



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

The Parrot



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WELCOME TO PARADISE REPUBLIC

KEEP IT COOL, SOLVING IT SMOOTH

OUR RESIDENTS



SOPIA GARDASH - PRESIDENT



MARIA BAKKE - MINISTER OF SPORTS



YULIA APYKOVA - MINISTER OF LEISURE



IRINA LAZAREVA - MINISTER OF EDUCATION



OLGA ALEKHINA - MINISTER OF CULTURE

Special Issue: Introduction

The Perfect Country: The Assignment

What's your idea of a "perfect" country? There are so many possibilities. Whatever your great ideas are, your vision of a perfect country would probably be very different from your classmates' vision, especially if they come from different countries. Yet it was just this question and the need to discuss opinions and perspectives that brought together the students in an ESL L310 (Intermediate-High Listening and Speaking) to practice their academic English. In Spring 2024, Professor Martha Robles Furgason considered the following SLO (student learning outcome) for her class: "develop and employ tactics to function in a pluralistic environment, including demonstrating through language respect for alternate viewpoints." She didn't just give a lecture about this skill; she asked students, "What does this Student Learning Outcome mean to you?" This was the start of their final project for the semester.

Who Works Together?

Professor Robles

Furgason explained how she organized the four groups with five students each. In her own words: "I created a numbered table with the list of typical speech topics, such as daily activities, sports, athletes, education, book authors, religion, etc. I wanted the topics to be random, so I gave students a 'Culture Raffle Card' with a number as they walked into class for their topic. The students had the choice of which students would be in their group as long as each member was from a different language. I also asked each group to elect a lead—not a leader because 'leader' tends to imply the group would follow instead of having their own autonomy, voice, and responsibilities. The leads were just a

vehicle for communication between the groups and me in case they needed any assistance."

What Was the Required Task?

This final project was a group speech with visual aids. Since the class had already had several speeches without the aid of visuals, students were encouraged to use either PowerPoint or Google Slides to help illustrate their topics with images. Most chose Google Slides, which was easy to share and update between the group members, and opened easily on Canvas. Professor Robles Furgason also included a short lesson on correct citations for

images they used from the Internet.

What Was the Preparation Process?

The class began on April 9, and their instructor gave them a few minutes before the end of each class for them to gather and discuss their presentations. She gave them a little bit more time (about 10-12 minutes) a couple of weeks before the presentation, and she also encour-

aged them to exchange emails and perhaps meet after class if their busy schedules allowed it, which a few did. Professor Robles Furgason only saw a few drafts of their slides, and they were mostly working as a group and making their own decisions. She told *The Parrot*, "I had confidence that they would work well because they often worked in groups for various activities in class, so I know they were responsible and focused."

Kudos to the Creators

Professor Robles Furgason said it was amazing to see students build community as they worked to brainstorm and decipher how to present

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their ideas as a group. Each member brought their own rich life experiences, yet they were considerate of each other's work, life schedule, and various opinions. She stated, "I am proud of the final product and hope for their continued success in their educational journeys!"

Welcome to Paradise

Each group created a unique name for their country. One group chose the name "Friendly Country" and another chose "Seekers." One team named their country "Yepascoanshia," which was a creative combination of the names of each member: Yevhenii, Sofia, Parham, Anastasiia, and Cody. In this issue of *The Parrot*, you will see the project presented by a group who formed the country of "Paradise Republic." We hope you enjoy their creativity and fun as you take a tour of a country that no one has ever been to before!



Typical Weekend

Music Festival

Why music is so important?

- Makes lives more intense and interesting
- Reduces stress and relieves pain
- Increases efficiency



Sports Events

Overcome the boundaries

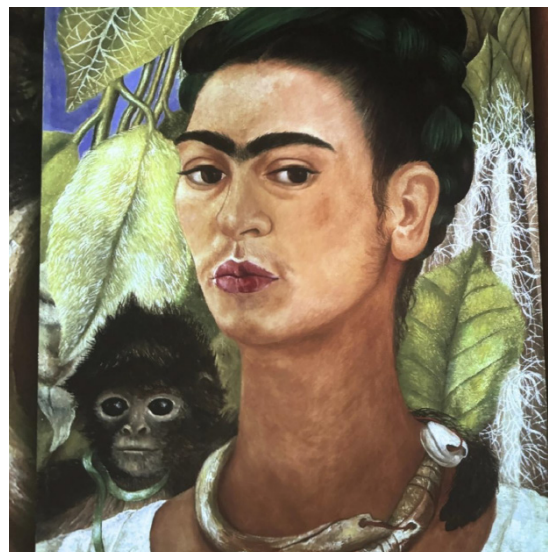
- Emotional release
- Support for your favorite team
- Force social connection



Exhibitions

The art of living

- Widen your horizons
- Find inspiration
- Cultivate aesthetic taste



Education in our country is a continuous system of successive levels:



Kindergarden

School

University

- Private and public
- They accept children from 1.5 years old to 6-7 years old
- **Three meals a day and a nap at lunchtime are provided.**

- Private and public
- Children from 6-7 years old are accepted
- The training takes 11 years
- **Meals 1 time a day, sleep during the lesson is not allowed.**

- Paid and free training is provided
- Full-time and part-time education
- The training takes 5-6 years
- **Meals and sleep are not provided**

School is like a second family



SCHOOL CURRICULUM

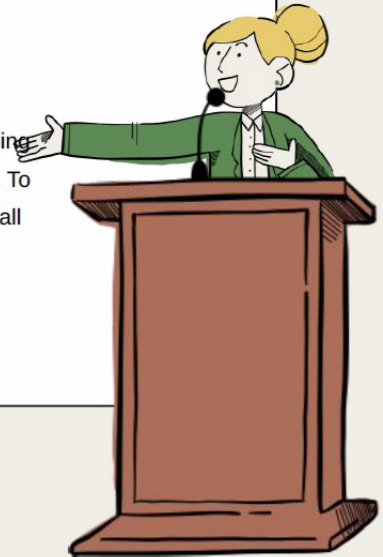
It includes the study of history, literature, exact sciences, physical education and a foreign language.

The school takes 11 years to complete. All these 11 years, from Monday to Saturday, in some schools from Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 2 pm children attend classes. Each lesson lasts 45 minutes.

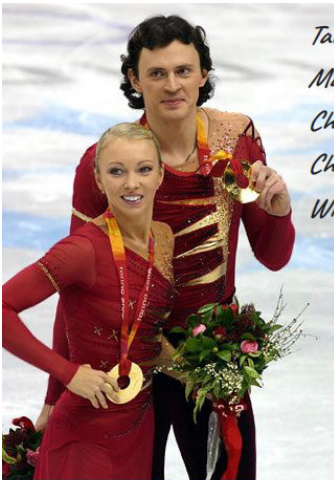
The next level of education is university.

It is not mandatory, but just to have a diploma.

At the university, you immediately choose the specialty that interests you. You attend lectures and practical classes according to a set schedule. Every six months you take exams and tests. To successfully graduate from the university, you need to attend all classes and pass all exams successfully.



Paradise Republic
 chooses
 a healthy sporting
 future!



Tatiana Totmyanina and Maxim Marinin, who won four European Championships, two World Championships and gold at the 2006 Winter Olympics.

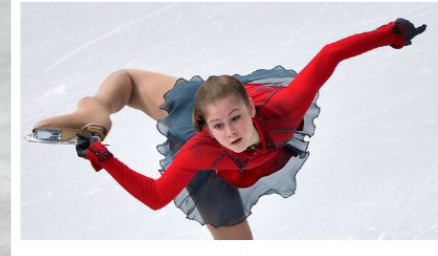
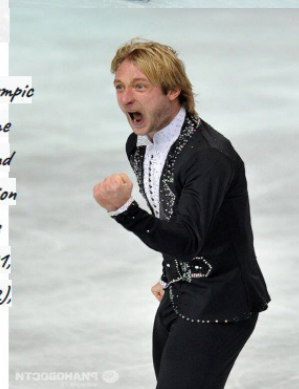


Figure skating

*Julia Lipnitskaya
Olympic champion (2014), European champion (2014), silver medalist of the World Championship (2014), world junior champion (2012), two-time silver medalist of the Paradise Republic Championship (2012, 2014).*



Evgeni Plushenko - Two-time Olympic champion (2006, 2014), two-time Olympic silver medalist (2002 and 2010), three-time world champion (2001, 2003, 2004), seven-time European champion (2000, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2010, 2012), ten-time champion of Paradise Republic.



In 2008, 2009, 2012 and 2014, the Paradise Republic team won the World Cup without losing a single match in those tournaments.

The Continental Hockey League (KHL) serves as the main hockey championship in the Paradise Republic. Hockey players also compete in prestigious leagues around the world, including the National Hockey League (NHL) in North America.

Ice

hockey



The birthday of hockey in Paradise Republic is December 22, 1946.

Our children are our future!



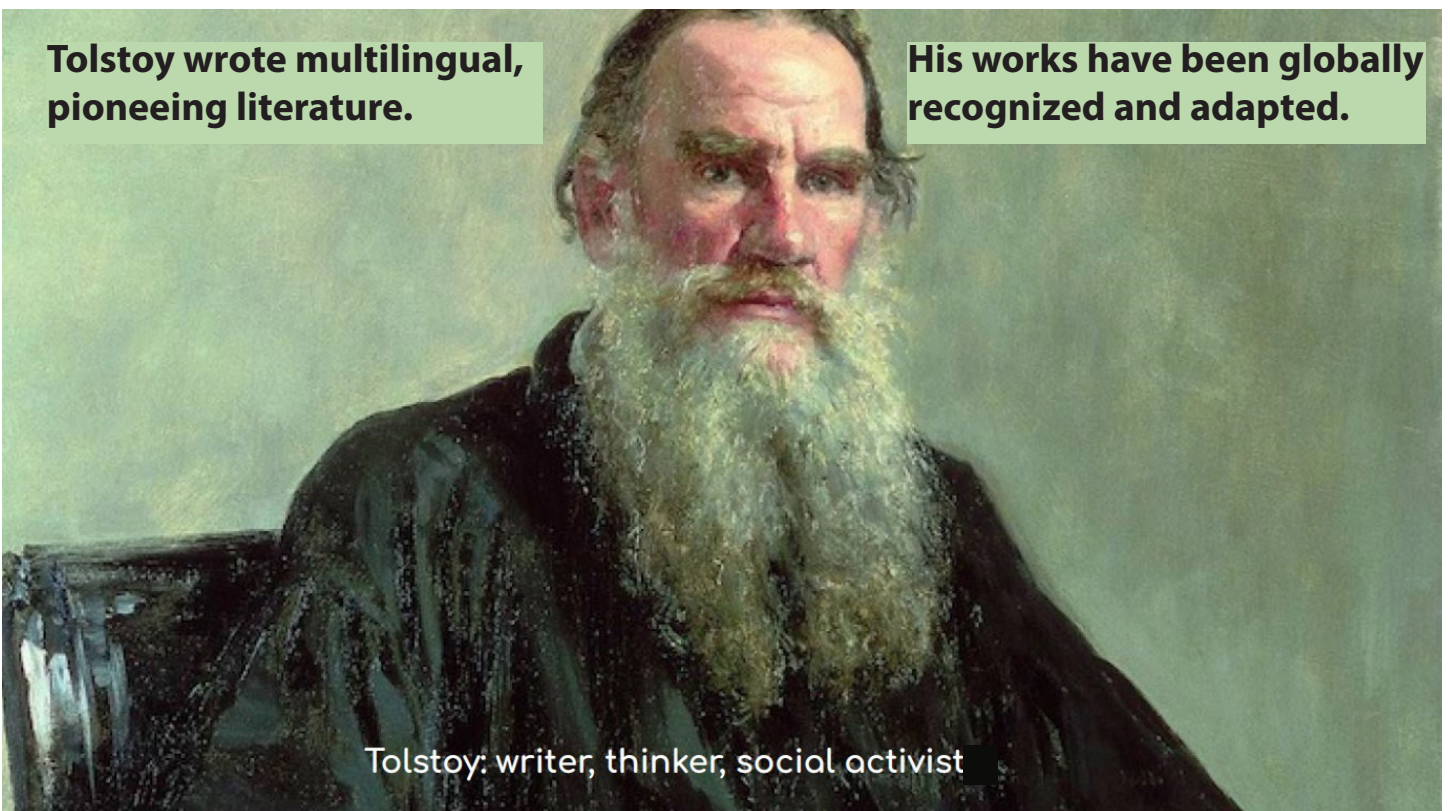
Tretyak is a legendary goalkeeper, 10-time world champion, 3-time Olympic champion and 1-time Canada Cup winner.



- Bilingual community
- Talented individuals
- Special figure. Who is “The one”?

Tolstoy wrote multilingual, pioneering literature.

His works have been globally recognized and adapted.



Tolstoy: writer, thinker, social activist



Hobbies of Paradise Republic

1. Thread Painting Embroidery

*Beautiful handmade paintings
decorate our homes.*



2. Handmade cross stitch clothes

Embroidery is more than just a craft

Embroidery is a powerful tool for enhancing your mental well-being. It can enable mindfulness and provide a sense of calm and fulfillment in today's world.

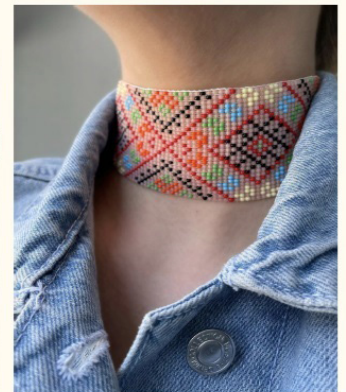


3. Handmade jewelry with beads

- beaded necklace
- beaded choker necklace
- beaded bracelet

Each beaded jewelry item is unique and very stylish.

Beaded bracelets have a rich historical background and cultural significance. These bracelets, made from various types of beads, hold spiritual and symbolic value in our culture.



OUR VALUES AND RULES

- STAY RELAXED.
- KEEP A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.
- RELAX EFFECTIVELY.
- PURSUE HOBBIES.
- EARN A DIPLOMA TO EASE PARENTS' MINDS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS,
PLEASE FEEL FREE TO ASK.

RESOURCES

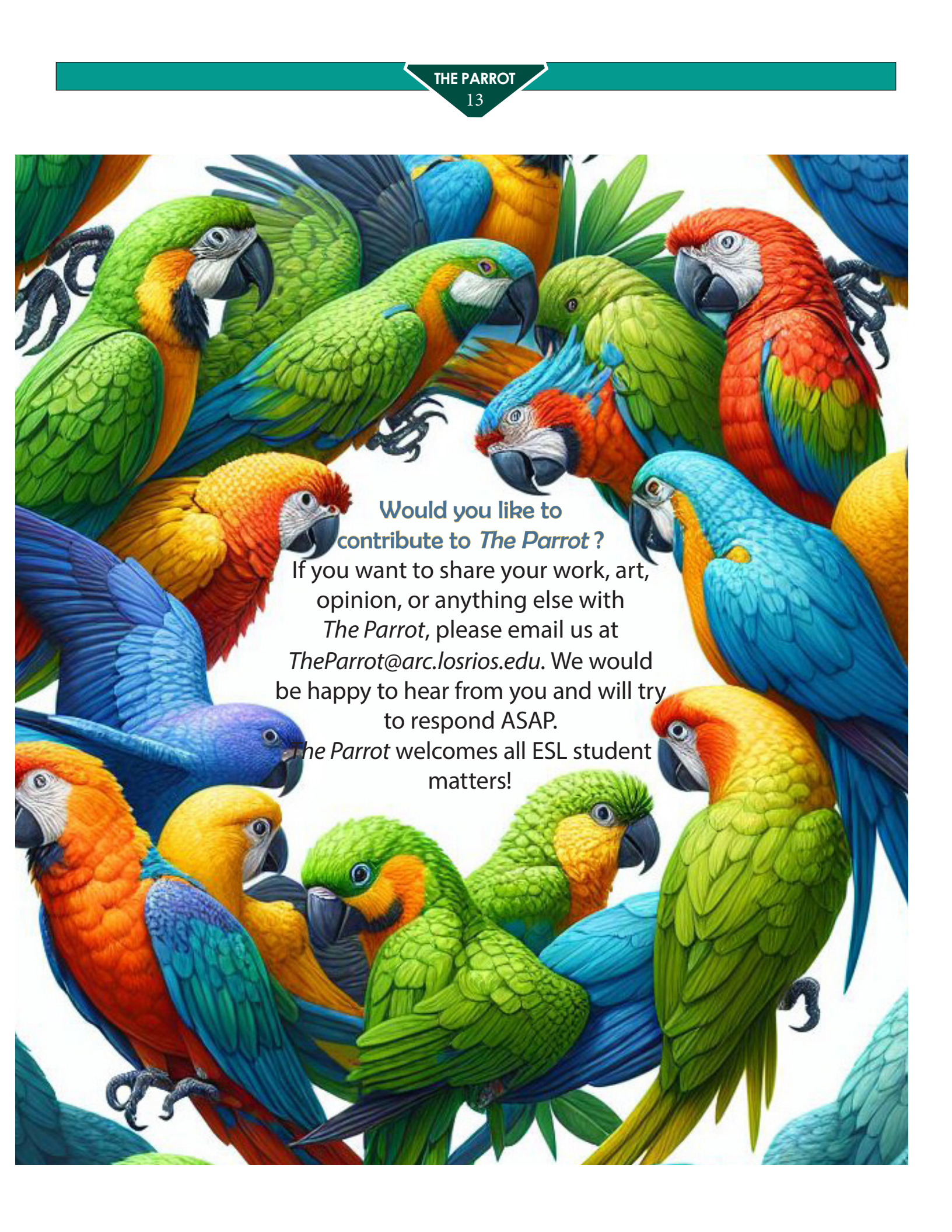
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- [HTTPS://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/UKRAINIAN_EMBROI
DERY](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukrainian_embroidery)
- [HTTPS://ARTSANDCULTURE.GOOGLE.COM/STORY/OQ
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- [HTTPS://EN.WIKIPEDIA.ORG/WIKI/YASNAYA_POLYANA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yasnaya_Polyana)

My Thoughts about Living in Manila

Manila is one of the mega cities in the world. It is in the Philippines. The population over there is getting bigger every day. Most of the people living there are celebrities, businessmen, and politicians. They spend a lot of money to make the city popular, like building a big hospital, schools, and churches. These buildings are the top priority over there. I would like to live in Manila someday because I can meet and join the concert of my favorite celebrity. Vice Ganda is the most popular celebrity, and I love to watch all her movies. Her movies are all funny and give me inspiration. Living in the city is my favorite place because I can buy all the stuff that I like. The mall over there is my favorite spot to hang out. I can meet new friends and watch a movie with them. The cinema in the mall is very nice and presentable. Many tourists are attracted to the design of the building. I think that living in Manila is the best choice. I hope someday I can provide my own earnings to live in the city, which is Manila!



Kryztel Alexcher L. Ferren – ESL 37
Opinion Paragraph



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!

My Utopia

For the first time, the concept of utopia was popularized by Sir Thomas More in his book from 1516 called *Utopia*. Mr. More refers to "utopia" as an idealized society with perfect qualities, where everything operates harmoniously and efficiently for the benefit of all its members of society. However, I think a utopian society is an imaginary and unrealistic vision which is nearly impossible to create and implement. The reason for being unrealistic and impossible to create and implement is linked with the diversity of human nature, ideology, and perspectives. Human nature is influenced by different aspects of life, such as the environment people grow up in, the family culture, the societal norms and customs people were raised in, and the people they live with. Hence, so many things contribute that each person has their own nature or perspective. As a result, I believe others cannot view a utopian society created by a person or a group of people as utopian due to the diversity of opinions and perspectives regarding an idealized society. It is also possible that they can't agree with each other a hundred percent. The only way they can agree with each other on the same system is through a give-and-take process, which I think puts the original idea of a utopian society under question. There-



fore, it is so challenging to have a utopian society in which 100% of the inhabitants agree with the system whole heartedly.

As mentioned earlier, each person has their own imaginary utopian society in mind, which might be different from another person. I also have my own imaginary utopian society in my mind, which is a perfect society with great qualities. What would be my ideology about a utopia?

My imaginary utopia should have the following qualities.

Health and Well-being: Everyone has equal and rapid access to medical care, which includes everything related to health and well-being of the members of society.

Education: Education is free, accessible, and mandatory for everyone. Every member is free to choose a major

or field of education, but education is a must, and everyone needs to get at least a master's degree. If members are willing to continue after a master's degree, education is free for them, but it is not a requirement to continue after getting a master's degree.

Technology: Innovative use and improvement of technology are highly encouraged.

Military Service: Every citizen needs to

serve in the military for one period of 3 years.

Equality and Justice: All members of Utopia are considered equal in the eyes of the justice system and have equal access to all resources, opportunities, and rights. No one is considered above the law, and no one is considered superior or inferior. All members of Utopia are equal.

Wealth Distribution: In my utopia, all members are wealthy, and there isn't a huge gap of wealth between the poorest and the richest members. There is only a tiny wealth difference among members, and there is a very fair distribution of wealth. There is no poverty at all. Everyone has enough to eat and drink, and all members have the basic needs of life such as food, home, car, work, etc.

Governance: In my utopia, there is a democratic government that ensures a democratic decision-making system is in place. It is a government system that is transparent and accountable between the government and citizens. Citizens are encouraged to participate in the government, and there is absolute political freedom, civil liberties, and freedom of expression for individuals and groups.

Work: All Utopians must work four days a week for eight hours. They also have three days a week to enjoy life with family, friends, and loved ones. All Utopians retire at the age of 40. The unemployment rate is zero. Everyone works in their field of choice as they have an education in that field.

Community and Social: In my utopia, family bonds, community bonds, and social bonds are fully supported to promote collaboration and a sense of belonging.

Violence: There is zero tolerance for violence. In my Utopia, violence has no place. Every conflict is solved via proper communication methods.

Foreign Relations: My Utopia has great relations with all other countries around the world.

Utopian citizens can travel to any corner of the world and get support from their country's embassy or consulate in case of need.

With all of this in mind, to create such a utopian society, I still believe a society that even has all the above-mentioned qualities might not be considered a utopian society for some people. Different people see things differently, and each person has their own perspective regarding an ideal society. In short, I can say that there is diversity in the ideologies of different people regarding an ideal society.

Divergent, a Hollywood movie from 2014, explains it very well. The movie shows the people who think they are the last reminder that human beings created a society and a government system that divides all the people into five factions based on their personality traits. Abnegation (selflessness), Amity (peace), Candor (honesty), Dauntless (bravery), and Erudite (intelligence). Based on the creator ideology, they have created a utopian (ideal society) where everyone is happy, and there will be a long-lasting peace. However, later in the movie, it showed that it is only an ideal society for some of the people who are ruling there and not ideal for others (others consider it to be a dystopian society). As a result, this caused the people to coup against the system and demolish it.

Staff Writer: Edres Sadiqi

The Thinning: A Movie Review



If you had to choose between a utopian or a dystopian future, which one would you choose to be in? I just finished watching a movie named *The Thinning*, which came out in 2016, and it was a thrilling yet mind opening experience. There are many dystopian types of movies, but if you truly want to understand what the difference is between a utopian or dystopian state of society, you have to watch this movie. It portrayed a future where the world was overcrowded, and we had to choose how to fix it. We decided that only the very smart ones can survive and live freely. The smart ones are chosen by having kids from kindergarten to 12th grade take tests in school every year. Only the smart ones who pass get promoted to the next grade until they pass the 12th grade. The ones who fail are taken away and given the death sentence. Here's a twist though: what if the system was rigged? If you were an adult who had a slow learning kid, what would you do? If you were a smart kid but were looked down upon, what would you do? While watching this movie, it made me think of where I would be standing. I was

actually comparing it with my life growing up and today's world. If an adult watches this movie, which side would they be on and if a kid watched this movie, which side would they be on? I really think that this movie can help a lot of people nowadays realize where we are headed in the future. Will we have a dystopian or a utopian future? If you get a chance, try watching this movie and see where you would stand in this utopian/dystopian dichotomy. Thanks for reading my review, and I hope you will give this movie a try if you haven't watched it yet.

Staff Writer: Phong Nguyen

Trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-naUJ6_K2Gs

Power of the Mind--Beyond Limits: Watch *Lucy* (2014)

Lucy, directed by Luc Besson and starring Scarlett Johansson, is a high-energy, sci-fi thriller that grabs your attention from the start. If you are looking for a movie that blends action, philosophy, and a bit of mind-bending fiction, *Lucy* is worth watching. It's a movie that challenges our ideas about human potential, what could happen if we unlocked the full capacity of our brains?

One of the things I love about *Lucy* is how it presents a thrilling, fast-paced story while also making you think. The idea that humans only use 10% of their brains is a myth, of course, but the movie uses this concept to show what might happen if we could push beyond our limits. It explores themes of evolution, control, and the power of human will. Even though the science behind it is fictional, the movie gives you a sense of how much we, as humans, can accomplish when we are determined to make something happen.

Scarlett Johansson's performance as Lucy is intense and powerful. You see her transform as her character's abilities expand. She goes from an ordinary person caught in a dangerous situation to someone with extraordinary control over her surroundings. Johansson manages to keep you invested in Lucy's journey, even as the character becomes more detached from emotions. Her portrayal is both fascinating and believable, making the movie's outlandish plot feel surprisingly real. Visually, the cinematography stands out, with its sleek, modern look and stunning special effects. From the high-speed car chases through Paris to the abstract sequences representing Lucy's heightened perception of the universe, the movie keeps your eyes glued to the screen. The camera work and visuals add to the intensity of the story, immersing you in Lucy's transformation.

What I appreciate most about *Lucy* is its message: the power of the human mind. Even when Lucy's physical state is affected by a dangerous drug, her determination and decision-making drive her forward. It's a reminder that, despite obstacles, we can

push through and achieve incredible things. The film shows that human potential is limitless, an inspiring message, even if it's presented through a fictional lens.

I highly recommend *Lucy*. It's more than just an action-packed sci-fi film; it's a journey into what could be possible if we dared to push beyond our perceived limits.

Staff Writer: Asila Sadiqi



Ode to Belarus

By Alena Shynhel, ESL 350

Everything good deal with you
Everything reverent deal with you
Everything spiritual deal with you.
When I am happy, I think about you
When I am upset, I think about you
When I am sad, I think about you.

You are something that I miss
You are something that I think
You are something that I love.

Love because

You are my places

You are my memories

You are my feelings.

But the most important

You are my home

Wherever I am

Whatever I feel

Whatever I want.

Ode to My Homeland

By Aqila Nasiry

A summer day, sunny weather, and the sound of water coming from the top of the summit. I am sleeping in my mother's arms

Oh, my beloved homeland, the land of my dreams

I was born with the feeling of love for you in my blood, I didn't realize when I

Became attached to you until I left you

I breathe your air, and I am in paradise

Almost a year, and I can't find you

I lost myself.

I am not in my mother's arms anymore

How am I supposed to live without breathing the smell of tulips?

Oh, my mother, I know how tired you are; you must be withering

There is no one to water you, how can I feed you while I am not there.

I will kiss your soil; I will put my head down to touch your beautiful skin

Oh, I can't find you, my hidden blessing.



(Shh! Don't Tell Disneyland!)

What's the Real "Happiest Place on Earth"? Finland!

It's Official

For the seventh year in a row, [Finland has landed the top spot](#) on the World Happiness Report's annual ranking of the happiest countries in the world.

What Is "Happy"?

Countries are ranked according to self-assessed life evaluations, and The Wellbeing Research Centre at the University of Oxford, which publishes the report, says that the report also considers the following six variables in the more than 130 countries ranked in the report:

- GDP per capita
- Social Support
- Healthy life expectancy
- Freedom
- Generosity
- Freedom of corruption

Finland's Secret

"It would be more accurate to say that Finland is the country that has the least unhappy people in the world," Martela tells CNBC Make It.

Finland outperforms the average country in education, work-life balance, environment quality, social connections, safety and life satisfaction, according to the [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development \(OECD\) Better Life Index](#). Life expectancy at birth in Finland is around 82 years, 85 for women and 79 for men. The Finnish people's strong sense of community is further proven by the OECD Better Life Index, which states that 96% of

people believe they know someone they can rely on in their time of need.

Top 10 Happiest Countries in the World:

1. Finland
2. Denmark
3. Iceland
4. Sweden
5. Israel
6. Netherlands
7. Norway
8. Luxembourg
9. Switzerland
10. Australia

This article is excerpted from [Finland is the happiest country in the world for the seventh year in a row.](#)





QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

Student Editors: **Tuyet Le, Emmanuel Madrid, Mohammed El mrani, Sayed Edres Sadiqi, Phong Nguyen, and Asila Sadiqi.**

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.

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