

THE PARROT



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

ESL Courses to Change — Professor Valcu

The Parrot: Hi, Professor Sanda. How are you today?

Professor Valcu: I'm fine. How are you?

The Parrot: I'm fine. I'm glad to make this interview about you. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

Professor Valcu: Sure. So, I'm Professor Sanda Valcu

and I'm part of the ESL faculty here at ARC. This is my third year as Depart-



ment Head as well. I came here as an immigrant like many of our students. I grew up in Romania, and I came here when I was twenty - one. I studied English for many years back in Romania. I started in 5th grade. I spoke English pretty

well when I came here, but I had to

Continued on page 21



American River College
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Tet!

p. 13

“When we are really honest with ourselves we must admit our lives are all that really belong to us. So it is how we use our lives that determines the kind of men we are.”

Cesar Chavez

International Women’s Day: History, strikes and celebrations

You might have seen International Women’s Day mentioned in the media or heard friends talking about it. But what is it for? When is it? Is it a celebration or a protest? And is there an equivalent International Men’s Day?



For more than a century people around the world have been marking 8 March as a special day for women. Read on to find out why.

1. When did it all start?

International Women’s Day grew out of the labour movement to become a UN-recog-

Continued on page 14

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
My Kingdom.....	2
How to Wash a Zebra..	3
War in Azerbaijan.....	4
My Cassette Tape....	6
14 Archi.....	8
My Grandma.....	10
My Special Person...	10

Student Chirpings

My Kingdom

Every person has a place where he feels secure and peaceful. A perfect home is a place where a person feels safe from all the worries and troubles of the outside world. My house is in Iraq, and it was always such a place for me. I used to spend a lot of time at my home when I was in my country before I had to leave it. I did like going out and visiting new places, but I could be completely free and comfortable at home. It is a place filled with good memories. I still have this house and I hope to go back one day.

My house may not look impressive to many, but it was unusual for me, as I loved every small detail in it. My husband is an engineer, so he designed the house based on our ideas and needs. It was not a spacious house, but it was a comfortable, warm, and tidy home. The house was made of bricks, so it was a substantial building. It had only three bedrooms, one living room, one kitchen, and three bathrooms. My house had a high roof and white walls. I especially loved the window in the living room as it faced the garden, and it was high and large. All things fit each other well, which shows that my husband took pains to work on the design. Moreover, my husband and I loved house plants, so there were plenty of them in all the rooms. In short, these details made me love this house.

There was a door that led the kitchen to the small backyard, so we had an opportunity to have dinner outside when the weather was beautiful. We also had a small garage on the left side of the house. The house was surrounded by a green lawn that my husband cut and watered regularly. We also had many roses on both sides of the patio that smelled nice. There was also a palm tree that was

growing in the backyard, under which my husband put a beautiful wooden table with chairs. I loved these days when the sun was shining into the garden, and the leaves began glowing with this deep green color. It felt like the house was part of the outside world, only more peaceful and comfortable.

My house not only represents my family and me as people, but it also holds many memories.



The first and happiest moment was when I got married and all the preparation for my wedding party took place at my home. I'll never forget all my friends' smiling faces and all the family members who traveled from faraway places to attend our wedding party. My husband and I worked hard to plan every single detail for the wedding party. The result of this happiness lasted for many months until we had our first baby. This house was witness to the beginning of every first of my baby's life — our baby's first cry, first laugh, and first step. I still feel the same warmth and happiness when I recall them.

In conclusion, I would like to note that no place will ever be so peaceful for me as my home. I keep the memories of it in my heart and mind, and I always tell my children about our house. Four years have passed since I have been at my house. I hope that one day I can go back to my home and return to my "kingdom". Yes! My home is my kingdom and I'll never forget it.

Rusul Atiyah
ESLW40
Descriptive Essay

Steps in Washing a Zebra for a Beauty Contest

Ask yourself: do you want your zebra to win at the world's first beauty contest for zebras? If yes, then you should understand that the preparation for this event largely determines its result. A zebra's washing is the most important part of the process of preparing for a beauty contest. An excellently-washed zebra is the key to its success at the podium. There are three main steps in the process of washing a zebra for a beauty contest.

The first stage in the process of washing a zebra for a beauty contest is choosing the right conditions for this procedure. First of all, the air temperature should be high enough for washing. Remember, a zebra is a heat-loving animal! A warm, sunny day is an ideal condition for a pleasant washing and drying of a zebra. Then make sure that you have chosen a clean place so that the washed zebra doesn't get dirty. The best place for this procedure is a lawn with low grass. After that, check if you have enough water to wash such a large animal as a zebra.

Afterwards, bring shampoo, conditioner (important for striped animals), and a large sponge and place them in a convenient place. The most important step in the preparatory phase is making sure that your zebra is fed and in good spirits. Finally, tie up your zebra so it can't escape.

The second and main stage in the process of washing a zebra for a beauty contest is the washing process itself. Initially, wet your zebra. If the zebra is worried, calm it down. Then take a sponge, apply shampoo on it, and start washing the animal in a circular motion. You should start with the head of the zebra. In the process of washing the head, make sure that the foam doesn't get into its eyes and mouth. After washing its head, go to the neck, trunk, and legs. During the washing process, clean the sponge of dirt, rinsing it with clean water. Pay



special attention to the washing of the mane and tail of your zebra. Everyone knows that judges at the beauty contest pay special attention to the appearance of a zebra. A beautiful tail and mane are the keys to future success. After the entire body of the zebra is washed, rinse the shampoo thoroughly. In the end, with your hands or sponge, apply a conditioner to the mane, tail, and body of your zebra. It is important to use a conditioner for striped animals. This is a guarantee that the zebra stripes retain their clarity. Fuzzy stripes on the zebra mean last place in the beauty contest. The last step is rinsing out the conditioner thoroughly.

The third stage in the process of washing a zebra for a beauty contest is drying the zebra. First of all, with your hands or a special squeegee, drive away excess water from the body of the zebra. This should be done from the top to bottom in the direction of fur growth. Then take a towel and wipe your zebra with it. Replace the towel when it's wet. Repeat this step until the zebra becomes relatively dry. A small measured walk with the zebra under the sun will help complete the drying faster. Don't use a hairdryer for drying the zebra because it can scare the animal. Finally, comb the mane and tail of the zebra. Done - your zebra is clean now, and it's ready for the beauty contest!

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of washing the zebra before the first world beauty contest for zebras. The appearance of the zebra with its well-groomed, clean, beautiful mane and tail are the things that judges pay attention to first of all. Follow these simple directions, and the process of washing the zebra before this most important event will be quite easy. Good luck to you and your zebra!

*Nadia Orlov
ESLW50
Process Eassy*

Motherland in Flames

I want to share a story about the most beautiful and sunniest country on the coast of the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan. This country has a huge, long, and dramatic history. I was born in the city of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. Everything was peaceful. People were joyful, international, helpful, plenty for all, and standing shoulder-to-shoulder to help the community thrive together as one.

While I was living in Baku, the war started. I remember the day when two Azerbaijanis were shot dead. The day after that, the streets were no longer as bright and shining with joy and the will to help brother to brother was gone. Everyone's face was filled with paranoia, they were frightened, and all were bugged by something. Our neighbors, Azerbaijanis who were not fond of the war or any conflict between the Azerbaijanis and Armenians, told us that the Azerbaijanis wanted their land back from the multiple races and ethnicities living there. The chilling words of our neighbors that "the Azerbaijanis want to nationalize the country, through any means" haunt me and my family to this day.

When two Azerbaijanis were shot, the war began. Some people assumed it was the Azerbaijanis who shot their own two people to provoke a conflict, and some believed the version of the media that the Armenians had shot the Azerbaijanis. Others had their own stories but the one terrible truth was that war had come to our friendly country. Brother turned on brother, blood spilled, children were thrown from the 10th-floor, families were

killed brutally in their own residences. People were tortured, law enforcement officers were bought, and the lovely and friendly country of Azerbaijan became a bloodbath.

I left Azerbaijan in 1988. Unfortunately, my parents didn't, and our great neighbors who were Azerbaijani gave them refuge in their residence. After two years of spilling the blood of brothers, the Russian government, after its reconstruction, sent armed forces, and enforced upon the country martial law. My parents fled Azerbaijan as refugees, saying goodbye to their motherland and Baku, never again to see the Azerbaijani sun or the Caspian Sea. Never again to see the beautiful trees of Azerbaijan. Never again to eat the natural fruits from the soil of the motherland. We said goodbye to the city of our childhood, once and for all.



Nikita Akhuamov
ESL G50
Expository Essay

The Dripping Water Tap

Several years ago, I was working on a road construction project in the southwest of my native country, Iraq, in a flat desert area. The difference between the nature of this desert and other deserts is the component of its surface, which is not covered by sand or like common deserts. However, it has a mix of soil and stone surface, meaning there were no sandstorms.

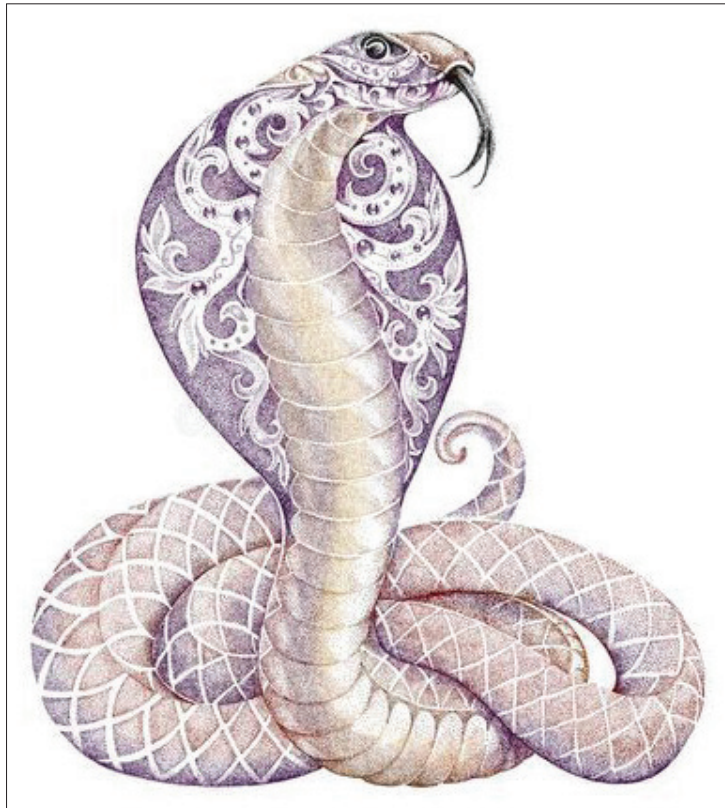
During the daytime, the weather is usually very hot; but it completely changes during the night and mostly in open areas, the temperature goes down and a soft wind blows, which makes a person feel drowsy and go into a deep sleep. This encouraged most of the project staff to move their frame beds out of their rooms to the open air within the project camp where we were staying.

One night while I was in a deep sleep, I suddenly woke to some noise I heard around my bed, caused by three of my coworkers. I asked them to please be quiet, because I was tired and wanted to sleep. They said they were trying to kill a big snake that had slithered and had hid under my bed and they couldn't find it. I said it was not joking time and to just go away and let me sleep. I was shocked when they swore that they were not joking but were serious. They urged me not to move in order not to be attacked by the snake.

Can you imagine a person who wants to sleep and there is a snake under his bed? I became frozen with fear, not able to move, scared of the re-

action of the snake. Slowly I covered my head and rolled my body up in my blanket and kept quiet, waiting for when I would be bitten by the snake. I couldn't sleep the whole night.

In the early morning when I felt the sun light, I didn't know how I had jumped from my bed and run inside my room. Luckily, I kept safe that night. It seemed that the snake had disappeared.



For me, I never slept again out of my room in that camp. Later, I realized that there was a leaking water tap near the place that I slept. The leaked water drops were the reason for the snakes approaching during the calm nights. They needed to get a little water in a hot dry desert. This is one of the stories of my life that tells how unexpected things could happen to me. I will never forget how I felt that night.



Muwafaq Shakir
ESLL310
Narrative Essay

People and Stress

Life has a lot of challenges and opportunities. Most people think more about life's challenges and negative things. It is a bad habit that increases their stress. Thousands of people face this problem around the world, and it is a serious problem, like a disease. Some people can protect themselves against this disease, and some cannot. When we want to have a normal life, we must try to avoid stress. We should follow some great things in our lives. There are a lot of things and activities around us to help decrease our stress.

First, we can think of positive things and do good activities to reduce our stress. When we think about the beauties of the world, good people, best friends, delicious food, and so on, we can feel better. Listening to music helps us to decrease our stress. For example, when I came to the USA in the early days, I was stressed too. I cried every day, but after several months I decided to stop crying and do positive things instead. I started listening to music every day, and that made me feel better. Also, we can have a fantastic trip with our best friends. Going everywhere with our friends can change our mood. We can enjoy our time with our friends, eating, shopping, watching movies, hiking, and lots of other kinds of recreation. In short, thinking about and doing some good things, like a good trip or doing some fantastic activities, can help us to decrease our stress.

Secondly, exercising can bring a big change in our lives. Every person needs to have a healthy life. Effective activities, like doing some exercises, can bring big changes to our lives. When we want to have a happy life without stress and negative points, we have to think about some useful things. One of the important points for decreasing stress is exercising every day. When we exercise, our bodies

become strong. Our blood flows fast, and it helps our minds. Also, it increases our appetite and helps us to eat better. When we eat well, it helps our bodies to be strong, and we can have healthy bodies. In brief, for a better life and a healthy body, and to decrease stress, daily exercise is very useful and effective.

Thirdly, sleeping well can help people to decrease their stress. It is an important piece of a doctor's advice because sleep helps people to forget their worries and distress. When we don't sleep well, it causes our stress to increase and it is



one of the significant points of increasing stress. If we want to be healthy and have a long life, we have to sleep well because sleep helps our minds to become refreshed. When we sleep, our minds are at rest, and when our minds rest well, it can increase some natural painkillers to protect our minds against word stress. For example, when we sleep for 7-8 hours, we can start a good day with a good

feeling. In short, good and sufficient sleep can make our minds strong and reduce our stress.

In conclusion, when we think about a healthy life and having a happy family and friends, we should protect our minds and bodies against stress. We should think about and do some positive things and useful activities to have a better life. We can't have a good and healthy life when we have too much stress. We should think of good things instead of negative ones. Exercising, sleeping well, and having fun can help our lives because they all strengthen our lives, and they can make life more enjoyable for us. So we have to think about them a lot.

Mahboba Jamshidi
 ESLW40
 Expository Essay

My Sentimental Cassette Tape

Most people nowadays don't use cassette tapes anymore, and they can't be found in a market. I love to listen to music, and I collected all the songs that I liked. In my country, Thailand, I liked to record songs from a radio station. I had a lot of cassette tapes, but I had only one cassette tape that I loved the most and that made me feel free and happy. I felt I could fly when I was listening to music from my cassette tape.

The tape was so old; it didn't work anymore, but I still kept it. I had a lot of memories from this tape. I had a favorite radio program, which played old songs from the years 1960 - 1970. The disk jockey let a song start playing a few seconds; then, he spoke about the meaning of the song in one or two sentences. I think that was nice! I felt close to the song. I spent about three months to record five songs because I sometimes had to hide my radio and wait until my parents weren't home. I called my tape "My Sentimental Cassette Tape."

"Rhythm of the Rain"

by The Cascades was one of my favorite songs. I could smell the grassland and the wild flowers when I heard this song. The D.J. liked to play this song while it was raining, and the next was "It Never Rains In Southern California" by Albert Hammond. I wanted to jump out of my bed to dance, especially as the rhythm of the song began. I couldn't help it; my legs were moving. I had listened to the radio program for almost three years; I knew the next song he would play, but I couldn't guess what he would say about that song. I liked his style and his management of the radio program. When the D.J. played "Why" by Frankie

Avalon, I knew from the D.J. that the song was about love, but I didn't much care what it meant until five years later. "I Left my Heart in San Francisco" by Tony Bennett; "My love waits there..." it was the sound of the D.J. who graduated from San Francisco University in California. He talked about San Francisco on his radio program; the weather was cold, the smell of the fresh ocean air, and there was a big full moon. I told myself I would be there in my dream city San Francisco. He always played "I Love you for Sentimental Reasons" by Nat King Cole before he said goodbye for that night.

I had transferred my tape to disc many times, but I kept the original cassette. The original cassette, which was a Sony tape, didn't work anymore. I had played my cassette a lot. The paper was torn; the tape was stretched, and the sound was "KO KA KO KA." My friend asked me why I liked my cassette. I explained that it wasn't the songs, but the voice of the D.J. When I was listening to the radio pro-

gram, I was fourteen years old. Most of the time, I wrote letters to request my song because I had to go to bed before ten p.m., but the radio program was on the air from ten p.m. to midnight, Monday to Friday. I always hid my radio under my blanket, so nobody knew that I didn't go to sleep yet. It was so exciting. I recall the good times I had when I was young. The D.J. was my model. I wanted to be a D.J. like him; although I didn't become a D.J., I still like to listen to the old songs.

Pattaraporn Callorina
ESLW50
Descriptive Essay



“I4 Archi” Coffee Shop

I am an active outdoor person. On sunny days, I usually like gardening. Sometimes I go for long walks, or I take bicycle rides, or I go swimming. However, there are also many rainy, snowy and windy days when I prefer to spend my time in a less active way, such as reading a book in a very comfortable place that I love. One of these places was a coffee shop on the seafront in Italy. The name of this coffee shop is “I4 Archi”, and it has a perfect location, an interesting interior, and a very “special energy” atmosphere for me so I could read a book with maximum pleasure.

I4 Archie is a coffee shop and restaurant situated by the Ligurian Sea in Chiavari, Italy. From outside you can see its structure is divided into two different spaces. One of them is an open shop window space in the front, and the other one is an indoor space with brick walls in the back. In front of this location there is a wooden promenade

construction which is a couple of meters above sea level. From inside of the coffee shop, it is possible to feel the iodine salt air and have a spectacular view of the sea and the beach. People usually swim and sunbathe there. Children play in the warm, clear water of the sea and in hot, coarse sand. From this place there are also visible some small boats and very large ships floating on the water.

I4 Archie coffee shop has a very interesting mixed interior design. In the indoor space the furniture has an “empire” style. There are gracious cherry wooden chairs and tables. The seats of the chairs are covered with brown shiny leather. The tables here are covered with two tablecloths; the bottom ones are golden and the top ones are white. People who want to have a very relaxed

breakfast, lunch, or dinner will sit in this room. They will hear soft classical music or jazz during their meal. In the front open window space, the furniture is in a modern style. These are simple plastic orange-colored chairs and tables which are in harmony with the glass walls. In the center of every table there is always a small bouquet of fresh seasonal flowers.



The energy atmosphere in I4 Archi coffee shop is special. When I came for the first time, I was delighted about everything I saw, drank, ate, and heard there. First of all, I like the sea and from the open window space I had the most perfect view of the sea I ever had. I observed and admired how the sea changed every day, and it was never the same. Sometimes, it was flat and looked like a mirror, and I saw the reflection of the sun or the moon on the sea. Sometimes, it was storming, and the waves were so high and tumultuous that I was afraid it could pull the coffee shop into

the sea. Second, the cappuccino and the ice cream at I4 Archi were the tastiest I have ever drunk and eaten. Almost every time I stopped there, I had a book with me, and reading it in such an atmosphere like that was always a great pleasure for me.

People have a need for a comfortable place that relaxes them. One of these places for me was I4 Archi. It is located near the sea I love. It has a colorful interior design and an atmosphere that relaxed me a lot. I4 Archi was a great place for me to drink a coffee, or a glass of water, to have some ice cream, and to read a book.

*Ala Floca
ESLW50
Descriptive Essay*

One Day in Paris

Since my school years, I have always dreamed about France. I have always been passionate about French culture, language, and traditions. I had a dream of visiting France, and especially visiting my favorite city in the world, Paris. My dream was realized in 2005 because of the opportunity to have an internship in France. I packed my suitcases, and after two long days traveling by bus, I finally arrived in the capital of France. I was extremely happy being in the city of my dreams, but at that moment, I did not yet know that I would always remember that day as my most stressful day as a newcomer.

Two friends and I arrived at the bus station of Gare du Nord in Paris. We expected that somebody from the school program would meet us to help us get to the railway station because Paris was not our final destination. We were surprised when

nobody met us or even called to notify us. Imagine three girls all alone in the big city. We were so disappointed and we did not know what we should do next.

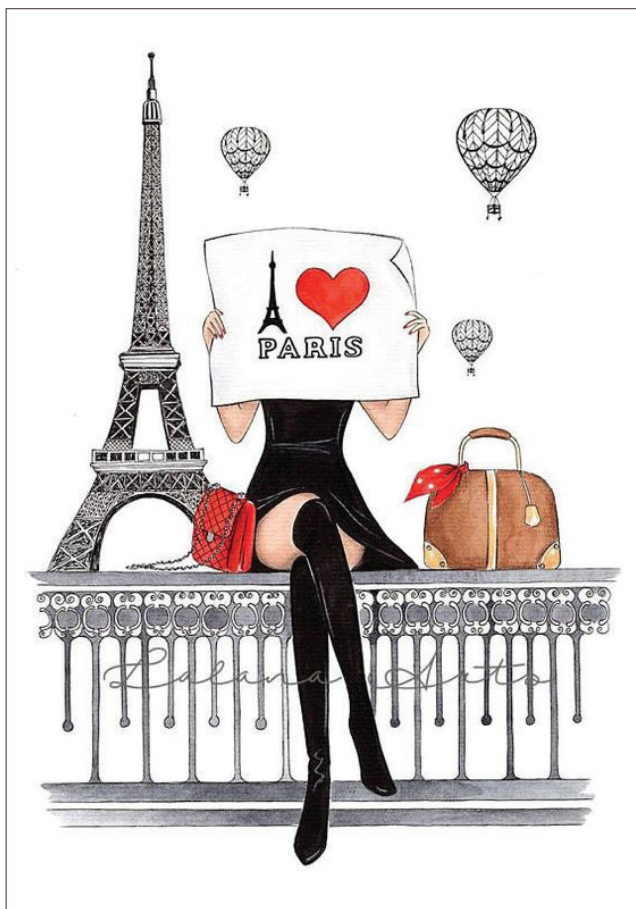
I speak French well, so I decided to make a decision and help my friends. I looked at the map to find the way to the Gare de Lyon, which was our place of departure. We descended into the subway to get to the railway station. Three girls with big suitcases in the subway looked so funny, but not for us as newcomers. One of us even cried because she was afraid. I appreciate some of the passersby that kindly helped us with our bag-

gage, and always politely answered all our questions.

Finally, we got to the Gare de Lyon. I helped the girls buy tickets because each of us had different destinations. We said goodbye to each other, and I departed from Paris to the city of Moulin, which is in the Allier region. After three hours on the train, I got to the Moulin Railway Station. *Déjà vu*, nobody met me again, and I was a bit shocked. This time everything ended better, and after five minutes of waiting, the director of the internship came to pick me up.

More than ten years have passed since that day, but I feel like it happened to me just one week ago. Memories come to life when I look at the map of Paris, or simply when I listen to French music. This situation in my life taught me how to not give up and to react fast in extreme situations. Of all the days that I spent in my lovely Paris, that

day I will always remember as my most stressful day as a foreigner.



Kateryna Maksymenko
ESLW50
Narrative Essay

The Istanbul Earthquake

Istanbul had a huge earthquake when I was in Istanbul, Turkey in November, 1999. There were a lot of buildings destroyed and damaged. This natural disaster brought a lot of problems to Turkey. It was one of the most dangerous days I've ever had.

This earthquake happened about 4 p.m. after I come home. I was cooking at home and listening to the news on TV. A couple of minutes, later I felt something moving a little bit, but just thought that it was windy.

When I was walking to the door, I suddenly felt things were shaking inside the room. I understood that all the apartment was shaking and fast. I was alone at home. I couldn't get out because it was too late

for me to get out of the apartment. I preferred to stay in my bedroom during the earthquake.

I was very shocked because I had never had this experience before in my life. I went to my bedroom and slept in my bed just to pray and wait to die. I thought that I was going to die inside my apartment without saying goodbye to my family and friends, but I didn't die. After a few minutes, the earthquake stopped. I will never forget that moment of my life. It is hard to explain when something happens like that. I just had a very terrible feeling and surprise when the earth-

quake suddenly happened.

Most people were running away from the earthquake to find a safe place to go. When I saw people on the streets, some people were even half naked because they did not have time to get dressed. There were a lot of people on the phone calling to their families and friends. Everybody was shocked, surprised, and unhappy. It was on their faces. Some people were trying to help other ones who were under buildings. The streets

were full of ambulances and police cars. Everybody wanted to try to help and save lives.

In conclusion, I will never forget this terrible earthquake in my life. Nobody died in my apartment building, but nine hundred eighty-one people died in Istanbul. Generally, in the Marmara

region of Turkey, about 17,000 people died from the earthquake in 1999. A lot of people lost their homes and more property. If you are at home and living on the 11th floor of an apartment, and you have no time to leave, what would you do?



*Huseyin Korkmaz
ESLW50
Narrative Essay*

The Life of My Grandma

My grandma Gasha was an ordinary person, but her life was not ordinary and calm. Grandma lived in two centuries — from 1892 to 1981. There were different periods in her life, but she never gave up.

Gasha was born and raised in a small village in Ukraine. When she was a teenager, she walked to the neighboring country, Russia, and worked for other people. That distance was about 150 miles one way. After that, she returned home and married my grandfather. They lived together, worked hard, and soon they had their own big and strong farm. Four daughters were born in their family. They lived happily, but this did not last long.

A famine occurred in Ukraine. The Soviet government took away everything from them that they acquired through their labor. They had nothing for food. Grandma told us how they survived that terrible period from 1936 to 1937. Their house was not very far from the forest. All autumn they picked acorns and various dry grass, and ground it into flour and baked cakes. When winter came, they chopped and dug into frozen ground and collect-

ed various plant roots. Then they were cooked and eaten by adults and children. There was not any other food. Two-thirds of the villagers did not survive that terrible winter, but grandma's family all survived. There was different green grass in the spring and this helped them regain strength and continue to work.



In the summer of 1941, war came to Ukraine. Grandpa went to war and died there. Gasha herself raised all her daughters and married them out. She lived alone in the usual rural life for many years. She had a big garden, orchard, and various livestock. She knew how to do everything that a man needed to do. She cooked simple, but very tasty food. My grandma didn't say too much. She was always busy with different things. Gasha did everything herself until the end of

her days. She had excellent eyesight and never wore glasses. She never complained and was never offended by anyone. She lived quietly and calmly, and just as quietly, she went to heaven.

Liubov Havryliuk
ESL G50
Narrative Essay

A Special Person

A really special person in my life is my mom. She gave me life. She taught me how to live and how to be a good person. Her name is Zinaida. She is beautiful and kind. She has brown eyes, and long black hair. All my relatives told me that I look like her. My mom always forgives my mistakes, and supports everything I do. When I was a little kid, it was a hard time for my family; but she always tried to make my life better. Now, I am trying to



pay her back by being a good son, and help her with house maintenance. She is a master in the kitchen. Everyone in my family loves how she cooks. I love how she makes Russian pelmeni and borscht. In her free time, she likes to watch news or movies, and she also likes to listen to Russian music artists. I love my mom and I will always support her.

Artyom Popov
ESLW20
Descriptive essay

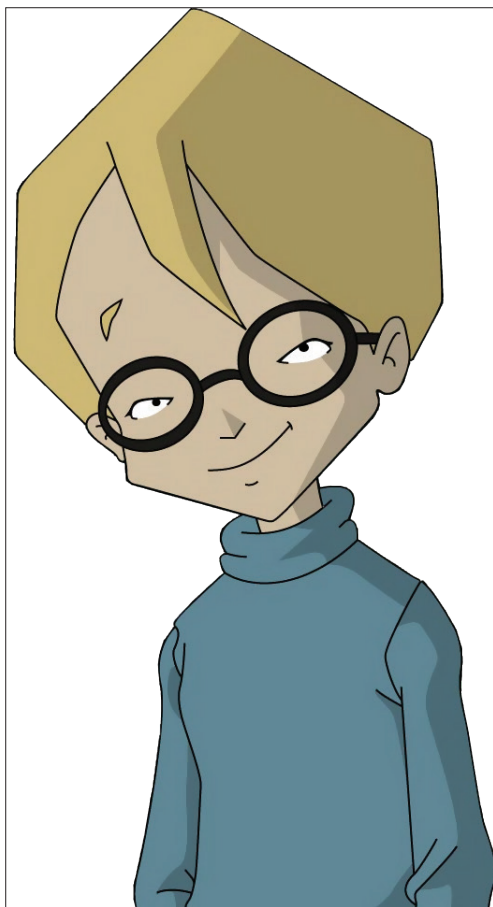
Learning Experience

Multiple Languages

As someone who grew up speaking only English, I have always admired multilingual families. I was amazed at their ability to effortlessly switch between languages and I respected them for preserving their culture and passing it down to their children. Growing up in a rural town in Connecticut, I rarely encountered other languages. However, I found my true home after I moved to California and joined the diverse community in Sacramento. Walking on campus, I often hear four or five different languages. I realized that this variety was reflected in my personal life, that many of my closest friends and mentors spoke more than one language. Wanting to better connect with different communities, gain new perspectives, and understand culture, I was inspired to study foreign languages.

I am currently enrolled in Russian and German at American River College, Arabic at Sacramento City College, brushing up on my once-decent French, and learning Farsi. Balancing five languages can be overwhelming and I sometimes have trouble separating the languages in my mind. I alternate thinking between German and Arabic perspectives in Russian class. I accidentally signed an IRS tax form in Russian cursive. My German teacher asks for a practice sentence and I start to write in Arabic script. A native Arabic speaking friend passes by on campus and I start speaking with them in Russian. Although these moments can be embarrassing, they are a reminder of the amusing confusion that accompa-

nies the learning process. These mistakes are also a tribute to how instinctive a certain language may become. Such challenges are offset by moments of joy where I am able to converse with both strangers and friends in their native tongue.



As a newcomer to this college I was thankful to find the community friendly and welcoming. Native speakers in my Russian class were always helpful, meaning I could get better feedback on my speaking, grammar, and listening skills. My professor in the fall would keep material engaging and interesting, on occasions playing old Soviet cartoons or giving tongue twisters and rhymes for mastering pronunciation.

Above all, I appreciate every Russian, German, French, Farsi, and Arabic native speaker who has demonstrated patience and kindness as I practice speaking their language. They contribute to my learning experience by correcting my mistakes and tolerating my mispronunciations and grammar. Speaking with such individuals also reveals the true value of learning languages. Languages allow us to build meaningful relationships with those from different backgrounds. Languages provide for common understanding and a shared bond, bringing us closer together despite our differences in culture or upbringing. That, more than anything, is motivation to pursue the study of language.

Isaak Todd
Descriptive essay

Around the World

New Year in February? Let's check it out!!!

TET (Vietnam)

Have you ever heard of a New Year's celebration that takes 5 calendar days? We have Christmas time for family in the United States but Vietnam has New Year's time for their families. Let's take a look at this festival to gain a general idea of why and how people celebrate it!



Vietnamese Tet is the most important holiday in Vietnam. This most important holiday is special for Vietnamese because this is the time when families gather together to celebrate. At this time of the year, people who live around the country will return to their homes to spend time with their grandparents, parents, children, and relatives.



Tet is usually in January or February of the year, in spring time, depending on the lunar calendar that Vietnamese use. People usually have at least

5 days off and get paid to enjoy their family time.

Before Tet, people usually clean their houses, go shopping to buy new furniture, clothes, and food like cake, soda, or jams for New Year. Many people also buy a lot of gifts to give to relatives or people who help them the whole year. One of the activities on Tet days is going to the flower market in

the main district of most cities in Vietnam. People usually dress up in nice clothes or wear traditional dresses (Ao Dai) to enjoy the beauty of the decorations to take pictures. Many activities before Tet time include wrapping sticky rice, which makes Tet really special in the Vietnamese heart.



On TET days, people also go to the flower market or go to their relatives or to important people's houses to give them gifts and wish them good luck for the New Year. Children often receive lucky money from adults to wish

them a new year and good luck in their lives.

TET in Vietnam is a significant and meaningful day in Vietnam that everybody is waiting for because they can spend a lot



of time with their families. There are many special and unique holidays or festivals around the world which have beautiful meanings you can explore. We hope this page gives you some information about other countries' holidays that you can enjoy. Have fun and enjoy reading!

Tuyet Le

Nestscape -- Articles from the Web

nised annual event.

The seeds of it were planted in 1908, when 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter working hours, better pay and the right to vote. It was the Socialist Party of America who declared the first National Woman's Day, a year later.

The idea to make the day international came from a woman called Clara Zetkin. She suggested the idea in 1910 at an International Conference of Working Women in Copenhagen. There were 100 women there, from 17 countries, and they agreed on her suggestion unanimously.

It was first celebrated in 1911, in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. The centenary was celebrated in 2011, so this year we're technically celebrating the 108th International Women's Day.



Clara Zetkin founded International Women's Day in 1910

Things were made official in 1975 when the United Nations (UN) started celebrating the day and setting an annual theme. The first one (in 1996) was "Celebrating the past, Planning for the Future". This year's focuses on "Think equal, build smart, innovate for change" - UN figures show that only half of working age women are represented in the labour force globally.

International Women's Day has become a date to celebrate how far women have come in society, in politics and in economics, while the political roots of the day mean strikes and protests are organised to raise awareness of continued inequality.

2. When is it?

8 March. Clara's idea for an International Women's Day had no fixed date. It wasn't formalised until a war-time strike in 1917 when Russian women demanded "bread and peace" - and four days into the women's strike the Tsar was forced to abdicate and the provisional government granted women the right to vote. The date when the women's strike commenced on the Julian calendar, which was then in use in Russia, was Sunday 23 February. This day in the Gregorian calendar was 8 March - and that's when it's celebrated today.

3. Is there an International Men's Day?

There is indeed, on 19 November. But it has only been marked since the 1990s and isn't recognised by the UN. People celebrate it in more than 60 countries, including the UK. The objectives of the day are "to focus attention on men's and boys' health, improve gender relations, promote gender equality and highlight positive male role models". The theme for 2018 was "Positive Male Role Models".

4. How is Women's Day celebrated around the world?

International Women's Day is a national holiday in many countries, including Russia where the sales of flowers doubles during the three or four days around 8 March.



A woman holds a bunch of mimosa in Rome on International Women's day 2012

In China, many women are given a half-day off work

on 8 March, as advised by the State Council, although many employers don't always pass the half day on to their female employees.

In Italy, International Women's Day, or la Festa della Donna, is celebrated by the giving of mimosa blossom. The origin of this tradition is unclear but it is believed to have started in Rome after World War II.

In the US, the month of March is Women's History Month. A presidential proclamation issued every year honours the achievements of American women.

5. What is happening this year?

This year's International Women's Day campaign has chosen the theme #BalanceforBetter, which encourages people around the world to take action towards accelerating gender balance.

The past 18 months have seen the women's movement reach an unprecedented scale. In October 2017, millions began using the hashtag #MeToo on social media to speak out against experiences of harassment and sexual assault, and to denounce

their widespread prevalence.



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez became the youngest woman elected to Congress in November 2018.

In 2018, the #MeToo conversation grew to a global scale, with countries such as India, France, China, and South Korea joining in the conversation to demand change. In the US a record number of women were elected in the midterm elections. In Ireland, citizens voted to repeal the eighth amendment of the constitution, paving the way for legalised abortion.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-47446243>

Nanny Noetal

Nanny Background: Nanny Noetal is your friendly oh-so-smart students advice columnist. Questions? Give to your instructor email braccop@arc.losrios.edu

Hello, Nanny,

I took a number of ESL classes and I understood all of my ESL teachers when they spoke. Now, I'm taking some regular classes like English and psychology. Often, I don't understand the teachers because of their accents. They speak fast and swallow a lot of the words. What should I do? This stresses me out.



Kevin K

Hello, dear Kevin,

Going from an ESL learning environment to a regular English course can be quite difficult. A few things you should do to make this transition easier is to reach out to your professor during his/her office hours. This will give you the chance to express your concern, but as well it will help your professor provide you with just the right tools for you to succeed in their classroom. Also build a good relationship with your

classmates; in case you ever need help, you will have a support group you can reach out to.

Nanny Noetal

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!

UKRAINIAN BORSCHT

Ingredients:

- *3 medium beets peeled and grated
- *4 tbsp olive oil
- *4 cups reduced sodium chicken broth + 6 cups water
- *3 medium Yukon potatoes peeled sliced into bite-sized pieces
- *2 carrots peeled and thinly sliced

Instructions:

1. Peel, grate and/or slice all vegetables, keeping sliced potatoes in cold water until ready to use.

2. Heat a large soup pot (5 1/2 qts or larger) over medium/high heat and add 2 tbsp olive oil. Add grated beets and sauté 10 minutes, stirring occasionally until beets are softened.

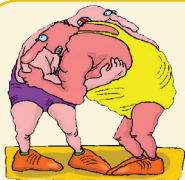


3. Add 4 cups broth and 6 cups water. Add sliced potatoes and sliced carrots. Then cook for 10-15 minutes or until easily pierced with a fork.

4. While potatoes are cooking, place a large skillet over medium/high heat and add 2 tbsp oil. Add chopped onion, celery and bell pepper. Saute, stirring occasionally until softened and lightly golden (7-8 minutes). Add 4 tbsp ketchup and stir fry 30 seconds. Then transfer to the soup pot to continue cooking with the potatoes.

5. When potatoes and carrots reach desired softness, add 1 can of beans with their juice, 2 bay leaves, 2-3 tbsp white vinegar, 1 tsp salt, 1/4 tsp black pepper, 1 pressed garlic clove, and 3 tbsp chopped dill. Simmer for an additional 2-3 minutes and add more salt and vinegar to taste.

Parrot Warbling



Grappling with Grammar

Past Modal Verbs

These past modal verbs are all used hypothetically, to talk about things that didn't really happen in the past.

Could have + past participle

1. Could have + past participle means that something was possible in the past, or you had the ability to do something in the past, but that you didn't do it.

Ex: I *could have stayed up* late, but I decided to go to bed early.

Should have + past participle

2. Should have + past participle can mean something that would have been a good idea, but that you didn't do it. It's like giving advice about the past when you say it to someone else, or regretting what you did or didn't do when you're talking about yourself.

Ex: I *should have gone* to bed early
(= I didn't go to bed early and now I'm tired).

Would have + past participle

3. would have + past participle to talk about something you wanted to do but didn't. This is very similar to the third conditional, but we don't need an 'if clause.'

Ex: I *would have gone* to the party, but I was really busy.

(= I wanted to go to the party, but I didn't because I was busy. If I hadn't been so busy, I would have gone to the party.)

Idiom--Attic

Experience is the mother of wisdom

Meaning: people learn from what happens.

Ex: You will never understand the love parents have for their children until you get your own children. **Experience is really the mother of wisdom.**



<https://7esl.com/idioms-about-mothers/>

Some Pronunciation Rules for English Words

1. How "Y" is pronounced in an English word.

"Y" is pronounced either as [ai] or [i:].

I. In a one-syllable word, "y" is pronounced as [ai].

Ex: my, by, fly, shy, try, cry.

II. In a two-syllable word, "y" is pronounced as [i:].

Ex: party, puppy, candy, bunny, funny, pony.

2. How "C" is pronounced in an English word.

"C" is pronounced either as [s] or [k].

I. When "C" is followed by "E" or "Y," it is pronounced [s].

Ex: cent, cell, cellar, center, ice, cycle, cyclone.

II. When "C" is followed by "o", "u", "a," it is pronounced as [k].

Ex: country, cold, cup, cut, curb, can.

3. How "G" is pronounced in an English word.

I. When "G" is followed by "E," "I," or "Y," it is pronounced as [j]

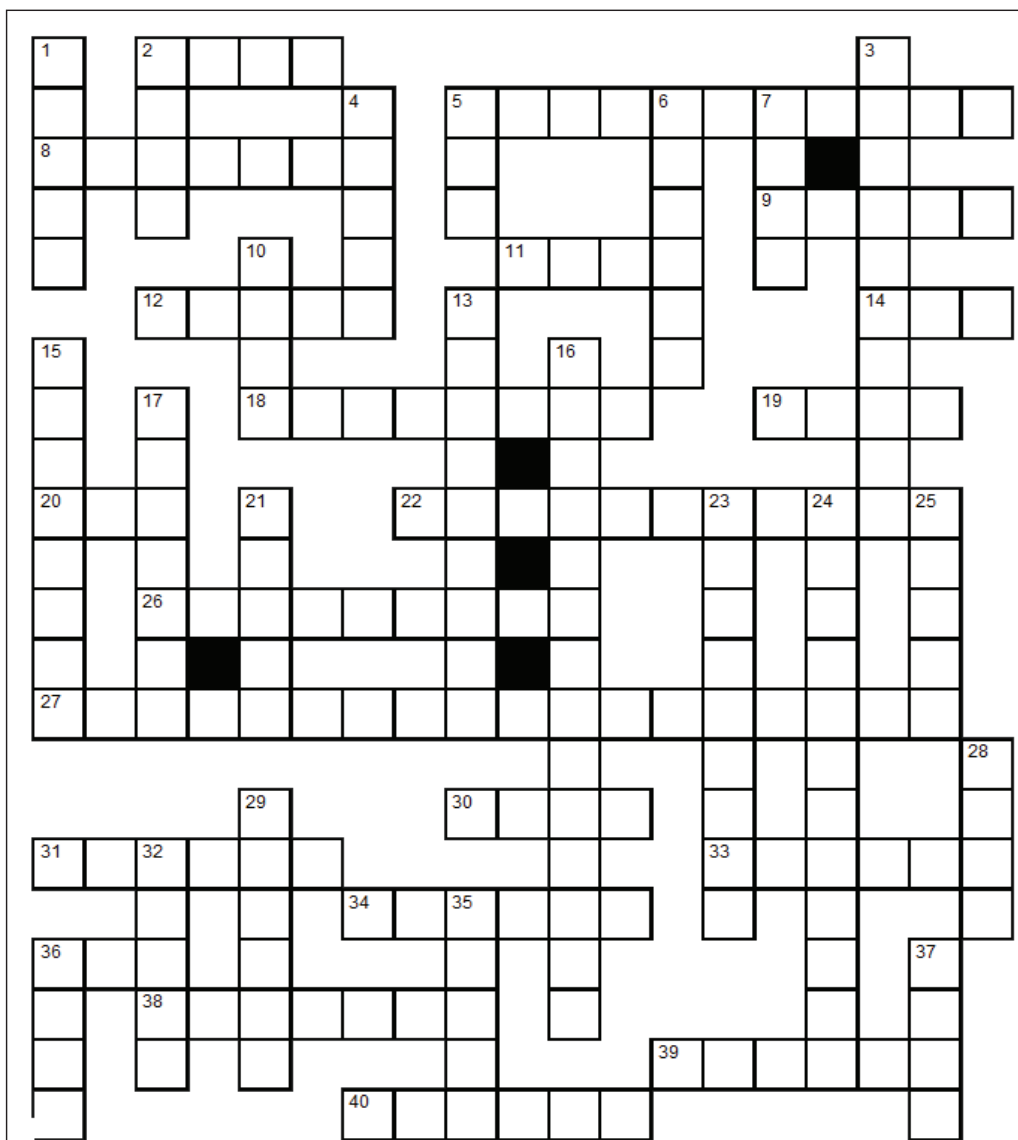
Ex: gem, giant, gym, george.

II. When "G" is followed by "U," or "A," it is pronounced as [g]

Ex: gum, gun, gap, gas, garden.



Some More Parrot Fun Stuff



Across

- 2** Something people use to clean up leaves. (4)
5 A person who delivers mail. (4,7)
8 Someone who teaches. (7)
9 A person who assists a doctor. (5)
11 A place where people live. (4)
12 A place where kids make sandcastles. (5)
14 A thing that people use to cut wood. (3)
18 A person who plays a musical instrument. (8)
19 A thing that people read. (4)
20 A thing that people wear on their heads. (3)
22 Someone who puts out fires. (11)
26 A time when kids wear costumes. (9)
27 A person who builds buildings. (12,6)
30 A thing that people use to catch fish. (4)
31 A place where people can see old things and learn history. (6)
33 An animal that makes webs. (6)
34 Something people use to write. (6)
36 An insect that makes honey. (3)
38 The time of day when people eat dinner. (7)
39 A person who sings. (6)
40 A person who draws pictures. (6)

Things That...

Down

- 1** A person who acts in movies. (5)
2 A place where people drive. (4)
3 A thing that people use to see tiny things like cells. (10)
4 Something that people use to paint. (5)
5 A thing that people use to find where they are. (3)
6 Something people use to take pictures. (6)
7 A thing that you wear on your finger. (4)
10 A place where people grow crops. (4)
13 A person who designs buildings. (9)
15 A person who fixes cars. (8)
16 A scientist who studies dinosaurs. (14)
17 A place in a home where people cook food. (7)
21 Someone who flies airplanes. (5)
23 A scientist who studies rocks. (9)
24 A holiday when people say thanks and eat turkey. (12)
25 A thing that people use to draw straight lines. (5)
28 An animal that can fly. (4)
29 A time when people go to the beach. (6)
32 An animal that gives us wool. (5)
35 The time of day when the stars come out. (5)
36 A place where people save money. (4)
37 A place where people picnic. (4)



More Parrot Fun Stuff

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

ACCELERATOR**ATOM****BEAM****CEBAF****CHARGE****COMPOUND****CURRENT****ELECTROMAGNET****ELECTRON****ELEMENT****ENERGY****FEL****FIELD****FORCE****INJECTOR****INSULATOR****INTERNET****IRON****JEFFERSON LAB****LABORATORY****MATTER****METER****MOLECULE****NUCLEUS****PHYSICIST****PROTON****QUADRANT****QUALITATIVE****QUARK****SCIENCE****SPEED****WEIGHT**

Don't Pinch

*When I got on the school bus,
I was in for a surprise.
My friends all stared and pointed.
There was mischief in their eyes.
A kid who sat in front of me
reached out and pinched my knee.
My friends all started laughing,
but the joke was lost on me.
And then I got my second pinch.
I felt it on my ear.
And then I felt a third and fourth.
You guessed it--on my rear.
I asked, "Why are you pinching me?
I think it's very mean!"
They said, "Today's St. Patrick's
Day
and you're not wearing green."*

By Bruce Lansky

Rigoberto's Riddles

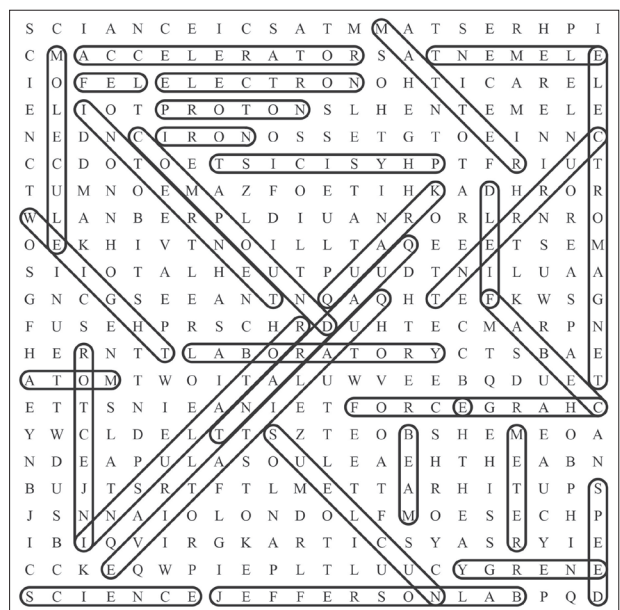
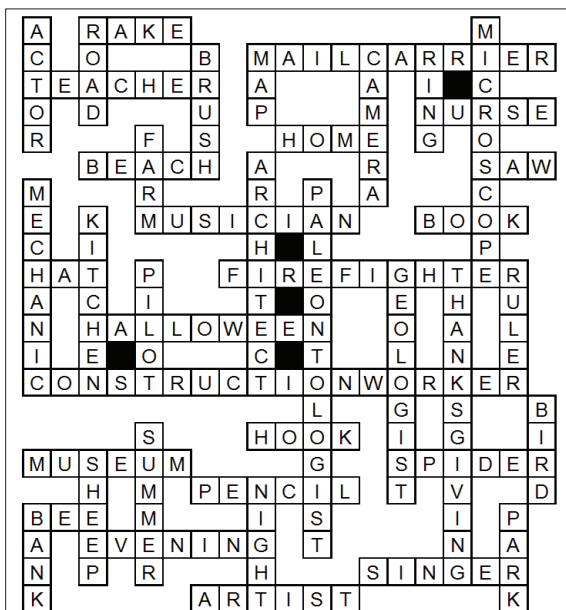
What do you call an animal you keep in your car?



A Carpet.

Silly Vasily's Chuckle Chamber

The homework assignment for my Spanish class was to write a paragraph. When I returned their papers, I asked one student if he had used Google Translate or any other online translator to write his paper. He categorically denied doing so. That led to my next question: "Then why is this in French?"



Interview with Prof. Valcu

Continued from page 1

start my education over like many of the students, going to community colleges and then Sac State.

The Parrot: Good, so, how did you come to Sacramento?

Professor Valcu: My husband had a job offer in this area in California, so we came to Sacramento and settled pretty much within two weeks. We've been here since 2000.

The Parrot: We understand that you grew up in Romania. How did you learn English so well?

Professor Valcu: I learned English, as I said, starting in 5th grade. It was one of the requirements for languages in our school. I continued all the way through. My parents really wanted me to learn English. I took a lot of private tutoring as well and I took every opportunity to translate for any visitors from overseas. So, I was really involved in learning the language. I also went to university for three years in Romania, studying to be an English teacher.

The Parrot: Oh, that's why you learned English so perfectly.

Professor Valcu: It's not perfect. I have a little bit of a stronger accent on Mondays. I always tell my students, that because I speak Romanian at home, sometimes I make more errors on Mondays.

The Parrot: It's okay. I understand that the ESL courses are undergoing big changes for the fall semester. Can you give us an overview?

Professor Valcu: Sure. As you know, as an ESL student, we have a very large program here, right? And our program traditionally has separate listening, reading, writing, and grammar courses. We have offered single skill, and we have seven levels of proficiency going from beginner to advanced, right? So, a very complex program, a lot of stu-

dents. We average almost 2000 students right now in the ESL program, very dedicated students. But recently we had a change in state legislation as it pertains to English, Math, and ESL as well. The original legislation was not directed to ESL, but because we are a language learning program, because we teach English, it affects us, it affects us greatly and so, under this legislation, there is a strong push for integrating skills, right? Or integrating reading and writing together, especially. Some colleagues also integrate grammar in that, so our department is going through some major transformations in terms of, again, integration of reading and writing. There are also some changes that would happen with as-

essment, and how assessment is done. I just don't know exactly what changes look like right now, so I can't really say. We are still going to have a placement test, and we think it's really important for students to know exactly where their level of English proficiency is, so they can learn at their best in the right classes. If the class is too high, they won't be able to understand. If it is too low, they'll waste their time. There are going to be some changes, but we hope

in a good way, in providing better information for students to make the right choices but also for the program to remain very strong, very robust. The big deal is that we are going to integrate all the reading and writing, starting at level 30 to low advanced, which is our 310 level. All our reading and writing courses will be together. Basically, we are taking two 4 unit courses and integrating them into 6 unit courses. Students save a couple of units at each level but also some of the skills overlap, like, for example, in 320 when you have to do some research, both in reading and in writing, we are now going to do it in one class, so it saves students some time, right? There are going to be 6-unit courses in reading and writing, and this is a very, very important course for all students to take, right? That will get



students to transfer-level English. The transfer level English is our ESL W340 level or the English 300 level, either one, depending on what students prefer to take and depending on their major. So, the goal is to get to that course, right? And all the prerequisites are in the reading-writing combination courses, so I strongly encourage all ESL students to keep progressing through the integrated sequence. As support for the integrated courses, we are going to continue to offer listening and grammar courses, listening and speaking and grammar courses, very important courses as well, and they are going to go really well. They are going to flow really well with

the integrated courses. The big change with those is that we are going to do 3-unit classes, 3 units for grammar and 3 units for listening at every level, because now that we have integrated 6 units, reading/writing, we want students to be able to take full-time loads of 12 units at the same time, so, that doesn't push them over the units limit. So, our goal as professors is to help students take integrated course like reading-writing, listening and speaking, and grammar courses at the same level, so they can really learn intensively in one semester. They can finish the

level and then move up. That's really the best for learning the language, right? If you take, for example, at the 50-level, ESL 55, and add grammar 50 and L 50, you're really learning a lot of intermediate level language. Then, as you move up again, you can really see progress in your language skills when you do that combination. That's why we're trying to save students some units. Now, if L's and G's are also 3 units and no longer 4, you are saving 2 units there. Basically, students are saving 4 units per level with these changes, right?

The Parrot: Are you excited?

Professor Valcu: I'm excited and scared at the same time because this is a big change, not only on the

student side but also a big change for the faculty teaching these courses. We have a lot of teachers, we have about fifty professors in this department and all of them have to adjust to these changes, especially teaching integrated reading/writing courses. This is new for us, so, we are going to have some training for the faculty in the spring semester to help them organize their courses and have some really good courses to offer students. I think it is a great advantage to our students, as I said. They can save units and time, because it is a little bit easier to get through the courses. It also gives students access to courses they wanted to take before such

as listening and speaking. Maybe students had to choose and said, "I don't want to take 16 units only, so I'm not going to take listening and speaking or I'm not going to take grammar." Now with this change, you can take all the skills with a 12-unit package, so, it is really helpful. I forgot to mention that in the fall of 2020, we added grammar courses at the 30 and 40 levels. These are brand new; we didn't have these courses before. So, now again, students with 12 units can have a grammar class, a listening and speaking class, and the integrated reading-writing courses. They work on all four skills at the same time.

The Parrot: Oh, good. But, what about textbooks and materials?

Professor Valcu: What do you mean? Like, if it's going to change?

The Parrot: Will there be just one book or two books?

Professor Valcu: For the integrated course, there will be just one book.

The Parrot: Just one book? Like, reading and writing together?

Professor Valcu: The integrated reading and writing will be one class, so there will be the one text or whatever materials are needed for that one class. The listening class as a 3-unit course will have



its own materials and grammar class will have its own materials. The integrated reading-writing text and materials are completely new because we haven't taught this way before. Then, in grammar and listening, we have some of our best faculty in the department working on really fine tuning what material to give students at those levels. We are trying to customize, so students don't have to pay a lot of money for chapters in books that they don't cover in the class. That's going to be something that we're working on in preparation for fall of 2020. For a high level like 315 or 320 there will be few things to buy because a lot of the material

will be handed out or available online. One concern is that many of the students are at different levels in reading and writing. In general, a lot of students are higher in reading than in writing. For example, you will have a student who just completed W40, so she qualifies to go to W50. However, she just completed R50, so she's ready for R310. What does she do? My suggestion will be to use the spring semester and this summer as a way to level higher because the department will go by the writing.

The department will take prerequisites based on the writing strength. Even if a student completed R310, he/she will go into ESL 315. Therefore, my suggestion will be to use the spring semester to definitely raise the writing skills, so that in the fall, students can go into a higher level integrated class based on the writing ability. Does that make sense? In addition, important to know is a 6-unit course means 6 hours in the classroom. A 4-unit course means 4 hours in the classroom. A 6-unit course means lots of time in the classroom. When the schedule comes out, most of our integrated courses will be two days a week because that's what most students prefer from just asking around and doing

surveys with the students, Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday. To offer an alternative for students who don't like being in the classroom for so long, we also offer an option on Monday - Wednesday mornings to do a Monday-Wednesday-Friday section, where they are in class an hour and 20 minutes on Monday and Wednesday and a longer time on Friday. What that allows them to do is to take a course, listening or grammar course, right after the integrated class, so that's another option that students at the 40-50 level have. We also offer a few courses that start at 7:30 a.m. It may not be good for students who have kids to

drop off at school, but we are offering a few sections to see if maybe students who don't have kids or don't have to be at a job, or who just want to finish their work early could take advantage of those early morning classes. The schedule is pretty straight forward. It's going to be different. The times of the classes are going to be different as I mentioned: 7:30, 9, 10:30 and 12:15. Different times are going to require adjustment. Now, courses such as 315 and 325, the integrated upper level courses, are hybrid. Therefore, 33% of them are online. They actually meet like our classes meet right



now, for only 4 hours a week (2 hours and 2 hours) because the rest is online. I strongly encourage students to practice working in Canvas from very early on because that's what's going to happen at the higher levels. Students need to be comfortable taking Canvas: submitting work, being familiar with typing, etc. So, our 315 and 325 are hybrid courses and there is an expectation that students at those levels can do some work online.

The Parrot: That's good. Are there plans for integrating other types of classes such as grammar with listening, for example?

Professor Valcu: We have talked about it in the de-

partment. There are other schools experimenting with that. We have not made a decision yet. If we are going to do that, there are just a lot of changes happening already with integrating reading and writing. Maybe in the future, but for right now we have 3 units of grammar, 3 units of listening separate. The other thing that is important for students to understand is that a 6-unit course is sizeable. It requires a lot of financial aid and dedication on the part of the students because to do poorly in a 6-unit course really impacts the student's GPA and financial aid ability. Therefore, we also don't

want to offer too many 6-unit courses. We are trying to offer the reading-writing courses and then trying to leave other courses in smaller units to make learning more accessible to the student from many different points of view.

The Parrot: Will grading be different?

Professor Valcu: We are still discussing the whole writing portion because we have requirements in terms of grading the writing and exams. The grading itself will be different, but the way, the percent of work that's done in reading

versus the percent in writing will be interesting to discuss. Figuring out what a grade is based on reading score and how much on writing score remains to be established. Grading will not be different, especially at the lower levels. Students will still be in class, there will still be exams, midterms and finals. So, at least at the beginning, I don't think are going to be major changes in the grading policies. If that happens, students will know early on.

The Parrot: What do you think the effect will be on teachers and on students?

Professor Valcu: I wish I had a crystal ball to be able to predict this, but I can't. All I know is that our department, our faculty members, are extremely dedicated to maintaining and providing our best

to the ESL students. Even with this new legislation, we really have your best interests at heart. We are very passionate about your success, so we made these changes because we know they're going to help, not hurt students. Integrating reading and writing is a good way to learn English. It is how I learned English in my home country, and I do believe it's a good change. I also think saving units at these levels will help students long-term, saving them financial aid for later on and helping them progress faster to complete transfer requirements or graduation requirements. I think these are good

moves. The effect on students will be okay, will be good; however, change is difficult, change is hard. It is not hard on us; it is hard on students. Therefore, I ask everyone, I ask students, to have an open mind and try, try new things: to take 12 units, to really learn the language fast and to concentrate. I know many students have jobs, kids, and sometimes multiple jobs. So it is hard. There are so many career programs we have here at ARC, so I hope that getting through ESL a little bit faster and in a more focused way will encourage students to get a

vocational certificate or an associate's degree here. Maybe our changes will push students to achieve a little bit more than they were initially planning to do because they will have extra financial aid, because they will have a little bit of an extra incentive. That's, at least, our goal for all students.

The Parrot: Do you have any advice to help students prepare for the fall semester changes?

Professor Valcu: Just to review, I think students should definitely plan on raising the writing level as much as they can this spring so that they are higher when they begin the fall semester. If they complete W40, definitely take W50. If they complete W50, take W310 or the integrated version of those courses, but definitely use the spring semes-



ter as a way to improve writing skills. The best way to learn English fast is to concentrate on learning it. We have a 16-week semester, but since you have to be here, focus on really learning English for a couple of years and then moving on. There is a great value in taking 12 units, taking all the strengths together, possibly even the lab, taking units in the ESL lab to help support the learning that happens in these new courses. It is really hard to learn the language when you only take one class and then go have a job and not remember anything. I know it is a lot to be a full-time student, but if possible, take the full suite of courses. It is the best way to learn. I'm speaking from my experience because I learned English as a second language and I know how much intensive learning helps.

The Parrot: Okay, those were all my questions. Thank you so much! I really enjoyed interviewing you and thank you!

Professor Valcu: Yes, thank you ,Fatima, it's been wonderful to be able to share this information. It's important for students to know what's coming and understand the reasons behind the changes, but also to know the ESL faculty are really here for our students and really all the changes we're implementing are made in your best interests and made with our hearts.

The Parrot: Thank you!



Parroteer: Fatima Carmona L310

Comprehension Questions:

1. Where is Professor Valcu originally from?
2. When did Sanda start to learn English?
3. When Prof. Valcu speaks English, on what day does she make the most errors and why?
4. What are three of the biggest changes to the ESL program for the autumn semester?
5. Did Professor Valcu say anything about the ESL Center?
6. What is the earliest start time for classes?
7. What effect will the new program have on financial aid?
8. Would you like to take two classes in one class, why or why not?



What will you do to protect yourself from the Corona Virus?



Adrian Toma
ESLR 320

"I think I will buy a mask and follow the instructions. I will clean my hands and take a shower every day. I will also try not to touch others and keep distance from people who are infected."

"I don't think I will get that virus because it's not serious in California. In any case, I'll travel to Dallas tomorrow. Then my family and I should wear facemasks."



Catherine Tyurinamour
ESLW 340

"If my family members and I get a cold or fever, we would go to the hospital immediately. We shouldn't get close to those people who have cold or fever symptoms."



Mohd Rasooli
ESLW 40

"I try to listen to the news to get information and I wash my hands every day. I shouldn't travel to the countries that have the virus. If it is getting serious in California, I should get a mask."



Sanaz Jafartayari
ESLW 310

"I think I should keep away from crowded places and I won't travel to the countries that are affected by the virus until it's over."



Dai Nguyen
ESLR 320

Pyramid Peak 9983 ft (3043 m)

In the old days of The Parrot, there was Trail Mick. Mick has now given way to Alpine Alex.

Hello, ARC family! The mountains have definitely been calling. Today I decided to answer the call from Pyramid Peak, a peak on the way to Tahoe.



The trail is steep dirt most of the way and transitions into a rocky scramble to the summit. The hike is not extremely difficult, but it's steep and sketchy, especially on the way down. You're hiking up a mountain, so you shouldn't be surprised that it's going to be uphill and you're going to be gaining quite a bit of elevation in a relatively short amount of time.

The first and last miles up are the steepest, with parts of the granite bouldering being scaled on all fours just to ensure an injury-free ascent to the summit. The views are spectacular from the top and really worth the pain of the way up because you definitely feel a sense of accomplishment for



scaling the highest peak in Desolation Wilderness. It took me just over 3 hours to get up and 2 hours to get back down. There are lots of tracks already near the top, but when close to the summit, be careful because most of them go to the right while the trail is on the left. The steep downhill for the entire second half of the hike was more physically de-



manding than the ascent. Better not skip out on leg day at the gym if you want to power up and down this peak. The trail head off of Hwy 50 was a challenge to find at the start, but if you use some hiking



apps it is not going to be a problem for you. Snowshoes and trekking poles are strongly recommended if you climb from November to April. Amazing hike and worth all the effort put in! Hope you will enjoy it as I did! See you on the trail. Have fun and be safe.

Out of the Cage

North Star

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Starts at 2:00pm

A young girl faces life-changing choices in the midst of the Civil Rights era.

Set in North Carolina in the 1960s, North Star is the story of Relia, an African-American girl, searching for her place to shine in both society and her personal life. The joyous innocence of Relia's summer is transformed by the rising tensions of the growing civil rights movement.



Location: Performances are in ARC's Main The-

Movies for Mental Health

Thursday, March 19, 2020

12:00 to 2:00 pm

A young girl faces life-changing choices in the midst of the Civil Rights era.

Set in North Carolina in the 1960s, North Star is the story of Relia, an African-American girl, searching for her place to shine in both society and her personal life. The joyous innocence of Relia's summer is transformed by the rising tensions of the growing civil rights movement.

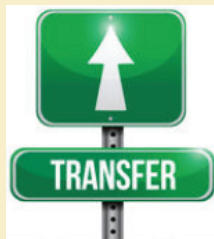
Location: Student Center Community Rooms 1 and 2

Sacramento State Representative

Wed, March 11, 2020

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Meet with a Sac State rep to make your transfer plans!



Location: Transfer Center ARC



SQUAWK!!

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

Student Editors: **Alex Grynishyn, Alaa Shatat, Tuyet Le, Dai Nguyen, Aesha Abduljabar**

Please let us know what we can do to improve "The Parrot." We appreciate any and all feedback you are willing to give us. Contact us by e-mail, call, or drop by. **Professor Travis:** Davies 370, (916) 484-4524, or Travism@arc.losrios.edu; **Professor Bracco:** Davies 337, (916) 484-8988, or Braccop@arc.losrios.edu. To see The Parrot in color go to <https://www.arc.losrios.edu/academics/the-parrot-newsletter>.