

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



The Parrot



ISSUE #187
FALL 2024



Inside This Issue



Rebecca Wong: Gifted Artist and ESL Professor

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: Professor Rebecca Wong, thank you very much for giving us and the *Parrot* the opportunity to have an interview with you. Let's start our interview with getting to know you. What is your name and can you tell us about your educational background?

Prof. Wong: Sure. So, my name is Rebecca Wong. A little bit about my education background, my undergraduate
Continue on page 18

- Ode to the Sun.....3
- Best Way to Learn English..4
- Micro Adventure.....5
- Basketball Dream.....7
- Syrian Food.....10
- I Miss Morocco.....14
- Carol of the Bells.....15
- Afghan Gathering.....23
- There is a Girl Inside.....29
- Galaxies Far, Far Away.....30
- Top 10 Christmas Movies...32
- Tony Robbins Podcast.....33
- Vocabulary App.....34
- Scholarship Winner.....38

Holy Dinner in Ukraine

Would you like to contribute to The Parrot?
Page 15

The brightest memories of early childhood are always associated with family traditions, which are deeply engraved in something native. Do you have a favorite holiday? Mine is Christmas Eve—the holiday richest in customs in my home country—as its peaceful spirit reminds me of the magic of family, faith, and the unity that makes this celebration so special. In my family, there was a tradition of visiting my grandmother for dinner and showing respect.



Continue on page 25



How to sign up for ESL Assessment

1. Scan the QR code below with your phone, or click on English as a Second Language (ESL) Assessment if you are on a computer.
2. Read all the information, and then scroll to the bottom of the page to choose if you want an in-person or an online ESL Assessment session.
3. After you choose in-person or online, sign up using your student ID number and birth date.



Need help?
esl-assessment@arc.losrios.edu

POEMS FROM STUDENTS

Ode to the Sun

By Ana Rusu -- ESL 350

Oh! My lovely Sun, in the sky so high.
Your golden charm, so bright and warm.
You brighten days in our lives and make us happy,
You rise each morning, painting the sky with a colorful embrace.

Looking at you, feels like heart is flying,
And all thoughts turn into aura.
Your warm rays embrace the earth,
Life comes alive in this wonderful show.

You smile sweetly in all the fields and forests.
Warming each and every leaf and flower,
You reflect like shining gold, in the mirror of the waters
And in our souls you fire flames of love and dreams.

You are a gift from the Lord to us !!!



My Best Way to Learn English

I moved to the USA from Ukraine 1.5 years ago. In the USA, people speak English. I learned this language in my high school in Ukraine. However, I want to improve my English skills and find a good job. The best way for me to learn English is to go to college. My sister went to American River College, so she recommended I go to this college. Now I am a student at ARC. I like to study English in person. All homework assignments and class assignments help me learn English. I like all of them. I especially like to take quizzes.

Antonina Buzian - ESL 37

Advice Paragraph

My Dream Job

My dream job is a wedding decorator. I like to help couples create their dream weddings. I worked as a wedding decorator in Ukraine for about seven years. My sister and I worked together. We had our own business. I also want to achieve this dream job in the USA. First, I need to learn English. I plan to take business classes in the future. This work is not easy. It is really hard. However, this work makes you happy because you help to make a beautiful wedding day for couples. I have good experience in this work. I think I can open my own business. I will study and work hard to achieve my dream job!

Antonina Buzian - ESL 37

Opinion Paragraph

New York

I want to live in New York because it is a very big and beautiful city for me. This city has many many different people. There is one downside. Its very expensive. I want to work and live in New York. I think I can make a lot of money in this city because it is the first city of the world. It is a good experience for life (because you work and speak with different people every day). In New York, you have a lot of on-the-job experience with all kinds of people. I have many friends in New York. They come from my country. I always speak with my friends, and they are waiting for me to visit. New York is a big and wonderful city.

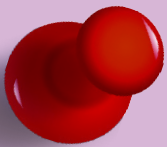


Artem Skvyrskiy - ESL 37

Opinion Paragraph

Micro Adventure for You

If you are very busy and working a lot, you should go on a micro adventure in your city. You should go to the local park, ride your bike along the river, and climb a hill. First, choose a day with good weather and go to the local park. Take a ball with you and play different games in nature. Second, go biking along the river with friends. Start this adventure early in the morning. Bring a water bottle and some snacks with you. Don't forget your phone because you will need it to take pictures of amazing places. Third, hike up a hill. Find a hill with a beautiful view on the map. Wear comfortable shoes and clothes. Take food for a picnic and extra water. When you reach the top of the hill, take some time to rest. Don't forget a blanket or a small camping mat. Have a picnic and enjoy the view. Watch the sunset from the hill. If you go on three micro adventures like this, you will feel refreshed and happy. Remember, sometimes the simplest adventures bring the most joy.



Olena Kalashnyk- ESL 37

Advice Paragraph

The Best Advice

Micro adventures can be some of the most amazing experiences in our lives. You should do them as often as you can. First, I recommend you visit the Creek Park. This park has long trails and beautiful sights. Don't forget to take a bottle of water and a cap. Second, you should go to the Lake Tahoe. In my opinion, it's the most wonderful lake in America. You can enjoy walking and breathing fresh air. Don't forget your lunch if you plan to go hiking for a long time. Third, you should go to the ocean. The best time to go there is a warm sunny day. Don't go to the ocean near a city because there is heavy traffic and many people. You should hike on the bank of the ocean to enjoy fresh smell and listen to the sounds of the waves. Take hot herbal tea and nuts or dried fruit. Finally, I am happy to give you some advice and hope these micro adventures help you have an excellent time.

Alisa Lysenko - ESL 37

Advice Paragraph

My Childhood Greatest Dream



When I was a kid, my greatest dream was to become a professional basketball player. Probably, many people in childhood want to become an astronaut or a ballerina, and some people like several professions at once. As we grow older, childhood dreams are replaced by serious thoughts about choosing a vocation, and I too have often thought about this question. Time was flying by, and I became a teenager, but my dream to become a professional basketball player didn't change. I just loved this game. Also, I had a hoop nearby, and my friends and I went there and played every day, after we did our homework. I was very serious about that and I was actually a very good player. I played at school for a couple of years. Also, I joined basketball clubs outside of school. I watched all the NBA playoffs at that time. I admired Michael Jordan and Kobe Bryant, and I wanted to be like them. Matter of fact, my parents were supporting me in the beginning, but later on they changed their mind. In my senior year of high school I looked for colleges with the opportunity to play basketball, but in the village where I used to live, I couldn't achieve my dream. I decided to move to the capital city of Ukraine, Kyiv, and of course, my parents didn't let me go. In the end,

that was just my dream. One which never came true. My parents thought that was not a real job for women. In their understanding, for women to be a doctor or a teacher it's a much better choice than a basketball player.

Also, they were saying that I am too young to understand what I want to do for a living. Well, in the beginning I was arguing a lot, but then I realized that they would never let me do what I wanted to do, so I just gave up.

Now, I am a parent too and I said to my children, "Dream wherever you want and let me help you to achieve your dreams." Maybe, they will not succeed in their dreams, but at least they will know if it works for them or not. Eventually, they will find their dream job and they never will ask themselves "What IF".



**Roxi Kambur - ESL 41
Opinion Essay**

My Husband's Birthday



My husband was born on November 11th many years ago. One day, before my husband's birthday, our children and I decided to make a surprise for their father. First, we blew up colorful balloons. Second, we decorated our home. The children hung balloons and put flowers in vases. We also made a poster on which we paste photos of dad. The photos showed the most important moments of his life from the moment he was born. Next, we prepared delicious dishes. For example, we made different salads, appetizers, and pies. Then we invited guests. I set the table and decorated it with flowers. When guests came to us, they brought many gifts for my husband and we sang him the song *Happy Birthday*. After that, my husband blew out candles on a big cake. The cake was unusual because we ordered a specialty cake.

On the cake was a small home, garden with apple trees, his cat, and figurines of our family. Of course, figurines were from sugar and cream. Finally, we created a competition. At our party everyone was having a good time. We danced, listened to music, talked and everyone said good wishes to my husband. Indeed, my husband was really happy.

Svetlana Selvasyuk- ESL 47
Narrative Paragraph

Syrniki

In my home country, cheesecakes are one of the most famous desserts, and we call them *syrniki* in my language. They have a round shape, like a hockey puck. *Syrniki* are soft, sweet, and golden in color, with a delicious aroma. I make them from cottage cheese, eggs, sugar, a little bit of flour, and vanilla sugar. I fry them in a pan with a little oil until they are perfectly golden. *Syrniki* can be enjoyed at any time of day; they are perfect for breakfast or as a dessert after dinner. You do not need a special holiday or event to eat *syrniki*, and they are even available in Ukrainian buffets in Sacramento. I make them for my family if I have free time, and they are my kids' favorite dish. Sometimes, I add raisins inside and serve them with condensed milk. Many people from Ukraine find *syrniki* difficult to cook because they can become too wet and lose their shape. One time, I tried to cook them as a teenager—it was a disaster. But I did not give up. Indeed, *syrniki* bring happiness to our family, and they remind us of home in Ukraine.



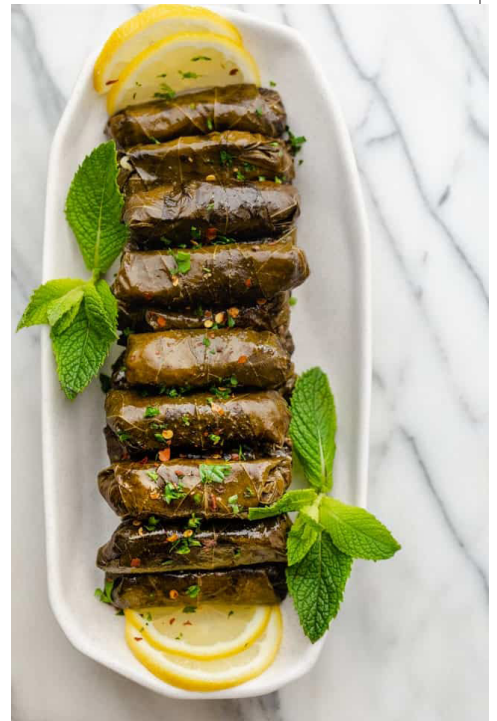
Olena Ivaniuk- ESL 47
Descriptive Paragraph

Warq Aleanab from Syria



In my country, there are many, many delicious foods, but it is my special dish that suits my taste “warq aleanab” or in English “stuffed grape leaves.” This food has a sour taste, but not like any sour one you know. It has a tangy taste, so it has that taste you can’t guess, what kind of flavor? *Warq aleanab*. It is small, gorgeous, beautiful rolls, that line up in the pot like soldiers in their bright green color uniforms as they line up for morning training. The preparation process takes time. First of all, the dish is made from grape leaves and a stuffing made of rice, lamb meat, and specific spices. Next, put the stuffing inside a grape leaf and roll it up. Finally, flatten the rolls gently in the pot. However, they have a special mattress that is made from tomato, garlic, and a lot of lamb meat with extra fat, and lemon. You must imagine these rolls as special guests with luxurious suites. This dish takes hours of simmering. When it is done, flip it. Then, enjoy eating it. This dish is the symbol of love. If I know someone exceptional, I invited them to share with us *warq aleanab*. This food is a main course you can eat for dinner or lunch. Don’t forget to drink a cup of tea after it. It is not like turkey at Thanksgiving, but we make it several times during the year. This dish never fails to transport me to culinary paradise with its exquisite taste and comforting aroma. One

time, when I was a little girl, my mom and I went to our farm to pick grape leaves to make warq aleanob, but when we arrived there, we didn’t find enough grape leaves to cook. I felt disappointed because while I was sleeping the night before, I dreamed about it, so I felt sad all the way back home, but when I entered the house, I found that my aunt had sent us a delicious plate of grape leaves. It felt like a dream come true. Indeed, this food is so spicy, and it takes the first place on my list of favorite foods. The taste falls in your heart before your mouth.



Rawda Shahada - ESL 47
Descriptive Paragraph

Raising a Pearl



Do you know how to grow a pearl? Do you know how to raise a child like a pearl? In the history helpful book *I Survived the Great Molasses Flood, 1919* by Lauren Tarshis, a smart little girl named Carmen has a very hard life, but she grows similar to an amazing pearl. Papa and Nonna are very important, lovely people in Carmen's life, and they help her grow like a pearl.

Nonna is a minor character in this book, but she is Carmen's grandmother, so she is important for Carmen. She loves Carmen. For example, she has an interest in Carmen's life, and she corresponds with her. Nonna has a big life experience and wisdom. For instance, she gives a wise advice to Carmen. Her words "Trees don't grow overnight" teach Carmen to be patient. Nonna was like a mother to Carmen because Carmen early lost her mom. When Carmen was two years old and all her family lived in Italy, a powerful earthquake took her mother's life. Nonna was instead a mom to Carmen. In short, Nonna is a very lovely important person in Carmen's life, and

she supports and helps Carmen grow like a pearl.

Papa is Carmen's father, and he is a major character in this book. Papa is from Italy. He emigrated to America with Carmen when he couldn't earn enough money to have a good life with Carmen in Italy. He hopes that Carmen will have a good life in America. For instance, he says, "Anything is possible in America" and "If you work hard, a person can be anything they want to be." He is a very hardworking man. In particular, he was a farmer in Italy, and he works in the stable in Boston. He is very strong. He rescued Carmen from the flood after an earthquake in Italy. In sum, Papa is a very lovely and important person for Carmen, and he helps her grow into a beautiful pearl.

In conclusion, Nonna and Papa are very lovely and important people for Carmen, and they help Carmen become a wonderful pearl. A pearl can grow from a simple grain of sand protected inside a shell. Carmen is like a grain of sand, and Nonna and Papa are like a loving clam shell for her. This book is very helpful for me because I am a mother, and I dream that my children will be like Carmen.



Liudmyla Peshko - ESL 47
Descriptive Essay

Grateful for America



America is a country for a wonderful life for most people because there are many opportunities for a good life here. People from America are grateful for many different things. Their lives are better because the government of this country cares about its citizens. We came from Ukraine to America four years ago to provide the better life from our three small children. I am thankful for three things in this country: my big apartment, my new car, and for the opportunity to live in America.

First of all, my family moved to Harlow Apartments three years ago. They are in Sacramento, Watt Avenue. It was our first housing in America. My husband's sister lived here, and she offered us this place to live. We were very happy to get this apartment because it was a big and well-lit place. There were a lot of Slavic people here, which helped me not to miss my country. Beautiful green area which bike. Paths for children and a closed area, but we especially love the large swimming pool where we spend our summer days. Entering the apartment can see a large window overlooking the trees. First, we enter a large living room with a kitchen and dining room. This is where we spend most of our time and love spending time here with friends, cooking delicious steak, desserts, and listening to our friends play the guitar. Our apartment has a new kitchen with a new oven and refrigerator. I like to cook here, so when I'm in the kitchen, my family spends time in the living room, where I watch a movie with

them. The kitchen and dining room are together, so its very convenient to serve food. My children love to be in the living room because there we have a TV, couch, and big play set for our kids. We also have a bedroom with large closets and a soft bed. In the summer, we put a small pool on the patio and its good on hot days in Sacramento. Indeed, my family is glad for this place because here we can relax after hard days.

Second, I am thankful in America for my new car. Having arrived in America, we realized that it was difficult here without a car, so this is my second car. My husband bought me a BMV two months ago. It's a white color car and has black leather inside. I need a car here because I need to drop off my kids at school every morning. I also drive to college and have a chance to study English. After that, I go to the grocery store and buy some food, and my car has a big trunk, so I can put many bags of food. Also, I take my son to boxing class and my daughter to swimming. In the evening on Wednesday, Friday, and every morning on Sunday we go to church. We travel by car all the time, and only on weekends does my family take a break from everyday life and go to the park to ride bikes along the American River. Finally, I'm glad that I have a car in America because it makes my life easier.

Last thing, I am thankful for the opportunity to live in America. When I was a small girl, I loved to watch American movies on TV, and it was my dream

to live here and travel around America. Therefore, I am very happy and thank God that my family is here right now. The first thing I liked was that people can have an education. It is not only young people, but also for adult and seniors. There are many free schools and colleges for learning English, which is very important for an immigrant. This was a big help for me because I couldn't speak or understand people. Next thing is a trip to America. This country has a lot of places for traveling.

Indeed, I am grateful to God for my beautiful apartment, my white car, and the chance to live in America. My family believes in our future in America because it is a country with a lot of possibilities.

Alona Kokhanevych- ESL 47
Opinion Essay



We can fly to any states by plane or by car, but it will take longer. In these four years I have a lot of places that we visited. In short, they were amazing and beautiful trips. My family and I were in Los Angeles near Hollywood and "The Walk of Fame." On the way home we stopped at many beaches, it was very beautiful. Last year, we were in Las Vegas and Arizona in the Red Canyon. These were huge rocks that we couldn't believe we were seeing. This year, I was in South Carolina. There is beautiful nature and fresh air there. In fact, the people in this state have another life, more quiet and they are not in a hurry, unlike California. Of course, we want to visit more places in America. Therefore, this will still be our dream. Lastly, I am thankful to live in America because it makes my life better, and my family is happier.

What Do You Miss About Your Home Country?

Why I Miss Morocco

Morocco is a country filled with vibrant culture, stunning landscapes, and warm hospitality, and it holds a special place in my heart. As I reflect on my time there, I am overwhelmed by a deep sense of nostalgia.

Whether it is the delicious food, the bustling markets, or the rich traditions, Morocco has left an indelible mark on my life.

The first thing that makes me yearn for my country, Morocco, is the treasure trove of memories that I carry with me wherever I go. I was born and raised in Morocco, where I built friendships that remain strong to this day. Whenever I have the chance to visit, the first thing I do is reconnect with my friends and reminisce about our shared experiences. During my last visit, as we sat together, recalling both joyful and bittersweet moments, we joked about the idea of writing a book to preserve those significant stages of our lives and reflect on how they shaped our personalities.

One of the main reasons I miss Morocco is the cuisine. Moroccan food is a feast for the senses, from the rich, flavorful tagines to the freshly baked bread and fragrant mint tea. The use of spices like saffron, cumin, and cinnamon creates a symphony of flavors that I haven't been able to replicate elsewhere. I especially miss sitting with family and friends to share a communal meal, a tradition that reflects Morocco's strong sense of community and togetherness.



Another thing I deeply miss about Morocco is the lively atmosphere of the markets, or souks. Walking through the winding alleys of Marrakech or Fes is an adventure in itself. The vibrant colors of the textiles, the intricate patterns of pottery, and the scent of spices in the air create a magical experience. Bargaining with shopkeepers, hearing their stories, and discovering unique treasures made every visit to the souk a memorable event.

The natural beauty of Morocco is another reason I long to return. From the rolling sand dunes of the Sahara Desert to the rugged Atlas Mountains and the serene beaches along the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts, Morocco is a land of diverse landscapes. Watching the sunrise over the Sahara or hiking through the Todra Gorge gave me a sense of peace and connection to nature that I haven't found elsewhere. These breathtaking sights are forever etched in my memory.

In conclusion, Morocco is not just a country from which I come but also a part of who I am. Its vibrant culture, breathtaking landscapes, and cherished traditions have shaped my identity and continue to inspire me no matter where I am. From the warmth of its people to the unforgettable flavors of its cuisine and the beauty of its natural wonders, every aspect of Morocco calls me back. While I may be far from its borders, the memories I carry and the connections I maintain ensure that Morocco is never far from my heart. I eagerly await the day when I can once again walk its streets, embrace its people, and immerse myself in its unparalleled charm.

Parrot Staff Writer: Mohammed El mrani

Shchedryk: The Origin of *Carol of the Bells*



Carol of the Bells is one of the most famous Christmas carols in the USA and around the world, warming the hearts of nations with its timeless holiday sound. The song has traveled for a century, from families in different countries to appearances in iconic films like *Home Alone* and others. But have you ever considered where this song originated?

Ukrainian culture is rich in folk art, especially in music. A famous Ukrainian composer, Mykola Leontovych, awakened the world's Christmas spirit by writing a song called *Shchedryk* between 1901 and 1916. The word *Shchedryk* in Ukrainian means "generosity," and the original lyrics tell the story of a swallow visiting a household to bring good fortune and prosperity for the coming year.

After Leontovych's song was released in 1919, the Ukrainian National Chorus, conducted by Oleksandr Koshyts, began traveling throughout Europe and the USA, performing *Shchedryk* with its magical lyrics derived from a Christian chant. On October 5, 1922, they performed the song in Ukrainian at Carnegie Hall in New York, marking a significant moment in its international recognition. After that, American composer Peter J. Wilhousky was inspired by this song and adapted

it, adding English lyrics more closely associated with Christmas themes, focusing on the sound of the "bells." He released the song in 1936, calling it *Carol of the Bells*. This adaptation rapidly gained popularity and became an iconic Christmas song worldwide.

In recent years, the world has become more aware of the Ukrainian roots of *Carol of the Bells*, and it is more often recognized as *Shchedryk* as well. For instance, the original *Shchedryk* was featured in an episode of the new season of the Netflix series *The Umbrella Academy*, which was released this August. In 2022, to celebrate the 100th anniversary and recreate the debut from 1922, a special show was held by the Ukrainian Institute, where the chorus performed again at Carnegie Hall, blending both Ukrainian and English lyrics into one masterpiece. You can enjoy the performance, where art and Christmas connect the American and Ukrainian nations through *Shchedryk* and *Carol of the Bells*:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCXyg6HkuDo>

Parrot Staff Writer: Sofia Kovalko



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!

Granny Noetal

Welcome to the Granny Noetal Column! Our student staff is pleased to share valuable tips and advice to support you on your academic journey at ARC.

Dear Granny,

I have spent so much time studying for a major that it has been hard to find a job at an entry level. I'm also interested in another major at a Los Rios Community College. Should I spend more time learning for a second degree?

Thanks,

Confused Student

Dear Confused Student,

Thanks for emailing us about your issue. I'm sorry that you are facing such a challenging situation. I believe it is never too late to learn another degree. I encourage you to go with your interests; however, you should find a temporary job which helps you gain more experience in the working environment while you are still at college. That way, when you are going to finish your degree, you will have more chances to get a career you love because you have work experience to match your education.

I hope we were able to provide satisfying advice to the student question. I am thankful for the information and experience the student shared with us. If you need some advice, please share your question with us at:

Granny Noetal

TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu

Thanks,

Granny Noetal



Continued from page 1

degree is in Art, Art Education. Actually, I started out my art education in elementary. I have a rich background in teaching, pretty much all grades K through 12th in fine arts as well as teaching all the subjects K through 8th for elementary. I spent a couple of years teaching in that area. I also did a lot of travel overseas and lots of humanitarian projects. I worked with lots of orphanages and I taught at different orphanages. Everywhere that I travelled in the world, I kept getting the same request: Can you please teach English? Can you please train bilingual teachers to teach English to the children? So, I saw this common pattern throughout my travels in different areas that I taught and worked. That actually motivated me, so when I came back to the U.S from working overseas, I decided to complete my master's in TESOL (Teaching English to Speaker of Other Languages). I realized that it could be a very helpful tool to use in other countries as well as in the United States to teach at the college level. That is a little bit about my background.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: Thank you very much for providing that information. Can you also share how you started your professional career and what inspired you to consider teaching at American River College?

Prof. Wong: Yes, so in terms of my career as an ESL professor, I think as I was coming to graduation, I had decided to pursue a master's in TESOL. Then I realized that as much as I love working with children, teaching adults at college level is also an area of interest for me and can provide more stability. In addition, how should I say this, I love children, but they are really energy sucking. So, at the end of the day I was coming home super exhausted from teaching the kids, and I was like, I can't do this, this is too much. Actually, switching over to college was, first of all, refreshing or I can say like a fresh breath. Secondly, I realized that I love working with peo-



ple from all different countries, so teaching ESL was a perfect fit for me. Before teaching at ARC, I was teaching at Woodland, which was a longer commute for me, so when a position opened up at American River College, they reached out to me for an interview. I said, "Oh,

that would be great." I am so happy I took that step because I am truly enjoying working at American River College with all the staff and faculty here. Such a great hub, especially the ESL center. I love how it is the hub of ESL.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: Thank you very much. Since ARC is so diverse, what do you like the most

about working in such a culturally diverse environment?

Prof. Wong: Oh, I just love the people. That is my favorite thing. Connecting with others and getting to know all the different backgrounds, hearing all different languages in my classrooms. Getting to hear all the experiences of my students. That is what brings the richness to the teaching here.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: Great, I have been in some of those classes with students from different countries. I know lots of funny things can happen. Can you share a memorable or funny moment from a classroom that involved students from different cultures?

Prof. Wong: So many funny moments, especially when students misunderstand the English. That's humor. I can't remember any certain instances, but I can share a story. At the end of my first semester in the spring, for finals, I said, Okay, we are going to do a movie party and we are going to have a big potluck, lunch or dinner together and we all can bring food. All my students came in and surprised me, they bought this beautiful flowering plant that was so huge and gorgeous. They were so sweet, they knew that I love plants, and I love flowers, they were like, "Prof., we want you to plant this in your garden and every time you water this, think of us, each of these flowers are one of the students in your class." I



said, "Oh, this is such a sweet gift."

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: You mentioned that you have travelled to many countries. Now the question is, if you could travel to any country represented by your students, where would you go and why?

Prof. Wong: This is a hard question. I want to go to all of the countries represented by my students. If I have to pick only one, one of my students is from Jordan and I really would love to go there. They have so many historical, cultural, and religious sights, and I think that would be a fun country to visit.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: Thank you very much. Now can you tell me, if you had to adjust your teaching methods to better engage students from various countries?, how would you do so?

Prof. Wong: I am always watching and noticing how my students react or respond to each lesson--to the things they understand and the things they don't understand. Every lesson I teach, I almost never teach it the same again, because, every time I am teaching I notice something different, and then I react and respond, act more carefully, change the direction, even topics or the types

of essays we do in our writing classes. It will depend largely on what I sense my students are ready to go towards. For example, this semester I noticed so many amazing stories coming up from my students. So, I said, why don't we do narrative essays. Share with me where your journey is coming from. Tell me what you have been through in the United States. I was just trying to connect whatever they are going through or have gone through to the lessons of reading and writing that we are doing in our classroom.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: Thank you very much. I believe being at ARC where there are lots of students with different backgrounds is a great opportunity for all the students, and they should get the maximum benefit out of this opportunity. What would be your most important advice to students about how to make the most of their experience at ARC?

Prof. Wong: One of the things that I always tell my students is to take notes, write, write and write. Take notes about everything you see in the class. We are in the digital age of technology and my students say it is easier to snap a picture or ask me to send the slides than actually writing things down. I tell them, even when I practice different languages, I have my language journal for each language that I have. And I am writing down the things that I learn, writing down the new words, writing down the things happening in the class or even when I am at home and encounter certain things. So, the more you are writing it down, the more it ingrains in your memory. Even typing with a computer cannot compare. Studies have shown that writing by hand actually reinforces the memory and learning process. It is the strongest and the best.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: This is really great information and great advice for the students indeed. Our following questions are something about you outside of your professional life. Can you share with us, outside of the academic world, what are your hobbies or passions that you love to do in your free time?

Prof. Wong: I love hosting, I love cooking, I love all the social activities that involve being with people. I also love doing art. I am very creative and artistic and I love travelling. Traveling the world and going all over the places. I didn't share this earlier, but I thought it might be helpful to mention that one of the ways that I enjoy connecting with the students most is because my own family are refugees to this country. So, I let the students

know from the first day of the class, "I understand where you are coming from and the hardship that you have been through." My family flew from Vietnam at the end of Vietnam War under very difficult circumstances and amazingly all of my immediate family made it here alive except one uncle who sadly died in the war, because he was fighting on the front lines. But otherwise, both my mom and dad's families miraculously made it to the United States. Came here without knowing a little English. They had nothing but a bag of clothes and whatever they could get from the refugee camps. So, I let my students know from the get-go, I understand the hardship and what it takes, what amount of great determination it takes to be successful, but I am here to show you, it is possible. If I could go through the academic system, learn English, with my family go from nothing and be able to make something, I know each one of them also can. So, having that background experience and the crazy things that my family has been through gives me such a great connection. In addition, being able to travel the world and connect with people all over the world as well adds to the cultural diversity that I enjoy and thrive on. That is my happy spot.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: I think the information you shared is so helpful because I am a first-generation immigrant to the United States and having a teacher who experienced our life and understands our struggles can be so helpful.

You have also mentioned about your art. It was interesting to me and I would love to hear more about your art. So, can you please share with us what kind of art you do?

Prof. Wong: Yes. So, my hands are into a lot of different arts. Even though I had my specialty in arts back in the day. Because I have an art degree. My specialty was in oil painting, but I have really diversified since then, so, between drawing, painting, design, ceramics, I do all kinds of arts. That is why I love teaching. Because in teaching you have to learn it to teach someone else. So, I am trying to experiment with many different things, and I also love cultural arts. For example, last year I travelled to Japan and learned an ancient pottery technique called kintsugi. It's where you take broken pottery and bind it back together with tree sap, and then actually you cover it in gold powder dust. It makes these elaborate beautiful pieces from broken pottery. There are so many different things that I could go into, but I won't go into today. Hence, there are lots of things in the arts that



I enjoy doing.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: It was really interesting to me. Thank you very much for sharing. Can you share more about your art business and tell us, what is your art business all about?

Prof. Wong: Because of my passion in art, I teach art workshops on the side. And I showed it to my two students because they have asked so much about it, and I have shared it. I do art workshops in the local community. I teach in Colfax, Auburn, and Roseville area. I do pop-up art workshops, like paint nights, or design nights, or build the terraria, so that families can come together and/or single people or just friends who want to have some fun or socialize. I host private events, I do corporate events, like for companies, if they want their employees to have a creative professional development day or for a birthday party for a group of friends or a social event for a church. So, I do all these different pop-

ups. I also do art camps for kids in the summer, teaching them all different creativity techniques, painting, and drawing. I now teach art classes for some high schoolers

now while I am teaching at American River College as well. I do all those as well as I do local art shows in Colfax. I sell my art online. I go to art shows and features and connect with other artists.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: Great, it looks like you are a multi-talented person. My next question is, how does being an artist affect the way you teach in your classroom?

Prof. Wong: Creativity is in everything that I do. So, I bring that into the classroom and the projects that students do. Whether they are designing a poster or creating different visual presentations, even the ice-breaker that we do in the class, when they are building things or creating things. It is fun because the language can be wrapped around the art in many ways. Just having that creative approach, I want to see my students have fun in my class. They are going to learn, they are going to write essays, they are going to be pushed and challenged but at the same time, I want the students to have some fun. I do enjoy the creativity that comes from making and designing new things, and, amazingly, every time I do an art project I am surprised because my students are so creative and artistic. When I see that, I am like, "Wow, you blow me away." There were some students saying, "I don't know. I can't do anything creative," and then I say, "Are you sure?" And when I actually see them making stuff, I am like, "Wow, you are definitely creative."

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: Do you have any pictures or a link from your website about your art that you want to share with us and readers?



Prof. Wong: My website is under my company name [CanvasHeart.Co](https://www.CanvasHeart.Co), and you can share my website and I will share some photos of my art that you can share as well, and the readers can also visit the website to view lots of my artworks, my art shop and different classes that I do.

Sayed Edres Sadiqi: Professor Wong, thank you very much for the time and the great information you have provided to us during the interview. It was a pleasure talking to you today and we wish you all the very best.

Prof. Wong: Thank you, Edres. I appreciate it.



Afghan Community Gathering: A Platform to Learn, Entertain, and Socialize



As of November 2024, Sacramento has become home to the largest Afghan immigrant population in all the United States. Although the majority of the Afghan population inhabits the city of Sacramento and the surrounding cities like Roseville, Elk Grove, and Rancho Cordova, there are still not enough community gatherings or programs that can help the Afghan community resettle in the U.S. Luckily, [MAS-SSF](#) (Muslim American Society for Social Services Foundation), which is a non-profit organization, conducts community gathering programs for immigrants every now and then. In particular, they do this for immigrants who came to the United States from Muslim countries.

On November 17, 2024, my family and I attended an Afghan community gathering organized by the MAS-SSF under the "Omid for Afghan" projects. Around 250 Afghans and their family members attended this community gathering event.

It was a very well-organized program, as the organizers thought of everything needed in a community gathering. There was a babysitting area with professional babysitters to take care of children while the parents were attending the program. It was very educational when Dr. Jawid Jameh, an Afghan-American, gave a presentation about the challenges and obstacles that immigrants can face during their resettlement period and how they

should address those challenges and overcome those obstacles to make sure they are not trapped in anxiety and depression. Furthermore, the part of the program that I loved the most was having live traditional music performed by Afghan-Americans and newly immigrated Afghan artists such as Atiq Shirzad (vocalist), Parviz Husaini (vocalist), Ashraf Jamal (keyboard player), and Syar Yusufzai (tabla player). It felt amazing having live Afghan music in a community gathering program. The program attendees were served a traditional Afghan lunch prepared by a local Afghan catering through MAS-SSF. There was a variety of different foods such as rice, kobedeh, eggplant, chicken korma, and spinach along with the seasoned vegetables and cold drinks served in a buffet style. My family and I enjoyed the food while listening to live music and sitting at a table with my extended family members in the Afghan community gathering in Sacramento, which usually happens so rarely.



One other part of the program that I found very interesting and rewarding was filling out a survey. Right after the registration process, my family and I were guided to a table that was reserved already under my name through my online registration. After getting a small break sitting at my reserved table, I was asked to follow one of the program organizers to a room at the end of the hall to fill out a survey questionnaire. It was super interesting

to me because, on that survey, there were so many questions, all about my immigration and resettlement process and the challenges I faced in all the years I lived in the U.S. as an immigrant. These were questions that I was never asked by any organization or a person before. Filling out the survey, for the very first time, I felt it was okay that I came as an immigrant to the United States, and that I do matter here, and I am important too. There are governmental and non-governmental agencies who follow up with us (me and people like me) who immigrated to the U.S.,



strengthening old bonds and making new bond with new Afghans. My wife, my son, and I enjoyed each part of the program and spent quality time with the community. I recommend all immigrants to attend their community gathering programs which are so helpful in their resettlement process. They can learn so many things from the community gatherings, and they are also a great platform to make friends from their community. I also request the governmental and non-governmental organizations in Sacramento and other surrounding cities to provide more and more community gathering programs for the new immigrants to help them cope with the new life in America and make their resettlement process easier.

Parrot Staff Writer: Sayed Edres Sadiqi



on how we are doing here and what our problems and difficulties are. They are putting lots of effort and energy into trying to help. After completing that survey and submitting it to the officer assigned there, I felt very good and it felt like I am also important here. On top of all the positive vibes I got from the survey, the organizer assigned a person to give me a \$25 gift card for the time I spent answering the survey questions, so that was rewarding too.

Overall, I found the community gathering super entertaining, educational, and a great platform for Afghan community members to socialize by





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

I remember when I was small, I would look out the window at home, my eyes catching glimpses of twilight through the thick snowflakes flying from the endless sky, and my pleasant excitement would grow along with my patience. I loved going to my grandmother's home; its cozy decorations and the Christmas tree blinking with its lights gave me a feeling of something indescribable that always lived deeply in my soul. But even more, it was heightened by the anticipation of the most delicious dinner of the day before Christmas, Holy Dinner, or *Svyat Vechir* in Ukrainian.

Christmas Eve is one of the most important holidays in Ukraine, and the traditions and preparations for it are deeply sacred and respected. For the Holy Dinner, Ukrainians prepare 12 meatless dishes, symbolizing the 12 Apostles of Christ. This requirement reflects the tradition of fasting, during which a special diet is observed—no meat is allowed for 40 days before Christmas. However, only very devout Christians strictly follow this rule for the entire fasting period. In my family, we do not adhere to the 40-day fast, but observing this rule during the Holy Dinner is inevitable. While the selection of dishes varies across regions and even among families, I'd like to share the ones that my family makes.

1. Kutya

The most important and ancient Ukrainian dish on Christmas Eve; without trying it, the main

supper cannot be started. This sweet delicacy is made of wheat grains, dried fruits, honey, poppy seeds, and nuts. Honestly, I don't like kutya because its ingredients aren't tasty to me. However, to honor the tradition and officially start the dinner, I always pick out only the nuts. My relatives always joke about this, making it a funny little tradition of its own in our family.

2. Borshch without meat

The most famous first dish in Ukraine, made of beets, potatoes, and other vegetables. However, while traditional borshch is rich with meat, for the Holy Dinner, it should be meatless.

3. Varenyky stuffed with mashed potatoes

These delicious dumplings can be stuffed with different kinds of fillings.

4. Varenyky stuffed with stewed cabbage**5. Holubtsi stuffed with buckwheat**

You can call them cabbage rolls—when the cabbage leaves are wrapped around the fillings. It is my favorite dish on the table, as we only eat it once a year. In our recipe, we make a filling of rice mixed with ground meat. My mom doesn't love making holubtsi with buckwheat, so the Holy Dinner at my grandmother's house was the only time of year I could savor this delicious food. When my grandmother could no longer organize the Holy Dinner due to her age, my older sister took over the recipe and started making it.

6. Fried fish**7. Herring with onions****8. Baked fish****9. Pampushky with cherries, fruit jam, or garlic**

Incredibly soft yeast-raised buns, usually presented on the table in two kinds: savory, sprinkled with chopped garlic, or sweet, stuffed with cherries or any jam and covered in powdered sugar. It is also my favorite dish of the Holy Dinner, especially the ones with cherries.

10. Pickled mushrooms



11. Stewed cabbage with mushrooms



12. Uzvar



A drink made of dried berries.

The Holy Dinner is not only about savoring delicious dishes, but it is also about preserving ancient traditions. While honoring the birth of Jesus Christ is important, Ukrainians also dedicate time

to preparing every detail, beautifully decorating the table with ornaments that hold deep Ukrainian meaning. The warm atmosphere grows even cozier as candles are lit, shining with hope for a better future in the coming year. The calmness and peacefulness of the dinner are enhanced by children who visit from house to house, singing Ukrainian Christmas songs called *shchedrivka* and receiving treats in return.

My last Holy Dinner in Ukraine was during Christmas 2021-2022, before the war in my homeland started. I came to the USA alone, without my parents, but my Ukrainian family here, who have lived in the U.S. for a long time, still support this tradition and organize *Svyat Vechir*, preparing all 12 dishes. But honestly, celebrating it in the USA lacks the magic and sacred atmosphere I experienced in Ukraine. I dream that one day, after we win the war and Ukrainian customs and culture remain alive, as they have for centuries, I will celebrate another Holy Dinner in Ukraine, when the sounds of *Shchedryk* will be heard in every part of the country.

Parrot Staff Writer: Sofia Kovalko

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.

Poem

There Is a Girl Inside

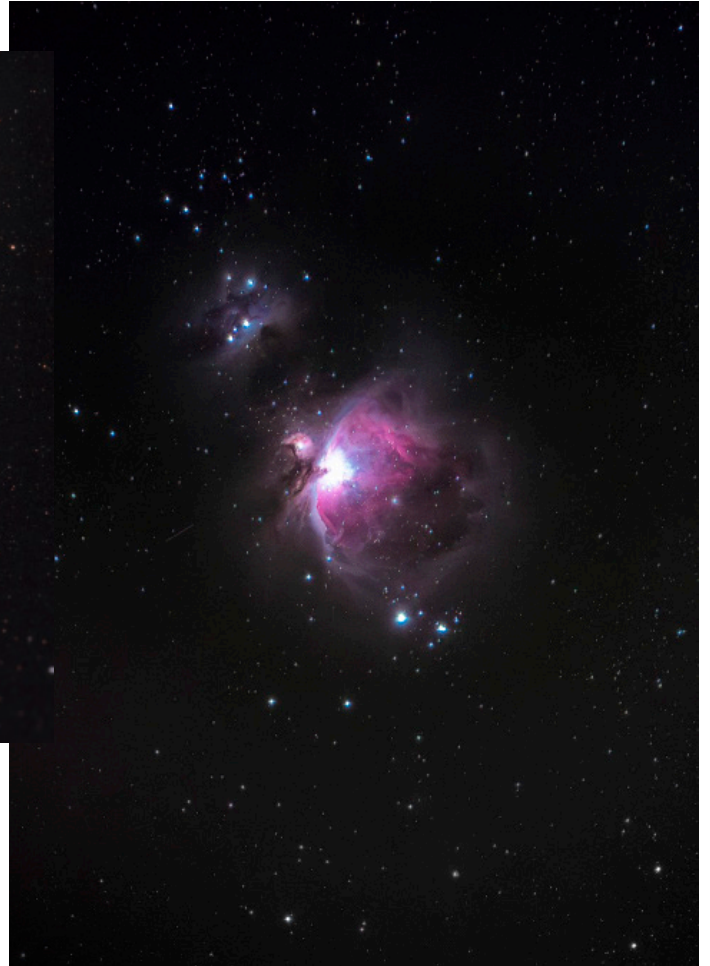
By Lucille Clifton

There is a girl inside.
She is randy as a wolf.
She will not walk away
And leave these bones
To an old woman.
She is a green tree
In a forest of kindling.
She is a green girl
In a used poet.
She has waited
Patient as a nun
For the second coming,
When she can break through gray hairs
Into blossom
And her lovers will harvest
Honey and thyme
And the woods will be wild
With the damn wonder of it.

I chose the poem "There Is a Girl Inside" by Lucille Clifton for this article because, as a student in EN-GWR 301, I am currently exploring New Criticism in my textbook, *Critical Theory Today* by Lois Tyson. Tyson encouraged me to explore the poem's structure and analyze its rich use of imagery, tension, and representation. The theme of inner vitality versus outward aging resonated deeply with me, and I found the poet's ability to convey such profound emotions through carefully chosen words fascinating. I wanted to share this poem with readers to inspire them with its beauty and layers of meaning.

Parrot Staff Writer: Asila Sadiqi

Capturing the Galaxies Far, Far Away...



Are you fascinated by the stars, planets, and galaxies? Want to capture the beauty of deep space just like I did? Follow this simple guide to take amazing photos of the Andromeda Galaxy and Orion's Belt.

What You Need:

1. Telephoto Lens: A telephoto lens (like a 200mm, for example) helps you see far into space. I used my Nikon 400mm for the photos shown above.

2. Camera: A DSLR or a mirrorless camera works

well. You can also use a smartphone with a good camera. I used a mirrorless one.

3. Mount or Startracker: A sturdy mount keeps your telescope steady. A motorized equatorial mount is best for tracking stars.

4. Remote Shutter Release: This helps you take photos without touching the camera, reducing shake.

5. Computer and Software: For processing your photos later. [PixInsight](#) is fun and easy to use!

Steps to Take Deep Space Photos:

1. Setting Up

A) Find a Dark Place: Go somewhere with little light pollution. Far from city lights is best.

B) Align the Mount: Point your mount or startracker at Polaris (the North Star). This helps in tracking stars.

2. Taking the Photo

A) Attach the Camera: Mount your camera and lens on the startracker.

B) Focus: Look through the camera and adjust the focus until stars look sharp.

C) Use the Right Settings: Set your camera to manual mode. Use the following settings:

- **ISO:** Start with ISO 800.
- **Aperture:** Set it wide open (f/2.8 or lower).
- **Shutter Speed:** Use a longer exposure, around 30 seconds.
- **Track the Stars:** Use your mount's motor to follow the stars as the Earth rotates.

3. Finding the Andromeda Galaxy and Orion's Belt

A) Andromeda Galaxy: It's a large spiral galaxy. Look northeast of the constellation Pegasus. It appears as a faint, fuzzy spot.

B) Orion's Belt: This is a line of three bright stars in the Orion constellation. It's easy to spot in the night sky.

4. Taking Multiple Shots

Take several shots of the same area. This helps reduce noise and improve detail.

5. Processing the Photos

A) Stacking: Use software like PixInsight to combine multiple shots. This enhances the quality.

B) Editing: Adjust brightness, contrast, and color using photo-editing software. Adobe Photoshop and GIMP are popular choices.

Tips for Success

A) Be Patient: Deep space photography takes time and practice. I count myself lucky to get these decent results, considering it was my first time trying this type of photography; however, there is always space for improvement.

B) Experiment: Try different settings and locations.

C) Connect with Others: Making new friends with people who are also passionate about capturing these types of photos can be helpful and inspiring. You can also share tips and do meet-ups and photograph together.

Capturing the Andromeda Galaxy and Orion's Belt is a rewarding experience. With practice, you'll be able to take stunning deep space photos. Happy stargazing!

If you have any questions or need more help, feel free to ask. Enjoy your journey into deep space photography!

If you want to see more of my work, please check out my instagram: [Instagram.com/emrrado](https://www.instagram.com/emrrado)

By Manny

Top 10 Christmas Movies

When the snowflakes are falling behind the window and the coldness of frozen intricate patterns appears on the glass... Wait, wait, but there is no snow in California! Nevertheless, there's no danger that the absence of snow will steal your Christmas mood. There's still time for you to make hot tea, surround yourself with plenty of sweets, and dive into holiday coziness, as *The Parrot* team has prepared a list of Christmas movies to watch.

1. *The Christmas Chronicles* (2018)

What a big dream it is for a child to meet the real Santa and his reindeer. This is exactly what happens to Kate and Teddy in this visually stunning movie, when they accidentally ruin Santa's plans on Christmas night.

2. *Spirited* (2022)

Is it possible to 'redeem' the 'unredeemable'? The Ghost of Christmas Present tries to change the perspective of the arrogant Clint Briggs by forcing him to confront his past, all while the Ghost struggles with his own.

3. *Falling for Christmas* (2022)

The plot centers on the spoiled daughter of a millionaire who loses her memory in a skiing accident and receives care at a cozy family lodge, where Sierra begins to rediscover the true values of family.

4. *A Boy Called Christmas* (2021)

Have you ever wondered about Santa's past? The story follows a young boy, Nikolas, on a magical journey to find his missing father in the snowy North. Along the way, he uncovers the true meaning of Christmas and starts to become the legendary Santa Claus.

5. *The Holiday* (2006)

An incredible movie where the bold decision to exchange homes, as Iris and Amanda did to escape their heartbreaking present, leads to discovering a new meaning of love during the Christmas break.

6. *Last Christmas* (2019)

Looking for twists in movies? The story of Kate,

an elf in a Christmas store who meets a charming stranger named Tom and rediscovers the meaning of love and life, is just for you. The heartwarming plot magically intertwines with the beauty of Christmas.

7. *Family Switch* (2023)

On a snowless night in Los Angeles, a family with complicated relationships between parents and children experiences the magic of body-switching.

8. *Home Alone* (1990)

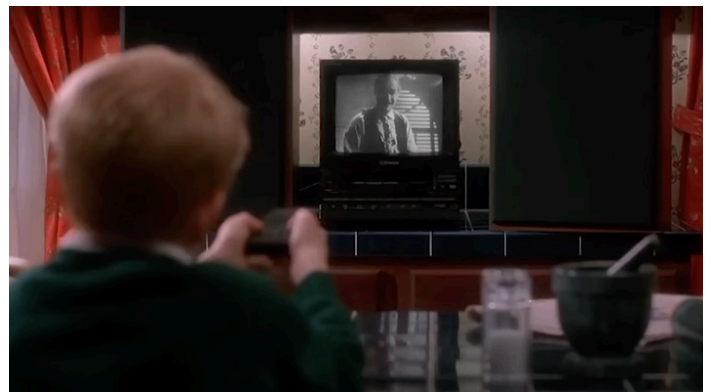
A classic that will always be relevant! We invite you to dive into the adventures of Kevin, Harry, and Marv over and over again.

9. *The Noel Diary* (2020)

The story follows Jake Turner, a bestselling author who returns home for Christmas to settle his late mother's estate and discovers a diary that reveals secrets about his past.

10. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (2001)

Welcome to Hogwarts! Harry, Ron, and Hermione invite you to join them once again on their journey through their first year at the school of magic.



Parrot Staff Writer: Sofia Kovalko

Podcast Review

Tony Robbins Podcast



Tony Robbins is a renowned life coach, motivational speaker, and author, widely recognized for his ability to inspire and empower individuals to take control of their lives. His *Tony Robbins Podcast* reflects his mission to help people unlock their full potential. The podcast features practical advice, personal stories, and interviews with experts on topics such as business, leadership, and mental well-being.

I follow Tony Robbins' podcast because he offers a range of series that are not only learnable but also deeply meaningful, with insights that can be directly applied to our lives for personal success. His motivational approach helps to inspire and encourage individuals to overcome challenges, build resilience, and achieve their goals. His focus on real-life solutions and empowering individuals is what makes his content truly transformative.

Tony Robbins is remarkable for his ability to transform lives through motivational speaking, coaching, and personal development strategies. His most notable contributions include his practical approach to unlocking human potential, focusing on personal growth, financial success, and emotional well-being. Robbins' seminars and books, like *Awaken the Giant Within* and *Unlimited Power*, have helped millions of individuals worldwide by offering tools to improve their mindset, build resilience, and achieve goals.

His dynamic public speaking style, combined with his deep understanding of psychology and human behavior, allows him to connect with audiences on a profound level. He is also known for his philanthropic efforts, such as his work with Feeding America and his

commitment to giving back to communities in need. Robbins' methods are rooted in neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) and cognitive psychology, which have contributed to his reputation as a leading figure in the personal development industry.

One of his most significant achievements is his ability to create lasting change in people's lives, particularly in helping them manage stress, overcome fears, and achieve both personal and professional success. His podcast, books, and seminars offer not just motivation but actionable steps for real-life change, making his work applicable to anyone seeking growth and fulfillment.

1. **"If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always gotten."**
2. **"The power of positive thinking is the ability to generate a feeling of certainty in yourself when nothing in the environment supports you."**
3. **"When you are grateful, fear disappears, and abundance appears."**
4. **"If you can't, you must. If you must, you can."**
5. **"The only thing that's keeping you from getting what you want is the story you keep telling yourself."**
6. **"Your past does not equal your future."**

For more detailed insights, you can explore his official website here:

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



Parrot Staff Writer: Asila Sadiqi

App Review

Vocabulary

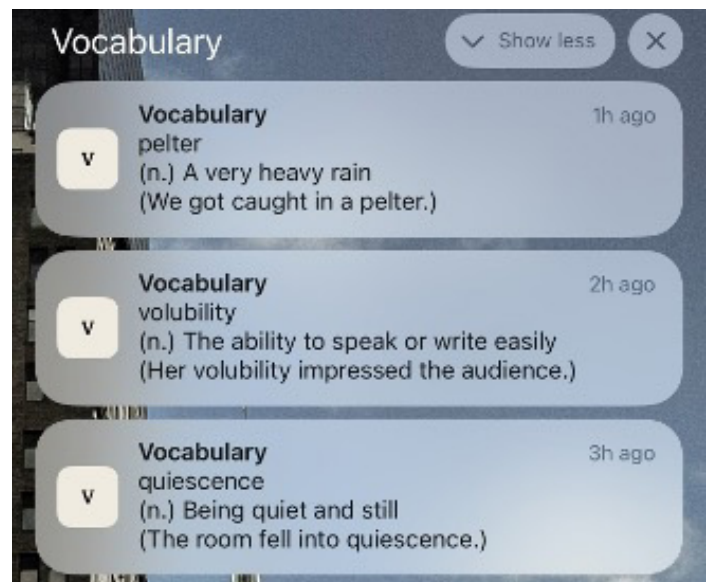


How do you like the idea of dedicating just 10 minutes a day to learning new English words? What if an app decides for you how many words per day you should learn? Or how about an app that takes on the responsibility of reminding you when it's time to learn a new word? I follow my favorite American writer on Instagram, and in one of the stories, I noticed a screenshot where she was commenting on a particular word. I glanced at it and realized she was using an app with daily notifications. I thought to myself, "This app must be really great if even authors are using it to continue learning English words!" Curious, I Googled it and learned more about the app. I decided to download it, even though it required a subscription, thinking it might be worth it!

This app is called simply *Vocabulary*, but behind its straightforward title, it hides thousands of challenging words that can enrich anyone's vocabulary—even native English speakers'—and serve as a great investment for developing yourself as a writer. When I registered, I decided to challenge myself and pick the highest level: Advanced English.

If you're unsure about your English proficiency, you can start with the easiest level, and who knows? You might enjoy it so much that you'll quickly advance to the next one.

The most vivid and interesting feature of this app is its daily notifications, which introduce a new word along with a simple definition. This feature is especially helpful for those who may not feel motivated to visit the app on their own. In this way, I'd call *Vocabulary* very inventive. On average, the app can send you about 10 words per day, but you can adjust the settings to limit how many words you want to learn and how much time you want to dedicate to it. A few weeks ago, I discovered a fun feature of this app. When pretty busy with my studies, I ignored all the app's notifications and didn't open it for a while. *Vocabulary*, acting like a persistent digital friend, noticed this and started sending me warning messages that I could lose all notifications if I didn't continue studying new words. Clever, but effective! I was worried about losing the app's benefits, so I immediately visited it and learned something new.



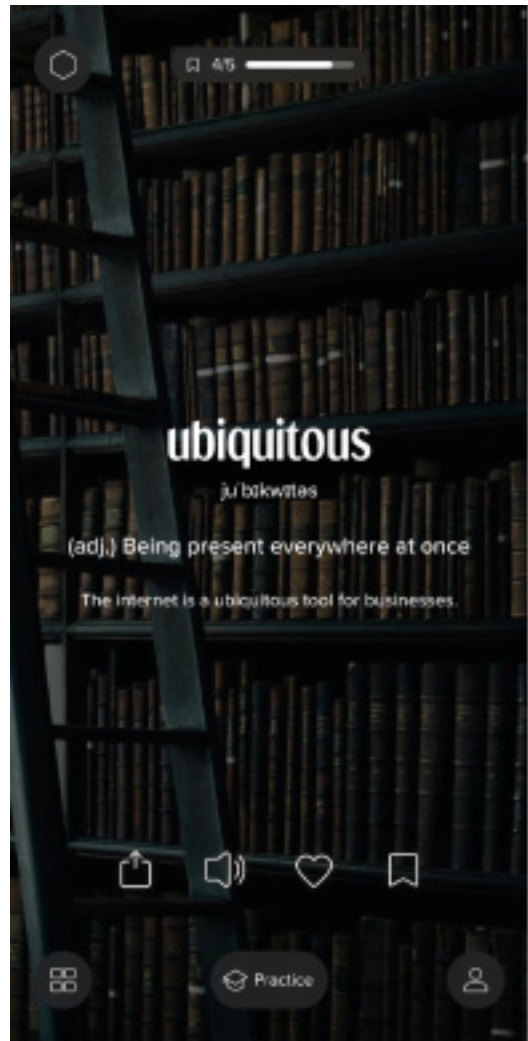
When you visit the app, it offers one word per page, including its phonetic transcription, part

of speech, definition, and an example sentence where the word is used. There's also a button for voice pronunciation, as well as options to save, like, or share the word—even with someone who doesn't have the app.

Words like *quiddity*, *ubiquitousness*, *perfunctory*, *taciturn*, and *expatiate*—challenging, right? But they're incredibly beneficial, as they can make your writing more sophisticated. *Vocabulary* also offers various thematic categories, such as society, technology, literature, science, business, emotions, and more. You even have the flexibility to create your own mix, which I personally use. Additionally, you can filter words by part of speech, origin, and level—beginner, intermediate, or advanced. Moreover, the app offers options for learning French, Spanish, and German as well. To consolidate your knowledge, you can take practice tests to ensure you remember the words and continue progressing.



Even though *Vocabulary* isn't free, I think it's worth it. I recommend choosing a yearly plan, as it saves you a significant amount of money each



month. Additionally, the app is highly customizable: you can select design features or even add unfamiliar words you encounter while reading books or studying, and the app will include them in your daily notifications.

I think this app is fantastic because it significantly enhances my vocabulary. You should try it, too!

Parrot Staff Writer: Sofia Kovalko



Zoom Hours
THU - 10am to 5pm
FRI - 8am to 2pm

Scan QR Code to Join the Zoom!

ESL Center FA24 **Open On Campus** **in the LRC!**

Monday to Thursday
9:00 AM to 5:00 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!



LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION HOMEBASE

HOURS

- ✓ Monday–Thursday
8–5pm
- ✓ Friday 8–4:30pm

Included Majors


- ASL-English interpreting
- Communication
- Deaf Culture and
American Sign Language
Studies
- English
- English as a Second
Language
- Journalism
- World Languages

SERVICES

- ✓ Workshops &
Orientation
- ✓ Support Resources
& Referrals
- ✓ Counseling
Appointments
- ✓ Snacks, Study space,
Lounge Area, Fun
events

Located in the Portable Village Room 613B

Contact Us

 (916) 484-8974

 Askhb-lac@arc.losrios.edu

Susan Pezone Scholarship Winner

Abdul Matin Khan



I am from Afghanistan and I can speak Persian and Pashto besides English. I have been here for almost three years and this is my third semester at ARC. My major is Computer Science, and I plan to transfer to a four-years college. I do Uber to support myself financially. My hobbies are playing and watching soccer, and video games, and spending time in the cafe or library. I feel happy about this scholarship, but unfortunately, I never met Professor Pezone.

Out of the Cage

Check Out Our Special Issue!



Great 2024 compilation layout featuring work from cultural, multicultural students, professionals, and more, all lovingly crafted.

The Parrot



ISSUE 185
FALL 2024



Fall 2024 Finals Schedule at ARC

Friday, December 13 through Thursday, December 19

Verify your final exam time and date with our professor. Check out your final exam schedule online.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS?

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

To see previous issues of *The Parrot*, go to [https://arc.losrios.edu/](https://arc.losrios.edu/academics/the-parrot-newsletter)

[academics/the-parrot-newsletter](https://arc.losrios.edu/academics/the-parrot-newsletter)

