offers few lessons for



## 2018

Severe influenza epidemics tend to occur every few decades. Experts believe that the next one is a question not of “if” but “when.”

While few living people can recall the great flu pandemic of 1918, we can continue to learn its lessons, which range from the commonsense value of handwashing and immunizations to the potential of anti-viral drugs. Today we know more about how to isolate and handle large numbers of ill and dying patients, and we can prescribe antibiotics, not available in 1918, to combat secondary bacterial infections. Perhaps the best hope lies in improving nutrition, sanitation and standards of living, which render patients better able to resist the infection.

For the foreseeable future, flu epidemics will remain an annual feature of the rhythm of human life. As a society, we can only hope that we have learned the great pandemic's lessons sufficiently well to quell another such worldwide catastrophe.

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/29/health/1918-flu-history-partner/index.html>



## Eat the World!

*The Parrot represents students of many hues and sounds --- no news there. Indeed, birds of a feather flock together, right? They also eat together. The Parrot is proud to present Parrot fodder from around the world in this and subsequent issues. Squawk!*

### Recipe for Curried Butternut Squash-Apple Soup!



#### Ingredients

- 4 Tbsp butter
- 2 finely chopped yellow onions
- About 1.5 Tbsp curry powder
- 2 small to medium butternut squashes
- 3 Granny Smith or other tart apples
- 3 cups chicken or veggie broth/stock
- 2 cups apple juice
- Salt (plenty) and pepper

Melt butter in a soup pot over low heat. Add onions and curry powder, stir well to combine, and cook over low heat about 25 minutes, stirring regularly. This should smell ridiculously good.

Meanwhile, peel, seed, and chop the squash. Peel, core, and chop two of the apples. After 25 minutes, add to pot along with broth. Bring just to a boil, cover, reduce heat, and simmer until squash is falling-apart tender. This will take more or less time depending on how finely you've diced the

squash; for me, it usually takes another 25 minutes or so.

If you are blessed with an immersion blender, use it to purée the soup in situ until very smooth. If you are not so blessed, put a large colander over a bowl and strain the soup, retaining the cooking liquid. Put the solids in a food processor (in batches if necessary), add a cup or so of the cooking liquid, and purée until very smooth. Return to pot.

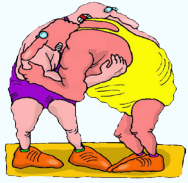
Stir in apple juice and return soup to low heat. If you used a food processor, add another cup to two cups of cooking liquid until soup is of an agreeable consistency. Heat through, stirring frequently. While reheating, shred the (unpeeled) third apple. Taste soup and season generously with salt and pepper.

Garnish each serving of hot soup with an attractive sprinkling of shredded apple (and maybe even a swirl of creme fraiche, should you be feeling super fancy). Mmm, tradition!



<https://redmollycooks.wordpress.com/2014/11/29/thanksgiving-tradition-or-the-soup-blog-lives/>

# Parrot Warbling



## Grappling with Grammar

### Then vs. Than

**Than** - this word is a preposition and a conjunction. You will mainly find than when people compare one person or thing with another: we use than to introduce the second part of the comparison:

I'm happier now than I was a year ago.

Than is also used with verbs in the past tense (especially the past perfect) and certain adverbial expressions to say that one thing happened immediately after another:

Hardly had Sunita started work than her boss asked to see her.

**Then** - this word is mainly an adverb and it has several meanings. Here are the two most important ones.

We also use then to talk about something coming immediately after something else in time or order:

First add the oil to the pan, then the vegetables.

We use then to talk about a particular time in the past or the future:

The restaurant closes at 11 o'clock, so we must get there before then.

**TIP:** Apart from thinking about the meanings of than and then, another way to get the spelling right is to remember that then is like when: both are spelled with an 'e' and both are used to talk about time (which ends with an 'e').

<https://blog.oxforddictionaries.com/2017/06/12/than-or-then-confusables/>

### Idiom--Attic

Keep your fingers on the pulse



**Meaning:** Being constantly aware of the most recent developments.

**Ex:** An entrepreneur must keep his fingers on the pulse of the market to be successful.

<https://www.careerride.com/idioms-meaning-and-examples-part-1.aspx>

### Beak Speak

#### How to Pronounce "The"

Normally, we pronounce the with a short sound (like "thuh"). But when the comes before a vowel sound, we pronounce it as a long "thee".

write: the apple    say: thee apple  
          the egg            thee egg



Emphatic the [thee]

When we wish to place emphasis on a particular word, we can use "emphatic the" [thee], whether or not the word begins with a consonant or vowel sound. For example:

A: I saw the [thuh] President yesterday.

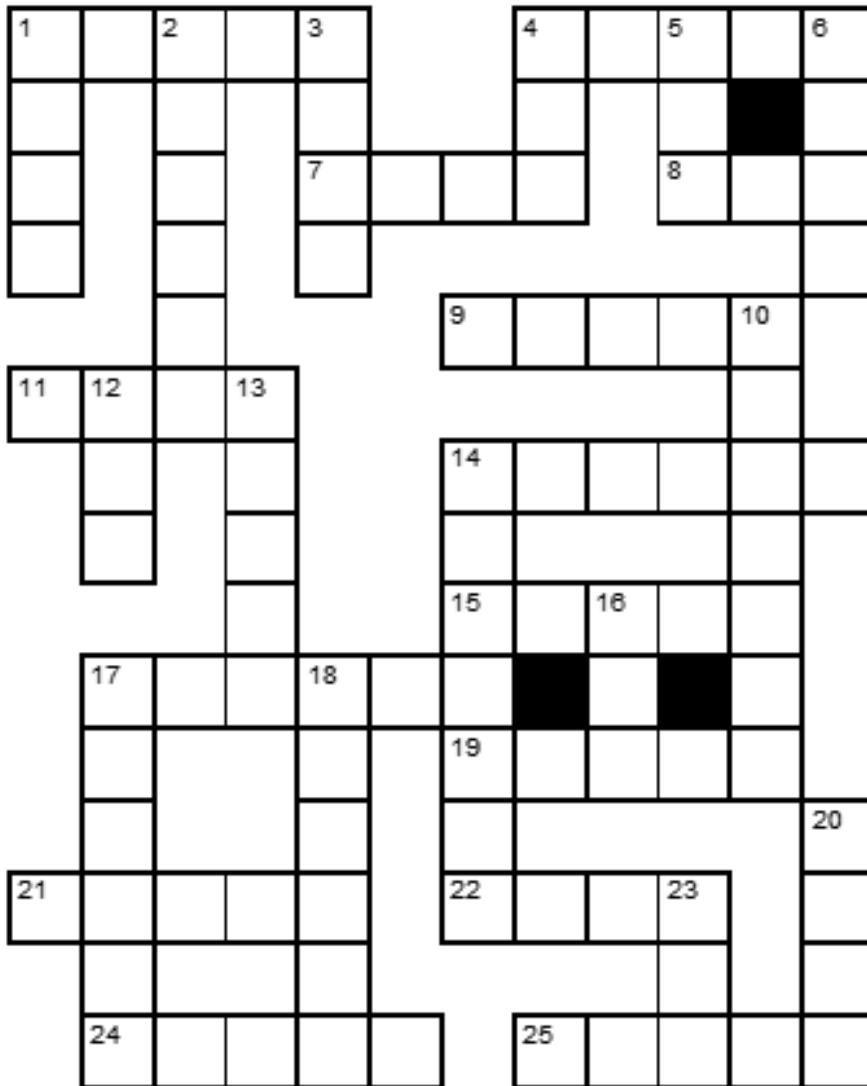
B: What! The [thee] President of the United States?

A: Yes, exactly!

<https://www.englishclub.com/pronunciation/the.htm>



## Some More Parrot Fun Stuff



### Across

- 1 The opposite of wrong. (5)  
 4 Another word for kid. (5)  
 7 The opposite of first. (4)  
 8 The opposite of high. (3)  
 9 A farm animal that rhymes with sleep. (5)  
 11 Another word for throw. (4)  
 14 A synonym of afraid. (6)  
 15 A kind of fruit that begins with A. (5)  
 17 A place that rhymes with pool. (6)  
 19 The opposite of heavy. (5)  
 21 A kind of fruit that begins with L. (5)  
 22 The opposite of east. (4)  
 24 A synonym of sleepy. (5)  
 25 The antonym of big. (5)

### Down

- 1 A food that rhymes with dice. (4)  
 2 A kind of fruit that begins with G. (6)  
 3 Another word for speak. (4)  
 4 A pet that rhymes with hat. (3)  
 5 Another word for sick. (3)  
 6 The opposite of up. (4)  
 10 A synonym of gift. (7)  
 12 The opposite of young. (3)  
 13 The opposite of north. (5)  
 14 The opposite of deep. (7)  
 16 A farm animal that rhymes with wig. (3)  
 17 A synonym for quiet. (6)  
 18 A type of fruit that begins with O. (6)  
 20 A toy that rhymes with tall. (4)  
 23 A drink that rhymes with sea. (3)



# Let's Go Camping

Find all of the camping related words from the list below. The words can be up, down, forward, backward, or diagonal.



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

BACKPACK  
BUG SPRAY  
CAMPFIRE  
COMPASS  
FIRE  
FISHING POLE  
FLASHLIGHT

FOREST  
HIKE  
ICE CHEST  
KNIFE  
LAKE  
LANTERN

MAP  
MOSQUITOES  
NAPKINS  
RACCOON  
RANGER  
SLEEPING BAG

SMORES  
STREAM  
SUNBLOCK  
SWIMSUIT  
TENT  
TRAIL



### Red Brocade

The Arabs used to say,  
When a stranger appears at your door,  
feed him for three days  
before asking who he is,  
where he's come from,  
where he's headed.

That way, he'll have strength  
enough to answer.

Or, by then you'll be  
such good friends  
you don't care.

Let's go back to that.

Rice? Pine nuts?

Here, take the red brocade pillow.

My child will serve water  
to your horse.

No, I was not busy when you came!

I was not preparing to be busy.

That's the armor everyone put on  
to pretend they had a purpose  
in the world.

I refuse to be claimed.

Your plate is waiting.

We will snip fresh mint  
into your tea.

By Naomi Shihab Nye

### Rigoberto's Riddles

Two coins add up to 30 cents. One of them is not a nickel. What are the coin?

*A quarter and a nickel.*



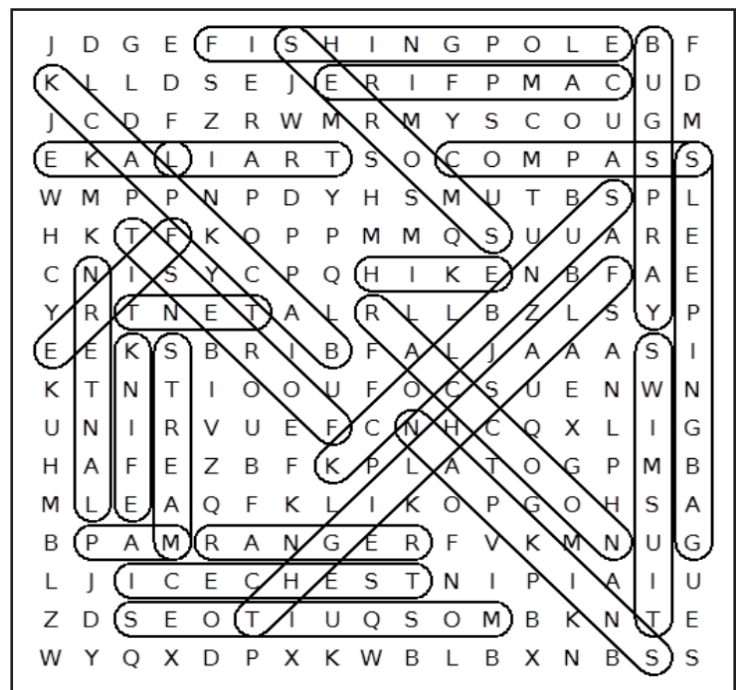
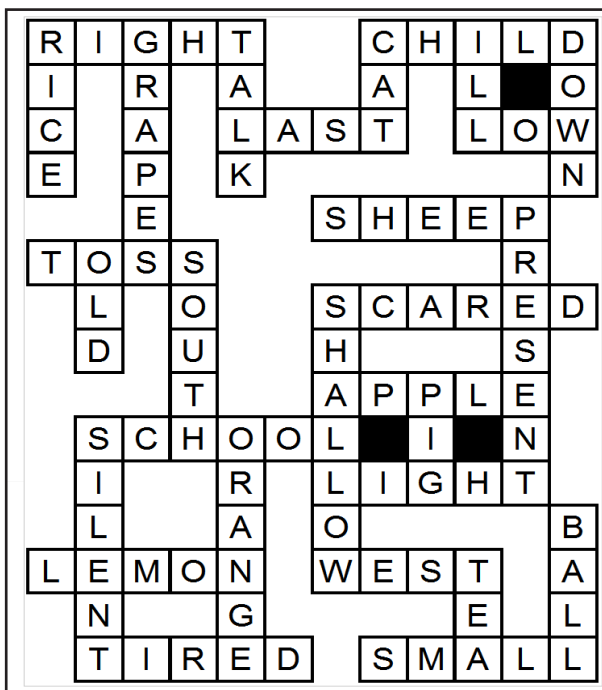
### Silly Vasily's Chuckle Chamber



A little girl came home from school and said to her mother, "Mommy, today in school I was punished for something that I didn't do."

The mother exclaimed, "But that's terrible! I'm going to have a talk with your teacher about this ... by the way, what was it that you didn't do?"

The little girl replied, "My homework."



## Nanny Noetal

*Editor's Note: Granny Noetal is on hiatus at the moment: hiking in Hungary, biking in Burundi, sailing in Singapore, kayaking in Kenya, gliding in Guyana, racing in Romania, fly-fishing in Finland, parachuting in Paraguay, swimming in Switzerland, diving in Denmark, and flying by the seat of her pants wherever she goes. In her place, her great grand-niece Nanny Noetal will be running her column with the same insightful advice and tips for ESL students. Don't forget to give your questions to your instructor and she will see that Nanny Noetal will receive them!*

**Dear Nanny,**

I was an ESL student for two semesters and now I am taking major classes like chemistry and mathematics. In all my classes, the lectures are just listening because there are about ninety-five students in the lecture room. There is no group study, no conversation, and no speaking. My problem is that I forget everything I had learned in ESL classes. I mean by everything: vocabulary, how to speak, how to write academically, and how to think in English. My parents and my friends don't speak English. How can I keep improving my skills in English?

Alla Esam

My sweet Alla,



Try to create your own environment by getting new friends who are able to speak English, by making study groups, and by trying to watch movies or going out to the cinema. You may also write in a diary every night before going to sleep. Reading also helps you to improve your English and build your vocabulary. Additionally, there are many interesting stories online and in the library you may like.

I hope you retake ESL classes, which are going to help you a lot. As for speaking English to your parents, speaking to parents in any language can be frustrating if you are young. When I was learning in high school, I listened to French songs, and I used to read books aloud to practice speaking and pronouncing correctly.

**Nanny Noetal**

### Interview of J.Lahey

*Continued from page 1*

placement results in three business days. At that time, they are also given instructions about their next steps, which include seeing a counselor.

**The Parrot:** Any special caveats or advice for students before they come to the Center?

**Mr. Lahey:** Yes. Students should make certain they have completed their application to ARC and have received their Los Rios ID number, which is a 7-digit number beginning with an "1." They should know this number and they should bring a valid photo ID, such as a driver's license, school ID, passport,

or green card. They should park in a student lot on campus. They should not park in Visitor Parking at the front of the school because the parking meters only allow one-hour parking and the ESL test takes longer than one hour. If a student does not already have a parking pass, all-day passes cost two dollars. Students should schedule three hours to take their exams, because it might take that long. Most importantly, ESL students should check the Assessment Calendar and arrive on time. We do not test for ESL every day. Students must arrive at least 30 minutes before the start time listed on the Testing Calendar, in order to have enough time to check in and fill out their paperwork. The time listed on the calendar is



the start time when all testers must be seated in the lab and ready to begin testing. We would like all students relaxed when the tests begin, not hurried or rushed.

**The Parrot:** When can they receive their results? And how many ways can they receive them?

**Mr. Lahey:** For most tests, students receive their results at the Assessment Center, as soon as the test has been completed. ESL results take three working days. ESL results for tests taken at the Natomas Center take a few days longer. Students can also access their assessment results online in their eServices account.

**The Parrot:** How soon after taking a test can a student re-test?

**Mr. Lahey:** For English, Math and ESL, a student must wait 30 days to re-test.

**The Parrot:** How many times can a student take an English test?

**Mr. Lahey:** In general, a student has two attempts: an initial attempt and one re-test, as long as he or she has not begun taking courses in that academic area. Once a student begins taking an English course, he or she generally cannot test again. A test result is valid for about 2 years. In an unusual case where a student's test results have expired and he or she hasn't started taking classes in the course sequence, the student may test again.

**The Parrot:** What challenges do you face with students who take an assessment test?

**Mr. Lahey:** Some students don't check our Testing Calendar, so they arrive at times when we are not testing. Some students do not bring a photo ID, so they are not allowed to test. Students can become frustrated when they cannot test when they would like to test. Also, ESL students may have difficulty with understanding the testing directions, both written and spoken. This becomes a challenge for both the test-takers and the test-givers.

**The Parrot:** How much time does a student have to finish the test?

**Mr. Lahey:** The ESL writing sample is timed for thirty minutes and the three computer tests are not

timed. The entire ESL session can take up to three hours. The regular English test is timed. Students should allow about one and a half hours for that test. This includes filling out the background questions and reviewing the sample test.

**The Parrot:** How much time do you give to students who want to take a math test and what is your advice for students before a math test?

**Mr. Lahey:** Our math test is not timed, but it usually takes between thirty minutes and one hour. My advice – and the advice of the Math Department – is that students should review before they take the math exam. There are many good sample tests and study guides on the ARC Assessment Center website. Reviewing the math they have previously learned can help students achieve an accurate math placement, so they do not end up in a class that is too low for them.

**The Parrot:** Are assessment tests available for students in other subjects besides ESL, English and math?

**Mr. Lahey:** We offer a Chemistry test for placement into Chemistry 400. We also offer graduation competency exams for students who wish to satisfy their Reading and Mathematics graduation requirements through an exam. Many students take the Reading Competency exam, but most students choose to satisfy their Math graduation requirement through a course, not an exam.

**The Parrot:** How long have you been working here? What facilities are provided for students now which weren't available at the time you started?

**Mr. Lahey:** I've been working at the Assessment Center almost eleven years, and we have more computers in our lab than we used to have. The types of tests have changed; we didn't have a writing sample for ESL when I started. I think that is a great improvement. I started at ARC almost 18 years ago, and the registration process was very different. Back then, students could register on the telephone or in person, but we didn't have online registration or online fee payment. Students could not access their records online. Now everything is so much easier for the students. We know it's not perfect, but the Los Rios District keeps working to improve the student's



online experience. Communication is so much better now. When I started, it was harder to reach students. Now every student has his or her own Los Rios gmail assigned to them and access to campus computers. We wish they would read those emails and access the messages in their eServices accounts! A big change that will occur very soon is that placement for Math and regular English will switch primarily from standardized tests to other measures, including high school academic records.

**The Parrot:** What are three words that your staff would use to describe you?

**Mr. Lahey:** Gruff but fair.

**The Parrot:** Ten years from now, where do you see yourself?

**Mr. Jerome Lahey:** Happily retired.

**The Parrot:** If you woke up in the morning and found out that you turned into the president of ARC, what would you change?

**Mr. Lahey:** Firstly, I'd like to say that the president of ARC is Thomas Greene and he is working diligently with the school's faculty, staff, and students on the ARC Re-design, which is helping the college re-think everything about how we serve our students. It will improve our students' overall experience at ARC. It will help them achieve their goals, which will allow more students to complete their classes, graduate, get

jobs, and transfer to four-year colleges and universities. I wake up every morning, glad that I work at ARC but glad that I am not the President, as he has an outrageously difficult, if greatly rewarding, job. That said, the Oak Café is an outstanding restaurant located on campus, and I think if I were President of ARC, it might be easier for me to get a reservation.

**The Parrot:** What would you be if you weren't the head of the Assessment Center?

**Mr. Lahey:** I've worked in colleges and universities for many years, always in what is generally called "Student Services" and I would probably still work at a college, perhaps even at ARC, but in a different department. I've always thought it would be interesting to work with students in some area of Student Activities or Student Government.

**The Parrot:** What do you do in your free time?

**Mr. Jerome Lahey:** I've found that over a lifetime of watching movies, listening to music, and reading books, I've managed to acquire a vast storehouse of knowledge – some more useful than other – that has made me a fairly decent player of trivia games, which I access on my iPhone.

**The Parrot:** Thank you so much, Mr. Lahey, for your time and great information.

**Mr. Jerome Lahey:** You are most welcome.

**Paroteer:** Habiba Salehzada

## Name One Thing you Want to Change at ARC!



*When I have a break I really need a quiet and shady place. Sometimes I want to eat my snack or read a book, but places where I can do it are so noisy or in the sun. I wish that students had more outside shady places to study and read quietly.*

*Svetlana*

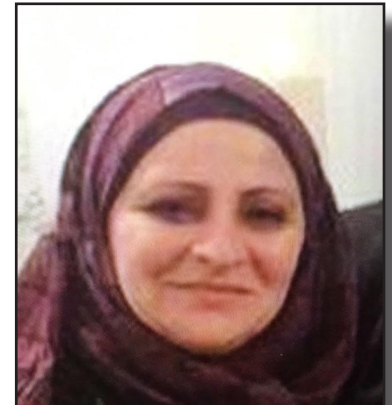


*I want to rebuild the portable classrooms. They are too old: floor, ceiling, and walls. Replace A/C because they are too noisy.*

*Kevin*

*We need more parking lots. Many students complain that they get to their classes late.*

*Sawsan*

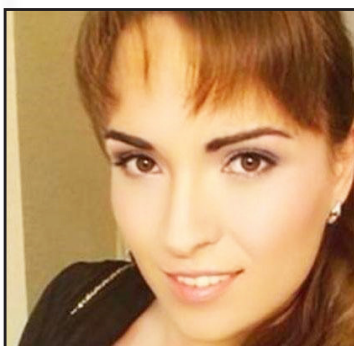


*I would like to see changing in the system of ESL classes. I want to attend a combined ESL class.*

*Olga*

*I would make more space for students to sit when they are waiting for their class especially Davies Hall. There are too many students in the hall.*

*Murtaza*



*Some new ESL students lose important events or programs because they can't find information or details about them. I would like to see more help for freshman. It will be really great.*

*Alina*

## Beaver Food Pantry

The Beaver Food Pantry is a pop-up pantry that distributes fresh produce and bread. This service is open to all ARC students, faculty, and staff. The Beaver Food Pantry was started in late Fall 2017 in collaboration with the Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services.

### Upcoming 2018 Distribution Dates/Times:

• **Wednesday, November 14 & 28**  
**12 - 3pm**

• **Wednesday, December 12**  
**12 - 3pm**

\*Distribution is on a first come, first served basis while supplies last

**Location:** In front of the Gym Ticket Window

Registration: First time users must fill out a one-time Intake Form before accessing services. Sign up here.

\*Returning users, please remember to bring your re-useable ARC tote bag.

Looking for More Resources? Check out our Food Resources Map with Campus and Community Food Resources.



## Out of the Cage

### Jazz Clinic with Quartet

**Tue, November 20, 2018**

**3:00pm – 4:00 pm**

The American River College Music Department presents a jazz clinic with Quartet (Dyne Eifertsen, Steve Lishman, Matt Robinson, Scott Gordon). Admission is free for this clinic. Parking for this event is \$2.00 and can be found in Lot D at the corner of Myrtle Avenue and College Oak Drive.

**Location:** Room 547, Music Department, American River College

### Eat Right and Sleep Tight!

**Fri, November 30, 2018**

**3:00pm – 5:00 pm**

Are you one of the 40 million Americans who are sleep-deprived? Besides our jam-packed schedules and our love of electronic devices, what and when we eat affects sleep, which in turn affects our health. Join us to learn how you can change your diet so you're no longer sabotaging your efforts to get those much needed ZZZs.

**Location:** Culinary Arts Demonstration Lab, room 584, American River College

### Beaver Food Pantry

**Wed, November 28, 2018**

**12:00pm – 3:00 pm**

Description: Fresh Produce & Bread from 12-3 PM. 1st time users will need to register using our intake form available on the Beaver Food Pantry website. Please bring a reusable bag with you as well. See you there!

**Location:** ARC Gym

### Sacramento Job Fair

**Thu, December 6, 2018**

**11:00 am – 2:00 pm**

Are you in the market for a job or a new career in Sacramento California? Have you been sending resumes to employers and wonder why they have not got back to you? The key is being able to get in front of the right person who is hiring. At our Sacramento job fair, you will meet hiring managers from the top companies in Sacramento.

**Location:** DoubleTree by Hilton Sacramento 2001 Point West Way, Sacramento, CA 95815



### Questions/Comments?

Student Editors: **Alex Grynishyn, Elaf Khafaja, Alaa Shatat, Betul Yousif, Alik Sayfullin**

Please let us know what we can do to improve "The Parrot." We appreciate any and all feedback you are willing to give us. Send us an e-mail, call, or just drop by Professor Bracco's office D337 (Davies Hall), call (916) 484-8988, or e-mail [Braccop@arc.losrios.edu](mailto:Braccop@arc.losrios.edu). To see The Parrot in color go to [http://www.arc.losrios.edu/ARC\\_Majors/Humanities/ESL/The\\_Parrot.htm](http://www.arc.losrios.edu/ARC_Majors/Humanities/ESL/The_Parrot.htm)