

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



The Parrot



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Inside This Issue

Mission Possible: Nelofar Noori on Determination



Salam. Thank you for giving The Parrot time to have an interview with you. Please introduce yourself and tell us your story. How did you start your educational journey at American River College?

Nelofar Noori: First of all, thank you very much for giving me the chance to have an interview with *The Parrot*. I am Nelofar Noori. I am 21 years old. I am a 3rd semester student at American River
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John Masefield's "The West Wind":

A Treasure Chest of Rhythm & Rhyme

by **ESL Professor David Evans**

One major poet not widely studied nowadays is John Masefield (1878–1967), who was Poet Laureate of England from 1930 to 1967. Masefield worked for many years aboard a ship before beginning to write for a living, and many of his poems concern adventures at sea. Although "The
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Would you like to contribute to The Parrot?

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The Beauty Hidden in Us

There is something so powerful
when we witness Godness,
when we recognize the face of
humankind

Love can come to you
Like a gentle breeze, yet so powerful
It has magic with a single-word
It can create a ripple effect with only
your intentions

Love and beauty never walk apart
To see beauty we need love
like a bird that never
Renounces his chant
Beauty and love become one

The beauty of an angry man
it is that he needs so much love
So let us end the day with a good
thought
How much love did I spray today?
Did I forgive myself or others?

When we find beauty even in the
darkest day

We meet hope
Even in chaos and hate
We must look for beauty
Because there's so much beauty we are missing
When we don't see beauty in the world.

When we focus on beauty
the doors of miracles take shape
and we start to see beauty all around us

Our words have the power
To transform, to heal, to inspire
So let's use this superpower

That lives in us, we can witness
Its greatness
if we just unleash the wisdom
That lives in our hearts

Let beauty find you
Let love surround you
Let kindness guide you
Let compassion walk you
let your heart inspire you
or inspire others with the very essence that lives
in you

By Emma La Torre Gonzalez - ESL L41

To Be Healthy

There are a lot of ways to be healthy. For example, first, you should eat well. Eat many different kinds of food during the day, like meat, fruit, and vegetables. Second, you should exercise every day. You can use indoor bikes. You can walk in a park. Then, get enough time to sleep at night. You should sleep at least 8 hours. Sleeping well gives you more energy. There are also some things you shouldn't do to stay healthy. First, don't use your phone too much because it hurts your eyes. Second, you shouldn't smoke cigarettes or hookah because it hurts your lungs and your health. Finally, you shouldn't pick up big and heavy things because it hurts your spine. Overall, you should stay safe and active to be healthy.

Ali Mahari - ESL37
Opinion Paragraph

My Goal



My most important goal is to be an accountant. I need to take many math classes, business classes, and general education to achieve this goal. I need four or more years to achieve this goal because these classes are not easy. This goal is important to me because I love math and I am very good at it. I believe this goal is not easy for anybody because some people don't like math. I believe I can achieve this goal one day because I am really interested in math. In the past, my dad told me if you love to do something, you will be great at it.

Ali Mahari - ESL37
Opinion Paragraph

My Goal in the Future

I have a goal. I need to learn English. My English isn't very good, and I need a lot of time to learn this language. I think it will take 5 or 6 years to learn English. My goal is very important for me because I live in the USA and all people speak English. When I go to a doctor, I need to speak English. When I call the supermarket, I need to speak English, also. My goal isn't easy to achieve. I need a lot of time. I need to learn new verbs and grammar at home. I don't have much time because I have a family. I hope to achieve my goal in the future. I want to learn more English.

Diana Shebchenko- ESL 37
Opinion Paragraph

People and Books That Mold Us

If we talk about a person's literacy, we likely turn to the past to look at the path of their formation as a literate person. As for me, I ask a similar question - what shaped me as a person? What from my past influenced me so that I could confidently say that I am a literate person? I was born and raised in a small town, not far from the capital of Russia, Moscow city. Our town was (and remains now) a scientific town of physicists and researchers. As you can probably guess, it is almost impossible to live in such a town and be an illiterate person. But if this could happen, it would be a shame compared to the many highly educated people living next to you. Therefore, education in our town has been the object of increased attention from the town government and the community. At the time of my school age, since the town was small, there were only three schools. My school was located across the street from my house. As literate individuals, we are molded by the people who we closely communicate with and the books we read.

I suppose no one will argue with me that the first person to instill in a child the basic concepts of literacy is his or her mother. This was the case in my early childhood. My mom was a literate and intelligent person despite her simple background. She worked as a secretary assistant to the head of one of the research departments of a scientific institute. From my youngest age she taught me to read. My native language is Russian; nevertheless, at the age of five I could read not only Russian

words on stores, posters, in books, but also foreign words written in Latin letters, although I did not understand their meaning. My mother used to say: "Learn English letters, it may be useful in the future." Only now do I realize how prescient she was. The fact that she put in me an interest in foreign words, an interest in reading fairy tales of different nations, and reading from an early age, served as the basis on which my further formation as a literate and intelligent person was built. When I was old enough to go to first grade, my mother gave the opportunity to continue my education to my first teacher Mrs. Margarita Pimenova. She was a moderately strict but fair teacher. Once, when I was in second grade, I did not behave very well in the class. Then the teacher took me to a neighboring class as a punishment. I didn't know the other class's teacher or the students there. It was a shock to me. I was so ashamed of being punished in this



way that I decided to show that I was not a bad student. I became involved in that class work and even earned a good grade. I believe that this "punishment" served me well and brought out some of the best in me. Otherwise, I would not remember this incident after all

these years. In class, we read a lot, wrote a lot, and developed beautiful handwriting. I was the student in the class who read the fastest in terms of words per minute. Then I loved reading books even more.

Every summer, during school vacations, I used to visit my grandmother in the village. It was a small village, but it had its own good library. I liked to go there and look for some interesting books to read in my free time, which any student has plenty of in the summer. One beautiful summer I was lucky enough to read the book *The Wizard of Emerald City* by A. Volkov, written by him based on *The*

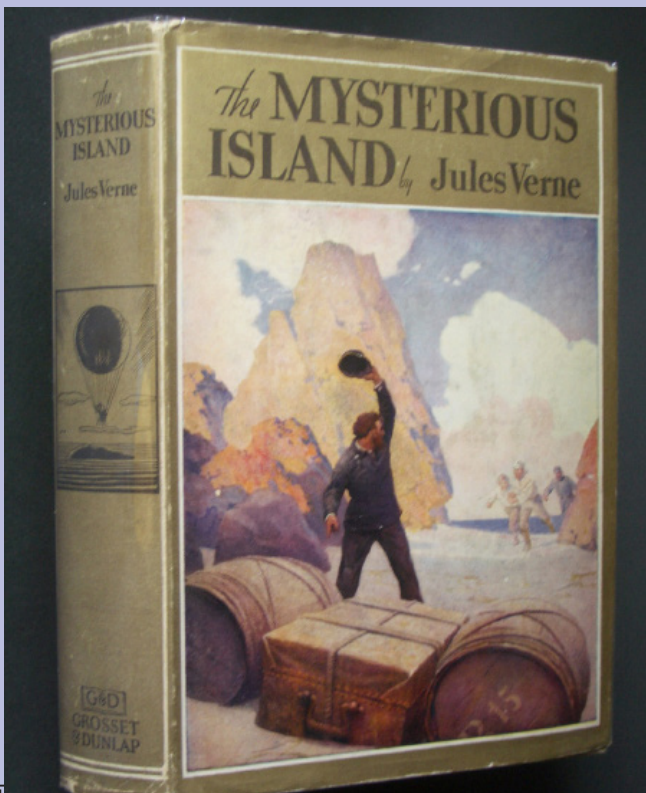
Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum. A little later I learned that the author who adapted this book for Russian-speaking readers wrote five more books, turning this fairy tale story into a series of books. Reading this series inspired me to read more interesting books. One day, digging through the bookcase at my grandmother's house, I found an old, somewhat shabby book. "What could possibly be interesting about this old junk stuff?", I thought. But a little later I realized that I had made a mistake in judging this book's unsightly appearance. It was an old, 1949 edition of *The Mysterious Island of Captain Nemo* by Jules Verne. I started reading and read for a long time without stopping. Do you think that was enough for me? No. Subsequently, for several years, I reread this book more than ten times. It took me mentally to a distant island, where I experienced together with the characters all the challenges and trials. This antique book, I could say, taught me the good qualities that the characters had.

Being at my current age, I still remember the knowledge of the lessons my mother and my first teacher taught me. It helped me so much when I

was enrolled in the University of Nuclear Power Engineering. My knowledge and my skills, my journey of developing my literacy molded me into what I turned out to be at that point. It became the apotheosis or quintessence of what I had previously acquired. After graduating from this institution, I have not lost my love for reading, writing, and knowledge. I strive to shape myself further. Going to college here in America helps me to qualify for a higher level of earning, to have a new level of job position. It raises me to another level in the eyes of other people and even in my own eyes.

The people who surrounded me from childhood and instilled in me reading and writing skills, and the books I loved to read, shaped me as a person. Through them, I felt a love for my mother tongue. I knew that literacy is not just the technical ability to read and write, but also the ability to think, to reflect, and to understand complex things in knowing the world. First my mother, and then my first teacher, through literacy taught me how to properly communicate with the world, with society, with people. This is very precious in my eyes. Now, having this invaluable store of knowledge, I can not only use it in my daily life, but also share it with others and teach it to my children and grandchildren. Literacy is a priceless gift that we can pass on from generation to generation.

**Dmitrii Mishin-- ESL 325
Narrative Essay**



Birthday Party How To

By Aleksandra Makareikina - ESL 47

Do you like to celebrate birthday parties for your child? Every parent wants to make an unforgettable birthday party for their child. The birthday party for kids is always an exciting event. If you want to have an awesome birthday party for your children, you need to follow my process.

When we have a birthday party for my son, I like to prepare for it by following several steps. First, to do everything in time I need to make lists of things to buy for the party such as the list of food, the list of decorations, and the list of guests. My son and I make the list of guests together. Next, my husband and I go shopping for various items such as a present, decorations for the party, food, and a cake. It takes a very long time to buy the necessary things for the party, so I usually order these things online. At night, we start decorating our house for the birthday party. For example, we inflate a lot of colorful balloons, hang pictures of the birthday boy on the walls, and hang various sweets from the ceiling. The main rule this night is not to wake up the birthday boy. For instance, one time we inflated a lot of balloons, but they turned out to be of poor quality and one by one began to burst. We thought our birthday boy would wake up, but he was fast asleep. Lastly, we hide the present and leave hints on how to find it. Indeed, it will be a wonderful surprise for your child's birthday if you follow this process.

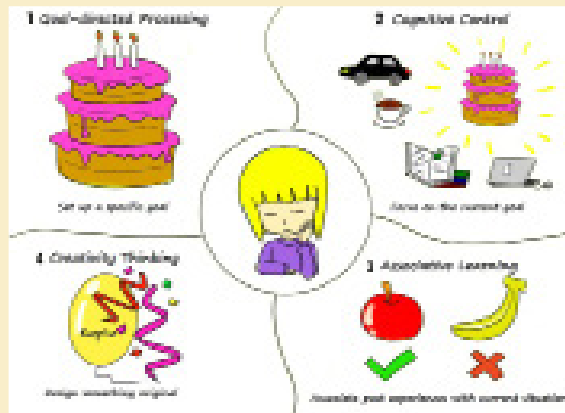
In my family, when we have a birthday party for my son, we have fun in many ways. First, my husband and I woke up early to wake up the birthday boy. Our son woke up very quickly this morning because he was thrilled. He searches different places such as in closets, under sofa, and under the table. During this process, we have fun. For instance, we

make riddles for him, play the game "Guess the animals", and catch each other with our eyes closed. In the evening, we meet guests. When we meet guests, we always hug them. It gets noisy in our house. The children scatter in different directions like little bugs. For example, several children run to jump on the trampoline, some roll down the stairs, and others pop balloons. Everyone has a good time. After that, all the children eat fun food such as pizza, nuggets, French fries, and berries. This is not a very healthy food, but I think you can eat some of this on your birthday. After a meal, my husband brings out a cake with the candles burning. At this time, all the guests sing the song, "Happy Birthday". Finally, our son makes a wish and blows out the candles. Indeed, all these actions allow us to have a lot of fun.

After the birthday party for my son is finished, there is a lot of work, but there is also fun. First, the whole family accompanies the guests and thanks them for visiting us. Next, it is time for us all to catch our breath. We sit on the couch and remember amusing moments such as making wishes, blowing out candles, and jumping on the trampoline.

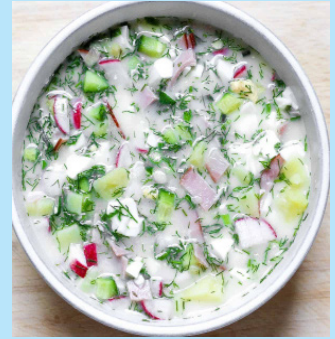
It doesn't take a lot of time. Then, the birthday boy opens his presents. He is very excited at this moment. My husband sometimes helps build toys such as Lego, robots, and the car. After that, I start to clean our house. For instance, I wash the dishes, lay out toys, and collect the garbage. It isn't so much fun, but I need to do it. Lastly, we go to bed after an active and fun day. In summary, it was a difficult but a wonderful day, and everyone had a good time.

In conclusion, if you follow my instructions, you and your child will have a great time at the birthday party. Your child will never forget such a party.



Favorite Foods in Ukraine...*NOT!* By ESL 47 Students - Opinion Paragraphs

I come from Ukraine, and one of my least favorite foods is "Okroshka." I tried this dish for the first time in a cafe and I didn't like it. "Okroshka" consists of various ingredients: sausage, cucumber, radish, boiled egg, and boiled potatoes, all cut into cubes. It's then mixed with plenty of dill and green onions and dressed with kefir. This dish has a liquid consistency, a sour milk smell, and a white color. Usually "okroshka" is prepared in the summer and served cold for lunch. Many people in my country enjoy this dish. Some cooks replace kefir with sour cream mixed with sparkling water or pour kvass over bread. However, I personally do not enjoy it with any variation. To me, this dish evokes memories of food that has already been eaten. Indeed, I think "okroshka" is the worst food in Ukraine, and I do not miss it here in the United States.



Svitlana Pechena

I come from Ukraine, and one of my least favorite foods is "krovyanka." It is a blood sausage. It is prepared from the blood and entrails of a pig. Usually, it is baked in the oven or fried. I don't eat this sausage because I am a Christian. My religion forbids eating anything with blood. But even if this rule didn't exist, I still wouldn't eat it because I have a terrible memory associated with it. One day when I was a child, I woke up from a terrible squeal. My brother convinced me that we should go and see what was happening. We came to our neighbors' house and I saw a pig being killed. Blood flowed from the hole in his heart into the bucket. I got scared and ran home. Later, I found out that sausage is made from this blood. Indeed, I think that "krovyanka" is the worst food in Ukraine, and I will never eat it.

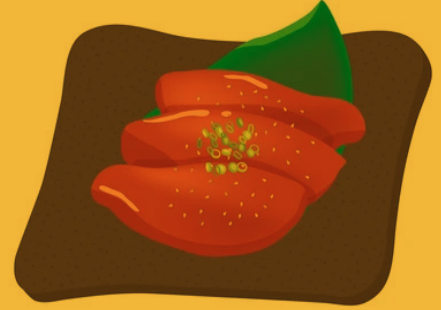


Hanna Konstantynova

I come from Ukraine, and one of my least favorite dishes is beef eggs. In our country, it is considered a delicacy and is usually served in restaurants. The main ingredient is beef eggs, which are fried and served with cream, onions and hot sauce. It seems to taste good, and there is no unpleasant smell. It looks like an ordinary dish. What bothers me is usually the association, and therefore it disgusts me. Although this dish is popular, and it is considered more for men, as if it is the home of male strength. One time, the girls and I celebrated a friend's birthday, and she decided to make a surprise. When we had already eaten everything, she told us what exactly it was. It was the only one time in my life. Indeed, the worst food in Ukraine is beef eggs, and I never want to eat it again.

Yaroslava Parpauts

I like many foods from my country, Ukraine, but I think the liver dishes are exceptionally bad, so I really dislike it. When I was child, my mother prepared several dishes from liver, such as stewed liver in cream and liver cake. Any liver is used for this. For example, chicken, turkey, or pork. I've hated this food since I was a child. My mother always first fried the liver in oil. Later, she put chopped onions, carrots, and this fried liver in a pan and poured cream over it. Also, she added spices to her taste. For liver cake, she prepared first ground liver, fried pancakes from it and smeared it with garlic mayonnaise. In my family, each person liked this food, but I'm an exception. I don't like the smell and aftertaste. Indeed, food from liver is really disgusting food, and I hate it.



Tetiana Mentus

Books: Find Yours!

Is it possible that only one book out of thousands can addict one to reading? After years of persistent but unsuccessful attempts to tether my life to books, in just one moment, reading over 500 pages transformed my perspective. Everyone believes that books are mirrors of our lives, our minds, and feelings, and a way to expand the borders of our wisdom. People think that books reflect who we are, and reading is an important necessity. Books always had meaning for me too. I always agreed with my friends and relatives that books are written art. As I grew up, I began to develop a great respect for literature and for those who love to read. However, I couldn't talk about my real love and dedication to books because it didn't exist. Despite my admiration for books in general, I didn't love to read, as it was boring for me. I didn't have the patience to spend hours, or even days, reading. This was my perspective once. It was complex and contradictory. It was once upon a time. This is my story of how one book changed my attitude toward reading.

When I was a child, my relationship with books was much stronger. I used to visit the library in my town, in Ukraine, every week or two, eager to discover a magnificent piece of literature. I took these books home, read them continuously, enjoying touching those old pages, turning page after page, and breathing in the smell of the old books

enriched within the library. Then I returned to the library to grab another book, and this routine continued for two or three years. Mostly, I read children's literature, but it was filled with deep philosophy and morals. I remember an interesting part of my life, when I liked a series of fantasy books, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, by Clive Staples Lewis. They were not in the library, so I had to borrow these books from a child of my parents' friends. It was my reading addiction, and I was ready to traverse winter trails and climb the staircase to the fourth floor of the building to visit this child and grab every part of this series in turn. Those were unforgettable memories. And they remained only as memories because my love for reading suddenly dissipated.

In middle school, I started to learn Ukrainian and world literature. Reading began to be boring and uninteresting for me. I had to overcome all these obstacles at home to read novels to get a good grade at school. I still remember how difficult it was for me; I read those books almost with tears in my eyes. It felt like they tortured me, while they were fascinating for my other classmates. This hopeless distaste for books lasted for about thirteen years. For people who sincerely love books, it may sound terrifying. How is it even possible not to love reading? Certainly, during all these years, I tried to recover my love for books. All my friends loved books. They could read five novels in a month, narrating their excitement to me later. I understood

that reading must be an integral part of my life, considering that I wanted to be a journalist. There is a dissonance here. I do love writing. I spent a lot of time on it and did my best to sharpen every word, every sentence in Ukrainian, to make my texts impeccable, to create my own style, to build my "I" in my writings. It is the occupation that makes me happy and inspired.

So, the main question appears at this moment. Why don't I like reading as much as I like writing? It is amazingly strange because journalism and books, writing and reading are fundamental segments that must exist with each other. How am I supposed to write without reading other authors? I gathered all my strength in one piece and made a lot of efforts to read at least one book. Frankly, several of my attempts were successful. I really loved some books, especially the genres of fantasy and documentary, the books of modern literature. However, reading only one or two books of my own selection, rather than those assigned for study, was not enough. For more than ten years, I couldn't revive my love for reading. I felt frustrated and came to the conclusion that maybe I was not created for books and books were not created for me. "You just haven't found your book yet," once my friend said to me.

Two months ago, I accidentally visited Barnes and Noble, a bookstore which I didn't even know existed. Naturally, I didn't expect to find it because I don't love to read. Walking among the aisles, my gaze locked on it. Gold cover, small dragons depicted on it. I read a title, *Fourth Wing* by Rebecca Yarros. Obviously, it is fantasy, so I can try, because I love this genre. While I was buying it, I thought it might take me at least six months to read this book due to its 520 pages, very small print, and the fact that it is written in English. I don't like reading in Ukrainian,

and this is English. How am I supposed to read this book? It is impossible. I will take a risk. This thought overwhelmed my brain, and this was book already in my possession. After reading thirty pages, I understood that this book is absolutely mine! The most interesting plot I had ever known, the author's exquisite style of writing, perfect characters that complement each other, dragons, the perfection of the general idea—all these things stole my heart. I was impressed and shocked by the easiness with which



I read this book. Those barriers with English disappeared, and I began to feel every word, even though I didn't know the meaning of each of them. It only took me one week to read this book, and it was my personal record. When I finished, I immediately rushed to the bookstore to get a second part of this masterpiece, titled, *Iron Flame*. In general, I am positively influenced by how Rebecca Yarros writes. Her style and her own obsession with this story amaze me and evoke emotions. I don't know

how I am supposed to overcome curiosity while waiting for the third part of this series. As I eagerly await, I continue to explore other American authors, because my soul is once again filled with love for books.

My difficult relationships with books took almost my whole life. It started with a little girl, who had a sincere child's delight in reading. Then I grew up and lost connection with books, but respect for them remained. In conclusion, it took only one book to change my perspective and inspire me to continue reading. I have found my book already!

Sofia Kovalko - ESL 315

Narrative Essay



Parrot Pastimes - My Hobbies

What activities make you happy in your free time? Because of our busy lives, it's very hard to spend time with our hobbies. Like every other person, I have some activities that I like to do in my free time. For instance, I like watching movies, going to the gym, and playing soccer. There are several reasons why I like to watch movies, go to the gym, and play soccer in my free time.

First of all, watching movies is one of my hobbies. I always like to watch English movies. Movies make me better in English, so that's why I like it. You can learn a lot of new vocabulary by watching movies. Watching movies has a lot of benefits. Some movies help us to learn new things such as *Ant Man* and *End Game* introduced the new version of quantum theory. My favorite movie is *Black Panther*. These movies depend on historical fiction to help us learn about history. To sum up, watching movies always makes me happy and helps me to learn about different cultures.

Secondly, playing soccer is my favorite hobby. I like to play soccer because it gives me pleasure. Playing soccer helps me to stay fit and healthy. I was 10 years old when I started playing soccer. In my free time, I learned some freestyle soccer tricks. I used to play soccer on my high school team. Every day in the morning, I played soccer in my backyard. I want to join any soccer club in Sacramento. In brief, soccer is my all time favorite game.

Lastly, going to the gym is one of my best activities. Doing gym helps me to keep strong, so I love it. The time I spend at the gym is my best time of the day. I go to the gym 5 times a week. I usually go to the gym at night when I have nothing to do. During exercise, I spend a lot of time with myself. There are some other benefits of doing gym such as gaining my muscles, making friends, and living healthy. Doing gym always makes me tired, so I sleep very well. Lastly, I can't imagine a strong life without doing gym.

I am grateful to my hobbies for making my free time more fun. I hope my hobbies will give some advantages in my future life. In conclusion, I can't expect a better life without these hobbies.

Zaki Rehman - ESL 47
Opinion Essay



What do you miss about your home country?

There are many things and people I left behind when I came to America from my home country of Jordan. I miss a lot of things that are in Jordan. One thing is my family and friends. Another is the various places I would go. Another thing I miss is my home in Jordan. The last thing I miss is the food and culture. These are all things I hold very dear to me. All of these things have a special place in my heart.

First, for me, family and friends are very important to me. My family and friends are the most important things to me. They have made a huge impact on me and my life. One of the people I miss the most from Jordan is my mom. My mom has always been my rock. She is the most understanding and caring person I know. Another reason I miss Jordan is because of my friends. One of the friends I miss the most is Diaa. Diaa is my closest and most loyal friend.

Next, when I left Jordan, the biggest difference was the places here compared to there. In Jordan there are farms everywhere. There are many fruit trees all around. One of the places I miss the most is the forest. When I was young, my friends and I would go play in the forest for hours on end. In the forest, we would find a big field and play soccer. Growing up, the forest in Jordan was always my happy place. From climbing the trees with my friends to looking up at the sky through the trees there are many things to miss.



Another thing I miss is my home. My home in Jordan is like a big castle. There is a lot of land. This land is filled with fruit trees and bushes. Another thing this land has is a big flower garden. Other than the outside, the inside is also big and beautiful. My room is huge. Back home I have a whole floor to myself. My floor has a big bedroom, a lounge room, a kitchen, dining room, and bathroom. My home in Jordan is very beautiful and I miss it a lot.

Lastly, a thing I miss from Jordan would have to be the food and culture. The foods in Jordan are so different from here in America. It is hard to find places here in America that have real Jordan foods. Some of the foods I miss the most are *shawarma*, *mansaf*, and *zarb*. I have tried many Arabic restaurants here in America and none have come close to tasting like home. Another thing is my culture. My culture is very different than in America. In my culture we have a schedule. We pray and eat at certain times of the day. Here in America it is different. I am not on a schedule like I am in my home country of Jordan. Indeed, I miss the food and culture from Jordan.

There are many things to miss from Jordan for me. From the people and places to the food and culture. I miss many things from Jordan, but I am also very happy and grateful to be in America and have the opportunities I have.

Mohammad Alhayek



Sacramento Unity Eid

The word Eid is an Arabic word which literally means “festival.” There are two Eids per year in the Islamic calendar that Muslims around the globe celebrate. Eid al-Fitr, which is a 3-day long festival, is also called “smaller Eid” and Eid al-Adha which is a four-day celebration and is known as “greater Eid.”

Eid al-Fitr is the first of two canonical festivals of Islam. It marks the end of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting, the month that honors the revealing of the Quran to Prophet Mohammad. It is celebrated during the first three days of Shawwal, the 10th month of the Islamic calendar. (However, the Muslim use of a lunar calendar means that it may fall in any season of the year). Eid al-Fitr is a time of official receptions and private visits. Muslims give donations to those in need in the community. This giving is called *fitrana*. Friends and families greet one another after the prayer is done and say *Eid Mubarak* “Happy Eid.” Adults give gifts, usually giving money as “Eidy” or “Eidana” to the children. All the Muslims wear their new clothes, and they visit the graves of relatives to pay respect and offer prayers. In addition to all these traditions, Muslims are encouraged to forgive and seek forgiveness on these holy days. In many countries with large Muslim populations, Eid occasions are national holidays. Schools, offices, and businesses are closed so families, friends and neighbors can enjoy the celebrations together. However, in the U.S. it is not a national holiday yet and Muslims may request to have a day off from school or work to be with their family and celebrate Eid.

This year, on Wednesday, April 10, in an unprecedented gathering, over 40,000 individuals participated in the “Sacramento Unity Eid,” marking it as the largest Muslim gathering in California’s history. The event took place at Cal Expo. The event was started with prayer services and followed by a festival featuring games, rides, games, bounce houses, food trucks, and a bazaar to celebrate the conclusion of the sacred month of Ramadan. The event was open to all and was a day of joy, reflection, and community spirit.

The Council on American-Islamic Relations of Sacramento Valley/Central California, commonly known as CAIR, organized the massive celebration along with 15 local mosques, community centers, and organizations. Organizers said a Unity Eid has not happened in Sacramento since 1993. They originally thought a crowd of 15,000 would attend. However, after the event, they estimated 40,000 to 50,000 Muslims attended the event.

Attendees said they hope the crowd of thousands praying, playing, and eating together sends a message of unity to leaders not only in Sacramento but also across the nation.

Because the event was such a success, organizers say they hope to host another Unity Eid next year.

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Continued from page 1

College. It is about a year and two months since I moved to the United States from Afghanistan. Before coming to the United States, I was a second-year student at the medical faculty of Kabul University. Unfortunately, after the collapse of the democratic government in Afghanistan, I was banned from continuing my education in Afghanistan and fortunately, by moving to the United States I have this opportunity to continue my education once again.

Regarding your question, as you know, moving to a new country and being away from family, friends and starting your educational journey again from scratch is difficult but not impossible. If we are determined and we put efforts towards our goals, we can find the right path and achieve our goals. When I came to the United States, I was able to enroll at ARC after two months and start my education. I had no information and no clue how to enroll at ARC. However, my husband, who lived here in the U.S long enough, supported me and helped me navigate the enrollment process. In addition to being a current student, I am also working at the ARC ESL LAB.

Since the enrollment procedure is totally different here compared to Afghanistan colleges, the next question is, did you face any difficulties when enrolling at ARC, and how did you overcome the challenges you faced?

Nelofar Noori: As you mentioned, the enrollment system here is totally different compared to the enrollment procedure in Afghanistan. However, I should mention that it is not that difficult. If new stu-



dents look for the available resources, online and in person, or find a person to help, it is a very easy process. It may look too difficult for the new students, especially students coming from another country, but indeed it is an easy process. Before I started my enrollment process, I was thinking that I wouldn't be able to start my education in less than 2 years and thought the enrollment process may take too long. But, fortunately my husband was familiar with the process and helped me through it. Since I am working at ARC now, I can say to all the new students that the enrollment process is easy and you just need to

find the right resources, and there is plenty of help to help you navigate through the enrollment procedure.

If a new immigrant student has no family or friends like you had to get help and wants to start their educational journey at ARC, what would be the specific resources you would recommend?

Nelofar Noori: I would say it is super easy. Students who don't know anyone can go to the relevant college, for instance ARC, then look for the Admission and Records department and get help to start enrolling. In addition,

immigrant students can also go to the ARC ESL LAB and seek assistance with any questions they may have. There are student helpers, faculty, and staff who speak multiple languages (English, Dari/Farsi, Pash-to, Hindi, Urdu, Spanish, Arabic, Russian, Ukraine) that can help students in their own native language and they can even help the new student with their application and any other enrollment process that they may need.

What is your major and how did you choose it?

Nelofar Noori: As I mentioned earlier, I was a second-year student at the medical faculty in Ka-

bul University. After moving here, I have decided to continue the same path. I want to be a dentist. Hence, I am taking all the required courses to get my associate's degree from ARC and then transfer to a university to do my bachelor's degree in a medical field and become a dentist in the future.

There are two things that worry most of new students, especially new immigrant students. First, if I start my education in the U.S., it will cost too much. Second, I am not fluent in English and won't be able to understand my studies. What would be your advice for the new students about those two issues?

Nelofar Noori: Regarding the cost of education, I would say there are various financial assistance resources at the community colleges that can support a new student. One of those resources is FAFSA. New students can apply for financial aid from [FAFSA](#) and get help with the application; they can go to [the financial aid department](#) or the ESL LAB. Eligible students can get a fee waiver and even more financial assistance from the FAFSA depending on how many units they are enrolled in. Moreover, there are other financial assistance resources like the emergency fund, scholarships, and [Beaver Cares](#) department that qualified students can utilize to address their financial needs.

Regarding language proficiency, if the new students are struggling with English, all Los Rios colleges have an ESL (English as a Second Language) department that offers English classes from novice-high up to advanced level, and students are placed in the classes based on the assessment test they take with the ARC ESL Department. Therefore, there are resources available that can directly address the financial and

language needs of new students. Hence, financial and language issues shouldn't be the obstacle to students achieving their educational goals.

Thank you very much for sharing great advice. One more thing that worries so many new immigrant students is the question of working as they study. New immigrants think that we must work while we are studying, so is it possible to work and study at the same time?

Nelofar Noori: That is also true. Coming to a new country and deciding to go to school and work at the same time can be tough. However, I would say, if you are a responsible person with good time management, working while studying won't stop you from achieving your educational goals. I can give my life situation as an example. I am still new in the U.S. I am a full-time student enrolled in 15 units, working 21 hours per week in the ARC ESL LAB, and I am married and have some responsibilities at home, too. I am able to manage all of my responsibilities due to good time management. So, for all those who want to work while they are studying, I would

say, America is the land of opportunities, and if I can manage work, study and my daily home affairs, then with solid determination and a good time management, you can do it, too.

Although you seem to be so busy, if you have free time, what do you do in your free time?

Nelofar Noori: In my free time I love reading books from my college curriculum, cooking, cleaning my house, and spending time with family and friends.

What is your favorite book that you recommend?



Nelofar Noori: One of the books that I read recently in Dari is [Atomic Habits](#) by James Clear, and another one is also in Dari which is called [The Compound Effect](#) by Darren Hardy. Both books are super useful and I fully recommend others to read.

What is your favorite food and what is the one dish that you cook well?

Nelofar Noori: My favorite food as it is usual for all Afghans is *qabuli*, and I think I can cook so many different foods, but the one I think I am so good at cooking is called *shorba*, and that can be translated to English as “broth.”

As a last question, is there anything that you want to share that we did not cover?

Nelofar Noori: I just want to emphasize that it is all about our own determination. If you are determined to continue your education, everything will fall into place for you. There are so many resources and people that can help you achieve your goals. You need to decide to go for it. One last thing that I want to share with the new-immigrant community is to support each other, especially in your family. If a woman is

deciding to continue her education, her husband and other family members should support her. I am thankful to my husband who has supported me when I decided to continue my education here in the U.S. I also want to thank my family that have supported me my entire life to continue my education. In my final words, I want to say that the location and time does not matter. If you are determined to achieve your educational goals, you can do it.

Thank you very much for sharing so much great information and for having this interview with me and The Parrot.

Nelofar Noori: Thank you very much for your time.

**Interview by Parrot Staff Writer:
Sayed Edres Sadiqi**

The Book of the Angels of Speech

Poetry from the Women of Ariana: A Book Review

This book includes a large number of women poets from the previous and contemporary centuries (as far back as the Vedic era, 1500 BCE) who have lived in the geographic area formerly known as Ariana, which was a name for ancient Afghanistan. Although there may be many female poets who lived in this region during this time, a lack of sources has made it impossible to reflect on their biographies and works.

This 350-page collection of poetry was compiled by the late researcher Gholam Haider Kabiri in 2012, with the financial support of the Consulate General of the United States in Herat, Afghanistan and by the Tomorrow Development Services Organization. They printed 4000 volumes in Kabul and

distributed them to the people for free.

I wanted to review this book because Afghanistan is one of the countries where women don't have access to education equally as men, and in this book, Kabiri has introduced 340 women poets from the past till now. At any time in Afghan-



istan, we have had strong and powerful women poets that were famous throughout the Persian/ Dari-speaking countries where they could present their talent to the world. Furthermore, we want to thank and admire Kabiri for his unique idea of getting together all the women poets of Afghanistan.

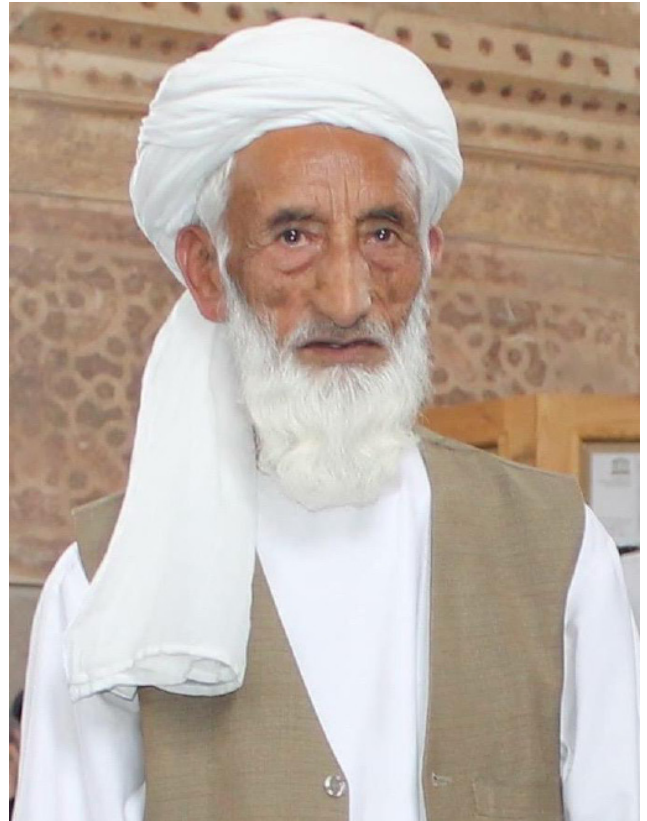
What is under discussion is that according to the traditions and common social relations in the East and especially in Afghanistan, during the recent centuries, the presence of women in all social and political levels has been prevented. Especially in the last century hostilities against women have been practiced and promoted by the ruling governments from time to time. The provision of such works can have a great impact on the improvement of the situation of women in Afghanistan and strengthen their participation in society and citizenship affairs.

The author made it clear that the purpose of his book is to respect and honor the status of women in this region, and actually reflect the presence of women in all social fields using reliable historical sources and scientific works. Undoubtedly, the recognition of women and the publication of their works conveys the message to the next generations that this land has given great importance to the position of women. In fact, it was these women who endured all the obstacles and problems, and they have been able to stand by their culture, create rich works, and convey their message to the next generations that they need to:

Learn the existence from the fire
Don't sit down until you perish

The author dedicated this work to his mother, and this is another step to promote the culture of honoring the position of mother. The author has included quotes from prophets and scientists around the world to help the reader understand the great position of women and to respect and appreciate them.

Parrot Staff Writer: Asila Sadiqi



Beginner Reading Comprehension

FRESH FISH

Mike was ready for bed. It was 11 o'clock. He had to get up early the next day. The next day he was going fishing. Fish wake up early. They look for food early in the day. They look for food late in the day. The best time to fish is early or late in the day. That is when the fish are hungry. Mike set his alarm. He set his alarm for 5 o'clock. The next day he would start fishing at 6 o'clock. He wanted to catch four or five fish. If he caught four or five fish, he could eat fresh fish all week. Fresh fish is the best fish. Mike went to bed.



Want to listen to this story? Click on the website below:
<https://www.eslfast.com/supereasy/se/supereasy012.htm>

Can you answer these questions?

1. What time was it?

- A) It is five o'clock.
- B) It's eleven o'clock.
- C) It's six o'clock.

2. What will Mike do tomorrow?

- A) He will go to see movie.
- B) He will go fishing.
- C) He will go to sleep early.
- D) He will not do anything.

3. Why does he need to wake up early?

- A) Because he wants to catch five fish.
- B) Because he needs to go fishing.
- C) Because fish wake up early.

4. How many fish does he need to catch if he wants to eat fresh fish all week?

- A) 4 to 5 fish.
- B) 7 fish.





**Would you like to
contribute to *The Parrot* ?**

If you want to share your work, art,
opinion, or anything else with
The Parrot, please email us at
TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu. We would be
happy to hear from you and will try to
respond ASAP.

The Parrot welcomes all ESL student
matters!





IR-5 Visa: Bring Your Parents to the U.S. The Rest of the Story

Disclaimer: This information is based on the author's experience and can be used for reference only because each case is different. It is not professional instruction.

If you don't know what an IR-5 Visa is about and its process, check out [Issue 178 of The Parrot, page 27](#).

After over one year of waiting for the documents, my parents came to the USA on March 8, 2024. It was hard for my parents to be on the long flight from Vietnam. It was four hours for the first flight and eleven hours for the second one. I traveled with them, and we flew to San Francisco International Airport. My parents were able to come to customs together with me and my husband; however, they had to go through the secondary checkpoint, which made them feel awkward. We waited in a customs room with a few families for about fifteen minutes before a lady agent called and asked us some personal questions. Finally, they were able to get out of the airport. It was a windy but cool day. My friend picked us up and drove back to Sacramento.

My parents were happy to see the scenery around the freeway with fresh grass and colorful flowers. They were well-dressed so they didn't get cold or weather shock. My dad was surprised with the clean roads. He was also surprised that there were not too many motorbikes compared to Vietnam. My mom loved the mountains and flowers.

Their first meals were American instant noodles because we didn't have time to stop by any places to eat. My mom learned how to use the kitchen here. She was amazed at the many differences. My mom was surprised at how many different trash bins we have here. In Vietnam, we can sell papers, boxes, and many

recycled things that we must put in the trash bin here. The next day, my parents worked on the lawn because they are hard-working people who don't want to stay still.

After two weeks, their Social Security Numbers arrived in the mailbox. We were surprised with how fast it was! Twenty-seven days after their arrival, their Green Cards arrived. We were really happy, but there was a problem with their names. USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) reversed each of my parents' first name and last name on the paperwork! USCIS gave us the website and number to contact if there were any issues; however, when we contacted them, they told us to contact the NVC (National Visa Center). We decided to keep the names with mistakes in the meantime because we didn't know how long it would take if we continued to deal with the NVC. Many friends told us they had the same issue and waited until they could apply for U.S. Citizenship to change their name. In the meantime, my parents must use their middle names as their first names. We went to DHS (Department of Human Services) to apply for health coverage but needed to wait because the process is complicated.

After receiving the above documents, my parents went to the DMV to get their Real ID and Driver's License. They have adjusted to American life quickly since they moved here. They have gone for a walk every day and are waiting to get their first job. I'm happy that I can be close to my parents, and we can take care of each other although life is tough for us now. The food is safe; the atmosphere is clean; and medical systems are available. I hope my parents will live for a long, long time with me.

Parrot Staff Writer: Snow Le

The Untold Stories of the Women of Afghanistan

Interview with Elaha Sahel

Parrot Staff Writer: Asila Sadiqi

Elaha Sahel was born and grew up in the midst of war, smoke and gunpowder. She and all the women of Afghanistan were in essence held captive by the Taliban in their two periods of ruling the government. Elaha Sahel worked for two decades to equalize the rights of women and achieve their most basic rights. Following this risky path, she and her team members faced significant risks to their safety due to the ongoing conflict and political instability. She and other women activists always worked hard to promote social justice, human rights, and democracy as she wanted her countrywomen to achieve peace, freedom, and independence. Elaha Sahel is currently exiled, but she continues to struggle against:

- Limited access to education; many girls in Afghanistan are denied the opportunity to attend school, which limits their opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- Gender-based violence; women in Afghanistan face high rates of violence including domestic violence.
- Cultural barriers: traditional gender roles and expectations limit women's opportunities to pursue careers and leadership positions.
- Political instability; the ongoing conflicts and political instability in Afghanistan make it difficult for women to fully participate in society and pursue their goals.

Furthermore, for women in Afghanistan,

there are other key issues such as conflict, limited access to healthcare, high levels of poverty and unemployment, discrimination, and a restrictive media environment that limits freedom of expression. Despite all these challenges, many women in Afghanistan continue to pursue their goals. They are motivated by a desire for equality and a better future for themselves and their families.



Elaha Sahel believes that she was not able to truly empower women in Afghanistan and promote gender equality, but nevertheless some of the strategies and initiatives that have been implemented in past two decades are:

1. Providing educational opportunities for women and girls.
2. Supporting policies and laws that promote gender equality and protect women's rights.
3. Providing access to health care services, including reproductive health services.
4. Engaging men and boys in promoting gender equality and challenging harmful gender norms and stereotypes.
5. Providing economic opportunities for women through entrepreneurship programs, micro financing and job training.
6. Supporting women's participation in decision-making processes at all levels, including in politics and leadership positions.
7. Raising awareness about gender-based violence and providing support services for survivors.



8. Providing legal aid and advocacy for women who face discrimination or violence.

Elaha Sahel has helped in many ways. However, more needs to be done to address the complex challenges facing Afghan women and girls today. She believes that the international community can put pressure on the Taliban to prioritize gender equality, women's rights, and stop inequality. As a female journalist and women's rights activist, she has many personal experiences and achievements.

All her efforts were for equality, social justice, and the empowerment of women in Afghanistan.

She ran a photo project in Afghanistan that narrated the real life of women. The project has helped people to reflect on the situation of Afghan women.

Though she currently lives in exile in Germany, Elaha Sahel's message to all Afghan women is to follow their dreams, inspirations, and never give up on their goals. Whether they live in Afghanistan or in different countries, women should continue to look for opportunities for self-development, capacity building, and defending their rights. She believes that by cooperating and supporting each other, Afghan women can create positive changes in their communities and beyond.



English Practice Hour

It will be in person and online.

Talk Time meets in Zoom once a week on Wednesdays and in-person once a month on Saturdays. We talk about holidays like Labor Day, but we also just check in with each other, telling highs and lows of our week. Students can email me, Professor Denise Saur, at saurd@arc.losrios.edu to get the time, locations, or link.



English Conversation Group

Fridays 5:00-6:00 | North Natomas library

Want to practice speaking English? Join our friendly group!

All languages and levels welcome. No registration. Meet new people and share experiences. This is not a class; it's more a social group for practicing.

Check "Events" for more locations and times at www.saclibrary.org.

Topics:

- Everyday life & things to do
- American culture
- News, pop culture
- Other...You help decide!

Groups are led by a trained facilitator. We hope to see you there!

Continued from page 1

West Wind" (1927), featured here, does not speak of the sea, it is natural to assume that the narrator of the poem is at sea while longing to return to his home in the west.

"The West Wind" may be described as a poem of nostalgia, a sentiment with which many people can identify during times of struggle or fatigue. As the *Redtree Times* puts it, "the West Wind is the voice of home and things familiar calling out to a weary sailor at sea. This idea of wanting to make our way past the perils of storm and disconnectedness to return to some simple form of stability, security, and warmth probably describes the desires of most of us."



The poem itself has a soothing quality. (I have recited it many times to my infant child to soothe him to sleep.) It will only sound soothing, however, if one hears the special rhythmic qualities Masefield has so artfully woven into it. And these are by no means obvious without sensitive reading. Searching for simple alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables will be of no avail

in discovering the rhythm of this poem.

Let's look at the fourth stanza, my favorite from a rhythmic standpoint. There are three ways of analyzing and representing its rhythm. One way is to suppose, as the metrist George Rippey Stewart Jr. did, that Masefield has used several "monosyllabic feet," that is, poetic feet consisting of a single stressed syllable, as opposed to a combination of a stressed syllable with one or two unstressed syllables. Thus, we could analyze the rhythm of the stanza this way:

the / YOUNG / CORN is / GREEN / BRO
ther / WHERE the / RAB bits / RUN

it's / BLUE / SKY and / WHITE / CLOUDS
and / WARM / RAIN and / SUN

it's / SONG to a / MAN'S / SOUL / BRO
ther / FIRE to a / MAN'S / BRAIN

to / HEAR the / WI ld / BEES and / SEE the
/ MER ry / SPRING a / GAIN

In the above scansion, each line of the stanza contains seven feet and seven stressed syllables, with each stressed syllable positioned at the beginning of a new foot. One drawback to this scansion is that it does not capture the fact that some of the stressed syllables are *more* stressed than other stressed syllables. The first, third, fifth, and seventh stressed syllables of each line receive more stress than do the second, fourth, and sixth stressed syllables.

Despite being less traditional, the other two methods of representing the

rhythmic structure do capture this additional rhythmic stress difference, which some metrists describe as “dipodic.” These other two methods really go hand in hand. Both are musical in their essence, though only the second is explicitly so. Consider first the chart scansion below; the stressed words of each line align with one another.

The	YOUNG	corn	is	GREEN	bro-	ther	WHERE	the	rab-	bits	RUN.		
It's	BLUE	sky	and	WHITE	clouds	and	WARM		rain	and	SUN.		
It's	SONG	to a	man's	SOUL	bro-	ther,	FIRE	to a	man's		BRAIN,		
to	HEAR	the	wi-	ld	BEEs	and	see	the	MER-	ry	spring	a	GAIN.

The above representation is inspired by a 1950 article by Warren Creel, published in *The English Journal*. Creel writes, “We find the pattern by counting beats, not by counting syllables, for the syllables are not all the same in time-value.” The intervals demarcated by three vertical lines are larger time intervals than those demarcated by two, which in turn are larger than those demarcated by only one.

I have used all caps to show that the triple-lined segments receive greater stress

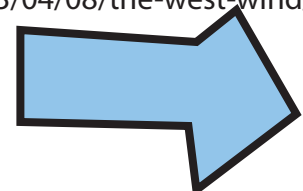
than the two-line segments, whose syllables just have bolding. The unstressed syllables are those in between. You can see in the diagram that “YOUNG” occupies a time interval of the same length as “SONG to a,” two lines down. Doesn’t that make the rhythmic structure clearer? Those of you who read musical notation may find the following, third, representation the clearest of all.

Works Cited

Creel, Warren. “Landmarks and Goals in Rhythm,” *The English Journal*, vol. 39, no. 6, 1950, pp. 295–302.

Stewart, George R., Jr. *Modern Metrical Technique: As Illustrated by Ballad Meter, 1700–1920*. New York, 1922.

“The West Wind,” *Redtree Times*, 8 April 2023, <https://retreetimes.com/2023/04/08/the-west-wind/>



Poem on the next page

Musical notation for the poem, showing four lines of music in 2/4 time. The notation includes notes, rests, and dynamic markings (accents) under the notes. The first line is: $\frac{2}{4}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \text{ } \gamma$

The second line is: $\frac{2}{4}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \text{ } \gamma$

The third line is: $\frac{2}{4}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \text{ } \gamma$

The fourth line is: $\frac{2}{4}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}}$ | $\underline{\underline{\underline{\text{J}}}} \text{ } \gamma$

THE WEST WIND

by John Masefield

It's a warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries;
I never hear the west wind but tears are in my eyes.
For it comes from the west lands, the old brown hills,
And April's in the west wind, and daffodils.

It's a fine land, the west land, for hearts as tired as mine;
Apple orchards blossom there, and the air's like wine.
There is cool green grass there, where men may lie at rest,
And the thrushes are in song there, fluting from the nest.

"Will you not come home, brother? You have been long away.
It's April, and blossom time, and white is the spray.
And bright is the sun, brother, and warm is the rain,—
Will you not come home, brother, home to us again?"

"The young corn is green, brother, where the rabbits run;
It's blue sky, and white clouds, and warm rain and sun.
It's song to a man's soul, brother, fire to a man's brain,
To hear the wild bees and see the merry spring again.

"Larks are singing in the west, brother, above the green wheat,
So will you not come home, brother, and rest your tired feet?
I've a balm for bruised hearts, brother, sleep for aching eyes,"
Says the warm wind, the west wind, full of birds' cries.

It's the white road westwards is the road I must tread
To the green grass, the cool grass, and rest for heart and head,
To the violets and the warm hearts and the thrushes' song,
In the fine land, the west land, the land where I belong.

PARROT PALETTE - Breaking Through

Breaking Through by Francisco Jimenez is a personal narrative of the author's years as an immigrant from Mexico. He faces many barriers in his life with his family in southern California, and the book describes how he breaks through the barriers of poverty, learning English, being deported, the extreme tiredness of working in the fields, his father's struggles with physical pain, and finally, figuring out how to fulfill his dream of going to college. The artwork comes from ESL students at ARC who read and studied this book with Professor Deanna Lewis in ESL 315.

This drawing represents for me the new change that Francisco faced when leaving Mexico and migrating to the United States. That is why Francisco is seen in the drawing looking outward, which represents the new horizons to which Francisco adapts. Furthermore, the breaks in the drawing indicate all the obstacles that he faces in his life. Furthermore, the butterfly alludes to the poem shown in the book about how all change involves effort and that leaving the comfort zone is always a risk but can bring with it many teachings. On Francisco's face in the drawing, you can see concern because of everything new that he has to explore. The black line that is observed indicates the path he had to travel and how difficult it was. And finally, the silhouette of the drawing shows the map of the Mexican Republic.



Brittany Medina, ESL 315



Because Francisco and his family and his neighbors were all working hard in the fields all the time, I think they were not only picking strawberries. They also picked up potatoes and more other crops. This is a drawing of them as they were working in a field picking tomatoes.

Guoxiang Sims, ESL 315

Some More Parrot Fun

Finding Hidden Words



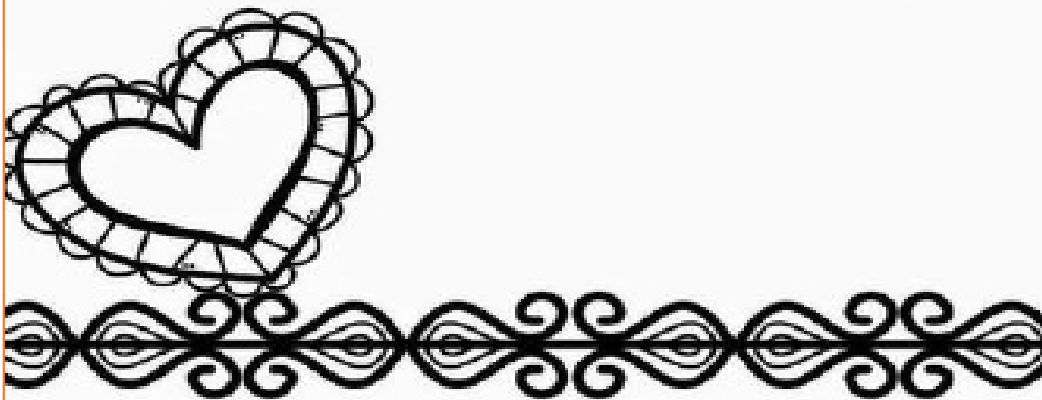
Challenge:
Find 6 hidden words.

See the answers on page 32.
Click here to [see](#) more fun stuff.

Poem

Mom, I Love You!

Mom, I love you
For all that you do.
I'll hug you and kiss you
because you love me too!
You feed me and need me
To teach you to play.
So smile because I love you,
On this Mother's Day!



Mother's Day is Sunday, May 12!

Volunteer Opportunity



Help for Refugee Children



Starting Point is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting newly arrived refugee children in the greater Sacramento area.

The organization strives to give them a warm welcome by providing basic necessities and programs as they begin their new lives in the U.S. They do things like meet refugee families with children at the airport, give them welcome baskets, and provide basic ESL and computer lessons, and they have even started a very popular soccer team for the kids. Visit the website and click on [REQUEST HELP](#).

Starting Point is directed by Vickee Moy, a professor of English as a Second Language in Sacramento. She launched Starting Point in June 2017 after being deeply touched by her refugee students' stories about their lives in their native countries and about their new lives in the U.S. Starting Point is one way she hopes to honor and

remember their incredible stories and beautiful lessons about perseverance, strength, hope, and humanity.

As a child of immigrants, Vickee feels a connection with new arrivals and is passionate about helping them begin successful lives in their new country. Along with her husband and three sons, she is excited to reach out to this growing community of newcomers.

<https://www.startingpointworld.com/>

Want to Help?

There are several ways that you can help Starting Point to help children. You can put together a welcome basket, assemble a backpack with supplies, help buy shoes, assist with lessons and program development for SPARK (Summer Program for Arts, Recreation and Knowledge), or even coach and support a soccer team!

Donations to Starting Point are tax deductible. Please visit the [Starting Point Volunteer Page](#) for more information.

Around the World



Let Lorot tell you about the fascinating cultures around the world. The USA has a dry climate while Vietnam is known for humidity and wet seasons. There are some interesting facts about humidity in Vietnam that I want to share with readers.

In Vietnam, you don't have to use lotion often because the weather gives you wet skin.

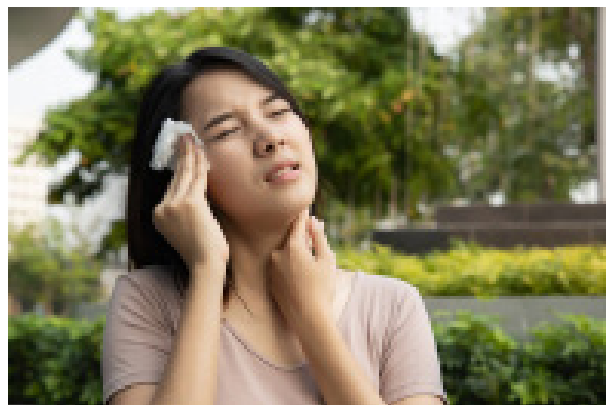
Your body feels hot and wet even though you just got out of the shower.

When you open a snack bag, you need to consume it right away or else it will become soft.

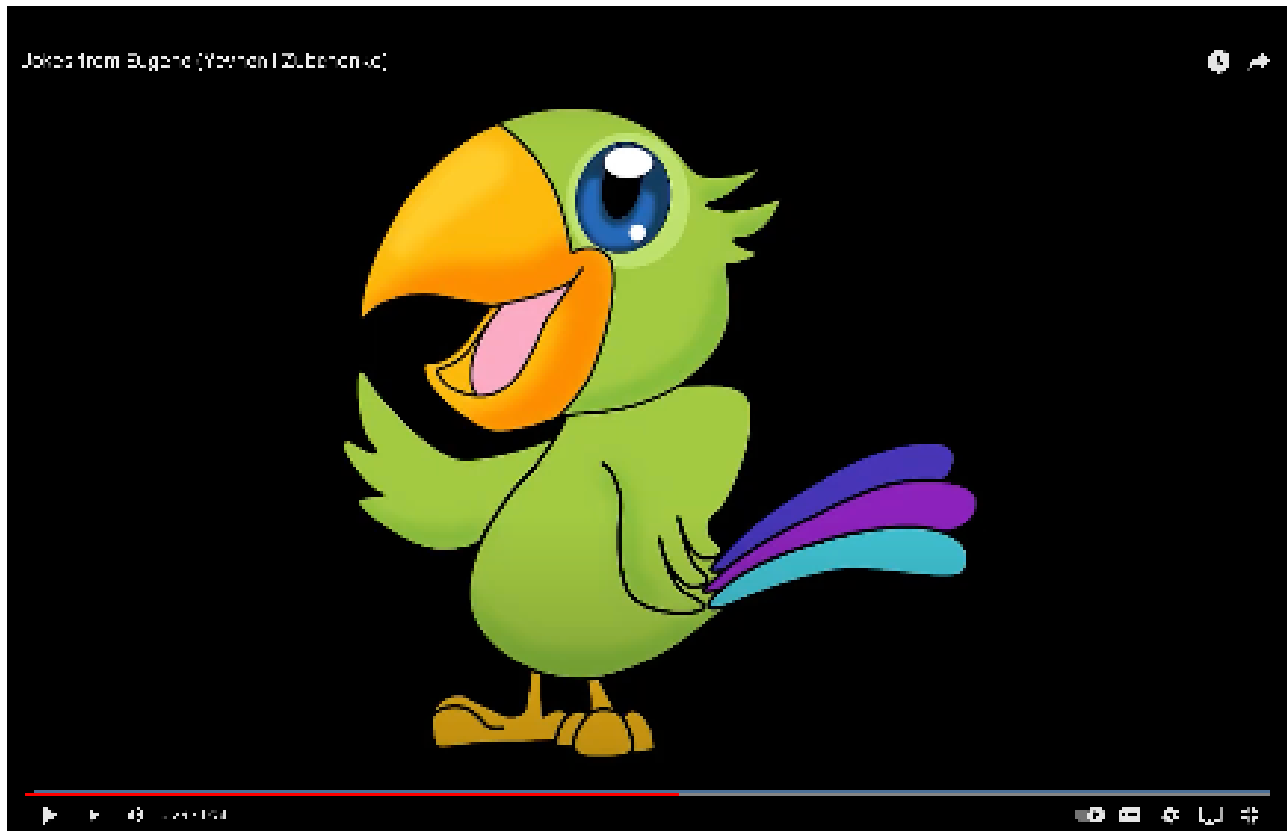
Humid hot weather makes you feel hotter compared to dry hot weather.

The clothes are slow to dry because Vietnamese usually hang clothes to dry instead of using dryers.

Normally, people prepare a lot of towels and rags to absorb water in the house during the rainy season.



Parrot Voices: Jokes from Eugene!



Click on the image to hear Eugene's funny jokes!

My name is Yevhenii Zubchenko; however, most of my friends call me "Eugene." I'm from Ukraine and moved to the US just last summer. Currently, I attend ARC to improve my English skills. I'm a believer, and my hobbies include music (guitar, singing and saxophone), reading, learning languages and collecting different kinds of tea. So, if you want to start a tea party and talk about languages with some music in the background, I will certainly be interested. The person laughing at my jokes is Matthew Tagintsev, my good friend. He agreed to help me as a single-person audience, and as you can see, it went great! :)



Scan QR Code

Zoom Hours

MON - 8am to 12:30pm

THU - 11am to 7pm

FRI - 8am to 4:30pm

ESL Center

Open On Campus in the LRC!

Monday thru Thursday
8:00 AM to 7:00 PM

The ESL Center helps all multilingual students with their classes and questions. We speak Farsi, Dari, Pashto, Russian, Ukranian, Spanish, and more. Come see us!



Ask
Questions

Get
Help



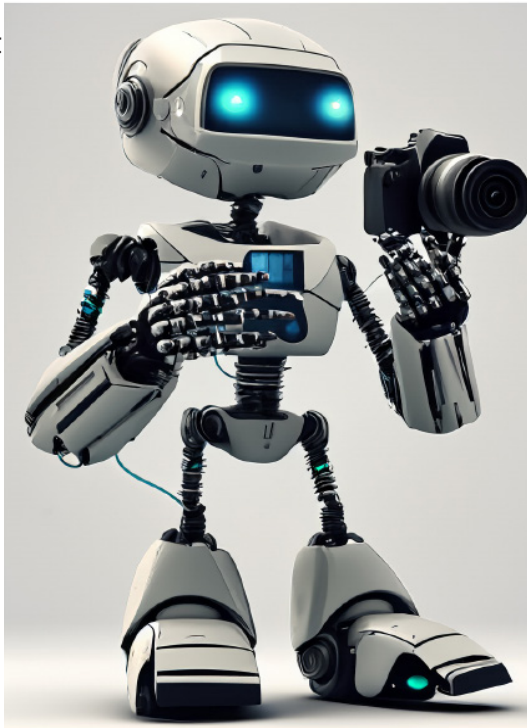
Answer: kite, balloon, jump, pizza, funny, hammer

Did you find
them?

AI vs Photography: The New Cold War

As technology increases, the new inventions tend to come out so often that it seems like the “new norm” is for companies to launch new and improved gear from time to time. Technology is quickly becoming too addictive, but sadly, no addiction is good. And now, there’s a new addition to the great advances of technology: Artificial Intelligence (also known as AI). According to Oxford Languages, AI “is the theory and development of computer systems able to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, decision-making, and translation between languages.” Even though it sounds promising, AI is quickly becoming a deadly opponent of several industries, including the photography industry. From AI tools that can complete create realistic scenarios, to AI websites where you can turn your regular iPhone selfie into professional headshots, AI can do in seconds what a person with a camera could achieve only with a lot of time, creativity, and knowledge. AI is becoming a threat to those who live off the photo industry, and without prompt laws and regulations, photography could be over.

Many professional photographers fear that AI may take their jobs away, especially wildlife photographers. Wildlife photographers make their living by taking unique shots of exotic animals in their habitats. Magazines pay hundreds or even thousands of dollars sometimes to own the right to those photos to use and distribute them. However, a recent controversy took place when Tim Flack, wildlife photographer, shared two images of a tiger, one taken with his camera



and the other completely generated by Artificial Intelligence. People couldn’t tell which one was which. Flack expressed his concern with the platform Sky News, saying that it is heartbreaking to see how AI creates one image using real

photographers’ styles and their public past work. Having the ability to create an image just following a few word commands represents a great threat to those who sell their photos to big magazines and informative channels. Such big companies would find it cheaper to get their material from a computer, rather than from a professional photographer. Leaving photographers without a job would be catastrophic, let alone stealing their style and photos to create a fake

image using AI. Without any kind of regulation, AI can deeply take a toll on those who take photos for a living. Photographers, however, are not the only ones fussing about this.

Big camera maker companies such as Nikon have also shown concerns about this new threat and have raised awareness to try to stop AI from spreading out too fast. According to an article from Notebook Check, “Camera maker Nikon has thrown its weight into the fight against controversial AI image generation tools, like Mi Journey, DALL-E, and Stable Diffusion, in an ad campaign centered around the beauty of the natural world and the creativity of photographers. The advertising campaign features stun-

ning imagery taken by Nikon users, with AI image generation prompts superimposed over the images to drive the point home." Nikon, with its campaign, is looking to showcase the beauty of nature captured by photographers using their products to encourage people to use a lens rather than AI. The campaign started in Peru, but it is slowly moving to other countries all around the world. Imagine how many people just from this industry could lose their jobs if AI is not promptly regulated. AI taking over could mean the end for photographers and camera maker companies, but affecting the photography industry from a business point of view isn't the only damage the uncontrolled use of AI can do in our society.



There are currently AI tools that can take your face and put it in someone else's body digitally without your consent to commit fraud or spread false information about you. Websites like deepswap.ai will allow you to create images and videos using your face or someone else's face for "entertainment purposes" at a cheap and affordable price. Unfortunately, this tool has been used to create fake pornographic videos of well-known celebrities, as well as fake news and hoaxes. One example is the one shared by *The New York Times* of a woman who used a deepfake website to harass three cheerleaders in Pennsylvania in 2021. (Christina Morales, *The New York Times*). The use of AI to generate fake content of a person without their consent to cause them harm is very alarming, and it's scary to see what it can be used for if there are not regulations or laws that control and reprimand those who use it to hurt others. But not everything that AI brings to the photography industry is necessarily bad.

Some AI tools have been shown to be beneficial to photographers in the image-making

and post-processing process. Editing photo software like Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Lightroom have integrated the use of AI to improve the editing experience, making it easier for photographers to select specific areas of an image and work on them individually. Newer cameras have also incorporated the use of AI to improve the autofocus on their sensors to detect and identify an object when it's placed in the frame. Sony cameras, for example, have the ability to identify birds and track focus on them whenever the camera is pointed at one. They also can track a person's eye and keep it in focus as long as the person stays within the frame. These tools can be very useful when it comes to taking and editing a photograph; however, it feels

bittersweet knowing that a tool so beneficial in some aspects, can also be so detrimental in others.

To summarize, we've learned that even though AI can bring some benefits to the photography industry when it comes to capturing a photograph, it also needs to be regulated in order to ensure the survival of this same industry. Regulations and laws are necessary to prevent AI from being used for malicious purposes, such as using someone's face without their consent to commit crimes or trying to take down an entire industry. We humans have the tendency to exceed expectations and improve constantly, but when that tendency makes us cross the line between greed and common good, is it even worth it to follow that path?

By Parrot Staff: Manny

Al-Halka: The Art of Storytelling, Moroccan Style

**The term Al-Halka in Arabic means "the circle."*

Al-Halka is an ancient Moroccan art. It is a form of popular theater associated with spontaneity, performed by men trained in the art of storytelling, the skill of mime, personification, sarcasm, enjoyable joking, laughter, and astonishment. The man presenting the show in Al-Halka is called Al-Halaiki, and his strength lies in his closeness to the public and its connection to the daily, even immediate, preoccupations of people. As a term, "Al-Halka" derives its name from how it is performed in a spontaneously-formed circle of people who surround the artist who tests his performing talents directly in a public space.

Storytellers, snake and monkey tamers, musicians, folk singers, and herbal medicine professionals are various groups that inherited the audacity to display talent in public squares and popular neighborhood spaces in cities and in weekly open markets in villages. This is one of the cultural phenomena that characterizes traditional Moroccan culture.

Some historical writings indicate that Al-Halka art in Morocco originated in the 19th century AD in the city of Marrakesh before it spread to the rest of the cities. It became popular especially in weekly markets to which people from various regions surrounding Marrakesh used to make pilgrimages.

Al-Halka has been a symbol of a common

memory shared by generations of Moroccans. Moroccan performers traveled far and wide

throughout the country to find audiences who wanted to see their creativity in the arts of speech and movement. People anticipated their arrival with the promise of something new, tales from legends, unique acrobatics, or amazing magical abilities.

In addition to a few other places, the famous Jemaa El Fna Square in Marrakesh (a famous tourist city in southern Morocco), which UNESCO has designated as a shared human heritage, remains the cradle of "the circle" art. The performers woo visitors to the Red City, from inside and outside Morocco, with miraculous tales of heritage. Local and Arab

stories or acrobatic movements are performed by young people who have never entered a sports institute, except for a acrobatic tradition specific to some tribes. In the famous square, others specialize

in taming poisonous snakes, while some perform famous songs from various cultures, or perhaps an old violin plays popular passages from the heritage of Arab and Berber arts.

Al-Halka is a comprehensive art. In Al-Halka, you can find the storyteller, who tells people stories, a large part of which is linked to ancient myths. Some find in it lyrical poems,

theatrical works, and performances by tamers of some animals and

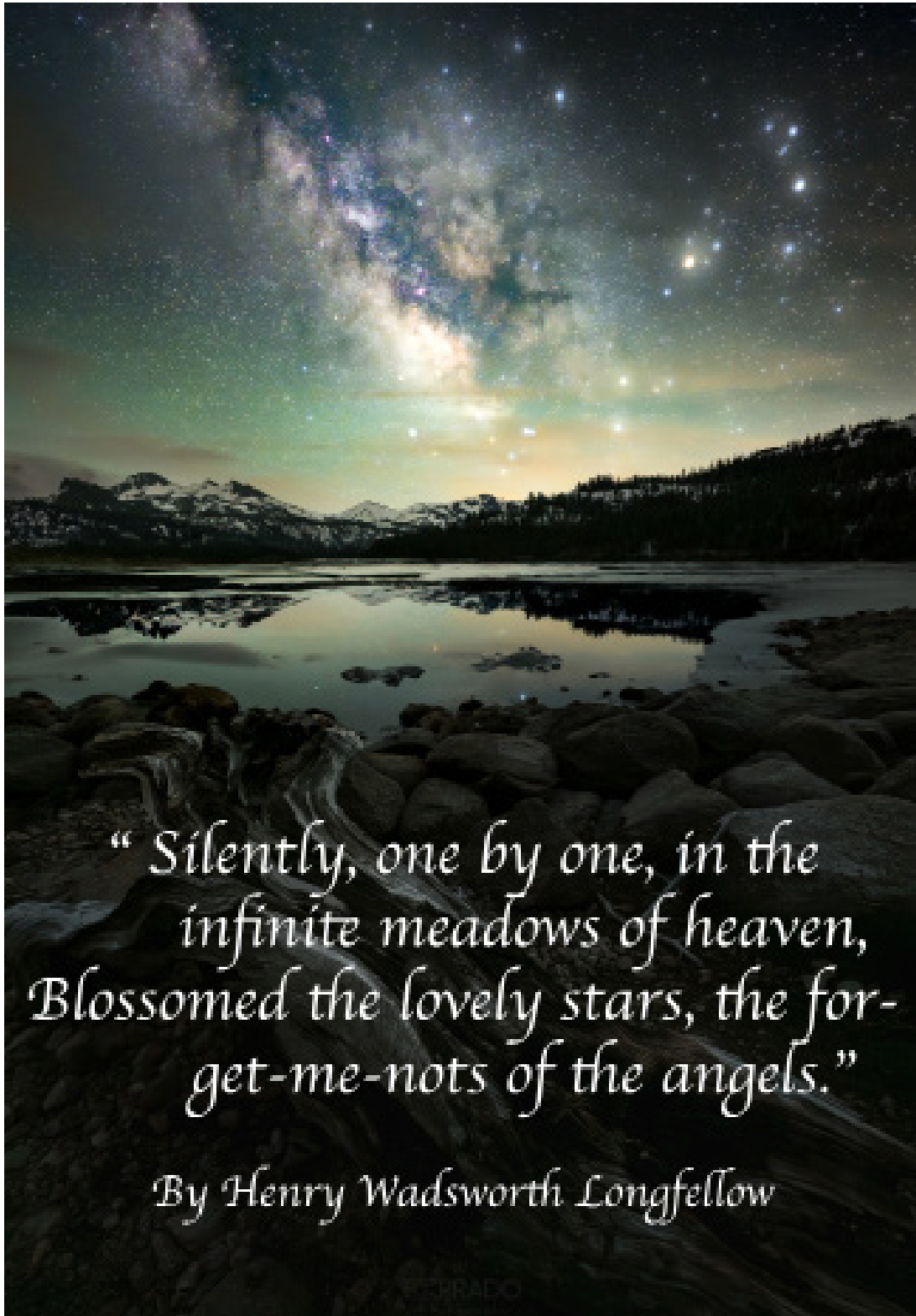


reptiles, as is the case with the snake tamers in Marrakesh. Al-Halka also served as a news center, where people shared their news and all the latest developments.

This art experienced periods of ebb and flow in some Moroccan cities. A decade ago, it completely disappeared from some public squares, and artists would have almost become (in the midst of the growing wave of new artistic expressive forms) forgotten had officials not intervened in the face of the insistence and complaints of artists. The state decided to rehabilitate some squares and allocate them to Al-Halka art.

Parrot Staff Writer: Mohammed El mrani





*“ Silently, one by one, in the
infinite meadows of heaven,
Blossomed the lovely stars, the for-
get-me-nots of the angels.”*

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Photo by Manny

Out of the Cage

Drop-in Information Session for Study Abroad in London (Fall 2024)

Wednesday, May 8, 2024

12:00 to 1:00 pm

Attend this drop-in session to learn more about spending 13 weeks studying media, literature, history, communications and/or journalism in the great capital city of London in fall 2024. Our time together will include a weekly calendar of subsidized cultural activities, and we will live in a city ideally suited for short excursions across the United Kingdom and Europe. For complete details, please visit this [website](#).

Online event. Join [Zoom](#).

Sharpen Your Interview Skills (CRC Work Experience)

Friday, May 10, 2024

12:00 to 1:00 pm

Are interviews causing you stress and anxiety? Fret not! Mastering the art of interviewing is a skill that can be acquired, honed, and improved with practice over time. The interview process might seem daunting if you're uncertain about what to anticipate, how to get ready, or what interviewers are seeking.

Register on [Handshake](#).

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

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Faculty Advisors: **Patrick Hoggan and David Evans**

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 at TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu. To see previous issues of *The Parrot*, go to <https://arc.losrios.edu/academics/the-parrot-newsletter>

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