



Language
Education
at a Distance

NEWSLINC

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF LINC HOME STUDY | FALL 2015



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About NewsLINC

NewsLINC is a quarterly publication of writing submitted by LINC Home Study students. We are proud of our students and thrilled to publish their writing. The publication encourages our students to practice writing, helps to boost their self-confidence, promotes language skills development and creates a sense of community within the LINC Home Study program. We also hope our readers learn from and feel inspired by the collection of works that are showcased each issue.

About LINC Home Study

LINC Home Study is an English language program for newcomers to Canada who wish to improve their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills but have barriers to attending classroom courses.

What is the program like?

As a student in the LINC Home Study program, you can learn English from the comfort of your home. You have the choice of completing the program either online (using a computer with internet access) or offline (using a traditional textbook and CD). All study materials are based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks standards. To be successful, you have to study hard and commit your time to improving your English skills. This includes studying independently for 5 to 10 hours a week and finishing homework assignments.

Do I get any help?

To ensure you have the best possible learning experience, you receive support from our experienced and qualified staff. You work with a TESL-certified instructor who contacts you every week by phone or VOIP to review your homework, help you

practice speaking and answer your questions. Your instructor develops a learning plan that is tailored to your individual needs and guides you along the path to achieving your goals. You can also contact our technical and program support staff for assistance with any questions you have about the program policies, features or functionality.

How do I register for the program?

To qualify for the program you must have your language skills assessed at a language assessment centre and be:

- of legal school leaving age within your province or territory
- a convention refugee OR a permanent resident of Canada who has not become a Canadian citizen
- unable to attend classroom-based English language training

How much does the program cost?

There is no fee to enrol in this program. LINC Home Study is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Contact Us

If you have questions or feedback about the LINC Home Study program or NewsLINC, please email us at: help@linchomestudy.ca

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'Seasonal' Section Cover - Photo Credit: Charles Z.

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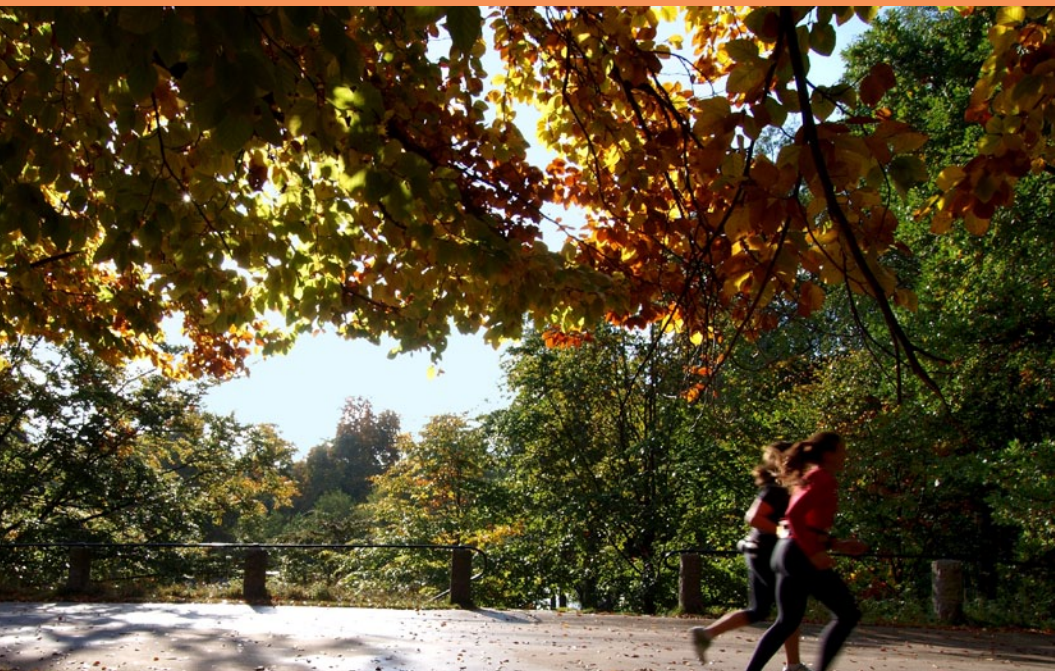
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Activity

The Pan Am Games

Weixing Z. | Level 7 | James H.'s Student

This summer, I went to watch the Pan Am Games with my daughter. It was one of the best things I did this summer. We made the decision in June when we were thinking what we should do this summer. Originally, we had several options such as a trip to Nova Scotia or a trip to Washington DC. Finally, we decided to enjoy the Pan Am Games in Toronto for the reasons below.

First, I had a chance to teach my daughter about how to make a decision. To make a choice among several items is not easy, especially for kids. So, I told my daughter that we could work it out by checking the pros and cons for each choice. For example, one of the cons for the trip to Washington DC was that I needed to drive very far and would be very tired, although she could explore a lot of museums there. For the Pan Am Games, there were many more pros than others, and it was in Toronto so that we didn't need to drive so far. Furthermore, it was a good opportunity for my daughter to know more sports games without going to another city.

Second, my daughter got to know how to make a plan. After the decision was made, I explained to my daughter that there would be a lot of sports events and we could not watch all of them, so we needed to figure out what events we would like to watch and then order tickets online. As a rule of thumb, we needed to pick the events that we wanted to watch the most and then, we needed to remove some of them due to time restrictions because we would like to watch them on the weekends. Furthermore, my daughter got to know that sometimes, we have to make a trade-off. For example, the tickets for the Modern Pentathlon were sold out, so we had to change to another event. In the end, we decided to watch Bowling, Artistic Gymnastics, Rhythmic Gymnastics, Synchronized Swimming, Trampoline and Volleyball.

Lastly, with the Pan Am Games, we got to know how proud Canadians are. We saw a lot of people wearing T-shirts with the pattern of Canada flags on the way to the stadiums. Furthermore, during the events, Canadians gave big rounds of applause to the athletes representing Canada. Even if Canada's athletes were not performing well, the people still encouraged and inspired them with lots of applause. For instance, Canadian athletes won golden medal in the event of Synchronized Swimming. The Canadian spectators were very excited to wait for the medal ceremony and sang "O Canada" loudly.

Although the Pan Am Games have ended, we believe we will cherish it forever. I believe my daughter and I have learned a lot through this invaluable experience.



Our Garage Sale

Ivette C. | Level 5 | John W.'s student



One day, my husband told me about how many things we had at home that we had not used for years. Immediately, we thought about having a garage sale.

First, we search around the house for all the things that we had not used for a long time. We went into the basement, and we found so many things like: a CD player, video games, pictures, electronics and clothing that we had not used for years. We took all these items upstairs, clean them up, and selected the best. Then we put stickers on each item with the price, always trying to choose a reasonable price.

Finally, the day of our garage sale arrived, on a Saturday. We got up very early in the morning around 5:30 am, and went outside to put up a few advertising signs at the corner. After that, we organized all our items on some tables in front of our house. One table had all electronics, another with clothing, and another with home decoration. People started to show up around 7:30 am. The first people that arrived bought lots of stuff! I was so surprised! Afterwards, some people found some things, and other only looked and then left. During the entire morning, we received a lot of people to our garage sale.

This was a long day for us, but we had a good time with the customers. There were even a few friend and neighbors that arrived. Some bought, some did not. Nevertheless, we sold around \$400 dollars' worth of goods! This was very good because a lot of this stuff that we were selling, were not used.

We will prepare our next garage sale in 2016. We had a good time, made some money and cleaned the house out of a lot of things we did not use. Other people wanted the items we did not need! We are excited and ready for our next garage sale!

Staying Healthy

Mahsan A. | Level 7 | Lily B.'s Student

I'm a 31 years old mother. As a full time mom of a 6 months old baby, I don't have much free time. However, I have managed to come up with a daily plan to be more active, to eat healthily, and to enjoy the fresh weather outside.

Being fit is very important for our health as well as our self-confidence. Because I gained weight during my pregnancy, I am trying to lose it. So, I have made a concrete decision to be more active, to do some exercises and to go outside for running at least three times a week while my baby is sleeping. I am determined to succeed with my plan.



First of all, I start my activity with half an hour of stretching, sit ups and push ups. Then, I run to the park which is located closer to my home. I run there for another thirty minutes and come back home. I finish my joyful exercises by drinking lots of water and taking a shower. It is a pleasurable activity indeed!

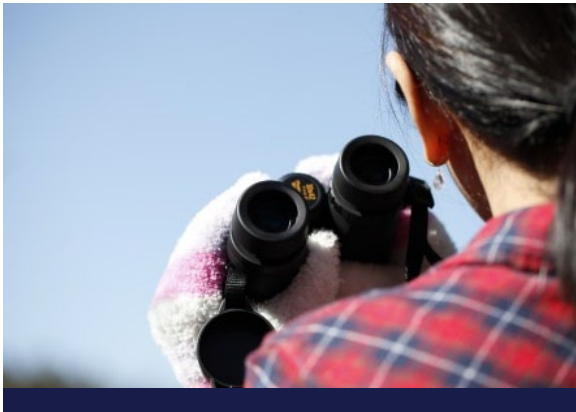
In order to be healthy, people should eat healthy healthily. Because of that, I have started to reduce amount of carbohydrates I take and replace them with fresh fruit. This includes reducing on sugar and cookies as well as chocolate. These days I feel healthier as I eat more beans and meat instead of rice and potatoes. Not only do I feel healthier but also happier.

In order to change my mood and make my daughter amused, I take her to the park and shopping. I push her stroller and walk to different places. This includes a lot of fun because my little girl can see new people, new things and enjoy the weather. When I am lucky, she is tired enough to fall asleep by the time we come back home.

Overall, we can have some fun if we can manage our time. It is of high importance to be healthy both physically and mentally. I have been trying to do so by exercising, eating healthy food and having fun with my six months old baby.

Bird watching in Colombia

Adriana D. | Level 3 | Supriya H.'s Student



“In order to see birds it is necessary to become a part of the silence.”

— Robert Lynd

Colombia has over 1850 recorded species of birds, the largest in any country in the world. Ornithologists and tourists from around the world come to Colombia to watch birds. During the winter, visitors can see migratory birds from North America. Swallows, woodpeckers, owls, gulls are easy to find anywhere in Colombia. Any place in Colombia is good for bird watching - the city, parks, camps,

farms, mountains and jungles. People enjoy bird watching in Colombia all around the year because it has a great biodiversity of birds and an agreeable climate.

Different kinds of persons of all ages like bird watching - students, life science specialists, common people, and ornithologists. Some people do it as a hobby and some do it as a profession.

Groups of birdwatchers should be very small, or the noise will scare the birds away. This will also facilitate better coordination and communication between participants. We must consider several aspects while we watch birds:

1. Do not disturb the birds.
2. Avoid wearing bright colors as this frightens birds.
3. Do not yell or make loud noises.
4. Move stealthily.
5. Watch your step well.
6. Do not chase the birds.
7. Do not try to touch the birds or go near their nests.

All you need is a pair of binoculars, a field guide to help you identify the birds, notebook to record data on the observed bird, a pencil and a camera.

Bird Watching allows direct connection with nature. Walk early in the morning and hear the birds singing; it will help you discover the charm of nature. Among the branches of trees or in the sky, find birds of all colors, sizes, shapes and features; it will help you understand that nature has been designed perfectly and we have much to learn.

My Hobby

Ganna P. | Level 4 | Jessica W.'s Student

There are lots of things you can do in your free time. As for me I prefer reading and listening to music. Also, my favourite thing to do is solving crosswords. It can be interesting and useful at the same time, because when you're trying to solve it, you find out lots of different facts, for example, questions about famous people, geography, science achievements, cultures of different nations etc. Moreover, you train your brain, by solving them. There are lots of magazines and newspapers that include crosswords (some of them have only crosswords in them). Furthermore, I find it very interesting to create my own crossword. My whole family likes crosswords, so we often spend some time together, trying to solve a crossword. Now, when I study English I try to solve English crosswords and I believe it will help me.





Arts

A Very Special Person, A Poem

Barbara R. | Level 6 | Ana R.'s Student

I would like to share this poem to celebrate a very special person in my life – my Mother.

Crumbs of life

A little sun, a piece of heaven,
crumbs of joy and a slice of bread,
a glimmer of hope, a drop of water
- When we have it, all of us are young.

Again we enjoy as once was
when joy was brought to the house.
Where father, siblings and mom waited
No creature was ever alone.

Oh, it was then a carefree life,
full of joy and surprises
every hour was happy
- Prayer always greeted morning.

Today is different - go out rays,
and in their place come the shadows.
The distant youthful years are gone,
Only the memory of the heart is free.

It is hardly surprising, who of us is safe?
The years pass - no one is eternal.
Let's enjoy the moment which can not last.
You are only one century - our Lord.



Book Review: The Kite Runner

Galicia H. | Level 7 | Joseph N.'s Student

The Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini
Anchor Canada edition published 2004

The book tells us the heart-gripping story of two young boys growing up in Afghanistan, Amir and Hasan. It is a story based on the friendship and hardships that take place between the two boys, two religious views, two worldviews, and two castes. The book focuses on Amir's tough journey to find forgiveness, purpose, and redemption. The author states the theme of redemption at the onset of the book when Amir is told, "There is a way to be good again" (Hosseini).



The vividness and uniqueness of the story make the book undeniably engaging from the start. It is as though one is not merely reading a story but experiencing the story through the text. The characters are powerful, sympathetic, and relatable. The plot unfolds at an excellent pace so that the suspense is built up but still leaves ample room for the reader's speculation. The setting is Afghanistan before, during, and after the Soviet invasion. Amir, the protagonist, flees to California where he learns a new language, graduates high school and college, and becomes a successful writer. One of my favourite motifs of this book is the manner in which the author brings to life his Afghan culture. One way he accomplishes this is to sprinkle words or short phrases of an Afghan language throughout the entire book giving the text aesthetics and authenticity.

As the story develops it is quickly evident that Amir has a deeply embedded desire to correct his wrongs, undo his bad judgements, and redeem himself. He returns to Afghanistan, endangers his life, rescues his half-brother's child, and brings him back to California. However, even after all that he endures and accomplishes, he cannot confirm if he has tilted the scales in his favour. The question still remains: Did he do enough to make himself "good again"? Still there are other questions that remain unanswered: Was everything that he did good in and of itself? Who decides the merit of the deeds? Is that measurement objective or subjective? Who decides which deeds are counted in his favour and which deeds are counted against him? Does the end justify the means? If so, does this position lend itself to subjectivism?

How I Became a Passionate Listener of the Vinyl Cafe with Stuart McLean

Vadym L. | Level 7 | Milanka V.'s Student

I live in a small town, Tisdale, in the north east part of Saskatchewan. Over the last three months my workplace has been in Saskatoon, which is two and a half hour drive away. I drive home to visit my family every Thursday and go back to Saskatoon every Sunday. I work ten hours a day four days a week, so I always have a three day weekend. I have to admit that on some of these days driving is very difficult, but over time I got used to it and I learned to enjoy the time I spend on the road. For example, I found great places along the way for coffee or snacks and would stop at each for a ten minute break just to chat with the owners and walk around a bit to stretch my legs. Another thing I got accustomed to is listening to podcasts using an online stream app on my smartphone. I have my own list of favorite CBC Radio podcasts which includes The Next Chapter, Spark, Ideas but the one I like the best is the Vinyl Cafe with Stuart McLean. The host, Stuart McLean, is a Canadian best-selling author, award-winning journalist and humorist. My favorite show features are the Vinyl Cafe Story Exchange, where people send in personal stories to McLean who reads selections on air, and funny Dave and Morley Stories. Musical content on the show is excellent as well. One of the touching stories in Vinyl Cafe Story Exchange struck me greatly. It was about a policeman who just took up the duties in the small town somewhere up north in Manitoba in 1960s and his first task was to deliver Christmas presents to children in remote snow-blocked communities. He described how difficult it was to reach the lonely house which was covered deep in snow and how he was rewarded to see happy and astonished children who did not expect to see anybody that evening. Another podcast I liked was "Updates" from July 11th, 2015. McLean was discussing his pronunciation problems with the editor of the Oxford Canadian Dictionary, which I can hardly believe he really has. Also, in that podcast, he had an amiable talk with a ten year old girl with autism. Every McLean's show is excellent, bright, lively and looked-forward to. I would recommend his show as a great practice for listening skills. Also I would recommend his books, especially his Welcome Home: Travels In Smalltown Canada which is about life in small communities all over Canada. It helps us understand Canadian way of life better. However, if someone knows another good radio program or ESL podcast to spend the time on a road trip, I would be happy to hear. Would you share your experience?



You're Not Alone

Memilos P. | Level 6 | Junko T.'s Student

Life is a challenge.
The only permanent is change.
If you struggle to keep up with the pace,
There is no other option but to face it.

It's hard to stay on track.
It's like a roller coaster ride.
If you think it's an abstract painting,
Don't be confused, focus.

Nothing is easy.
Everything is messy.
If you give in you'll go crazy.
So stop spinning and you won't go dizzy.

Don't forget for a moment, you're not alone,
Even for just a moment.
That everyone goes through trials and difficulties...
Won't that be enough to make you feel at ease?

Yes, life is a challenge.
And the only permanent is change.
Disregard what your life is missing.
Instead gather all your blessings.





Bios

My Autobiography

Farhad R. N. | Level 5 | Vinka B.'s Student



Esfarayen, where I was born in 1970, is a pretty mountainous town in north east of Iran. I jumped from childhood to manhood when I was around 9 years old. Our farm, where I was working hard to help my dad save some money, was also my sanctuary; a great place for me to learn how to ride a horse, shoot and hunt, drive a truck and tractor, and to overcome fear of darkness in the middle of the night at the cemeteries. Because working at the farm and attending school wasn't a good situation to get good marks, I failed in the first attempt to go to the university. In my country there is a national exam to be accepted in the universities. My

parents had pushed me to become an architect. It was almost impossible for me to be chosen in a competition with 1.5 million participants, of whom 300,000 wanted to be architects. Only 200 students would be accepted in three universities. For one year I had been locked up in my room to be prepared for next year's exam, only to make my dad happy. He was sick and I was going to do anything to give him some reason to live. I told myself, "Nothing is impossible."

In 1989 I was accepted in the Tehran University, which was one of the best universities in the Middle East and Iran. Nobody in town believed that I had done an impossible job until they saw my report and my name in the newspaper. However, in 1995 my dad passed away, when he was 54 years old, just a few months before I got my master's degree. For the next 10 years, my life had been turned upside down. I lost not only my dad, but also my best friend. I decided to stay single and take care of my 6 siblings and my mom, as my dad asked me to do so in spite of having an older brother. After working in my architectural firm in Mashhad, a nearby town, in 2003, my mom said, "It's time to be married, Farhad." and so I got married.

My family and I have been in Canada since November 2012, a place where I thought I can leave behind all the bad memories and start a new life. Since we landed here, finding a way to keep my lifestyle as good quality as it was in Iran, has been my concern all the time. As a result, I decided to go back to school, get a Civil Engineering Technology certificate, complete my knowledge in construction, and finally get my architectural licence. I know the future is mine. I did an impossible job once because of my dad and I am determined to do it again, but this time for myself and for my family's sake.

A Sparkle from Sudbury

Kim L. | Level 4 | Ethel D.'s student

I am from Vietnam. My friends and co-workers call me “Kim.” I came to Canada in 2009 as a skilled diamond worker. About thirty of my co-workers and I come from Hô Chi Minh city. We all work for Crossworks Manufacturing in Sudbury. It is the largest diamond cutting and polishing company in North America. I work in the Brilliance Section and have been polishing diamonds for more than 18 years. All of us in the factory cut and polish the “Victor” diamonds from the De Beers mine in Northern Ontario. We also work with stones that are mined from the Northwest Territories and South Africa.

Being a diamond polisher requires a good eye for detail, mastering the skill in using the right tools and lots of patience. The proudest thing I have done in my work was when I polished the biggest diamond the company ever had this year. My supervisor trusted me with this important and challenging assignment. I finished polishing the diamond after two weeks and he said that I did a very good job, the diamond was perfect! I was thrilled and honoured to be recognized as one of the best diamond polishers in our company.

I am very thankful to my Belgian employer because he gave me and my family a chance to come to Canada. I like to live in Canada because it is the best country to live in. However, I don't like the winter here, it is too cold. In Vietnam, it is either hot or rainy and dry. Canada is so much bigger than Vietnam. The food and culture are also different. There are many things I miss from my homeland but I miss my parents the most. It will take a long time before I see them again.

Now that I have been in Canada for the past six years, many things have changed. I have learned how to drive so I go to work by car. I have started to eat less rice than before and most of all, I have to speak English at work, on the phone, in my children's school and in the mall. This has been very difficult for me. I am lucky to be a student of the LINC Home Study program and my teacher is very helpful and patient.

My husband and I are seriously planning to buy a house in the near future. Also, I will use the extra money from my overtime work to see beautiful places in Canada. I learned from my teacher that there are more than 2 million lakes in Canada and 300 lakes in Sudbury! I love the water, so my family and I will go to a famous Canadian lake one of these days. We will go camping and fishing. It will be a wonderful time for the whole family.



*PHOTO CREDIT: Kim L.
Kim & her family in Hô Chi Minh*

My Life

Maria G. | Level 6 | Vinka B.'s Student



I was born in 1965 in Lima, Peru, South America. Since I was a little kid, I remember my parents working seven days a week, twenty four hours a day because we lived in a school and when the priest needed my father, he had to be available. My dad worked like a gardener, carpenter, and an electrician during the mornings and in the evening and on the weekends he worked like a painter. My mom was the owner of the cafeteria, so when my brothers and I had lunch breaks instead of relaxing with our classmates, we had to help mom in the cafeteria. Since I was nine years old, I also remember helping Theresa, the Administrative

Assistant of our school to stick students' pictures on the certificates. When I finished work Theresa would take my mom and my brothers to the beach, so those were the best years of my childhood.

When I finished high school I decided to study to be an Administrative Assistant and I started working at 18 years of age. After ten years working in Lima, Peru, suddenly our president left the country with all Peruvian money and started a chaos, where our currency was devaluated and many companies closed down and others were filing for bankruptcy. Many Peruvians lost their jobs so that's why lots of them had to travel to other countries to look for work. I decided to move to Santiago, Chile to look for a better job, but starting in another country is not easy even if you speak the same language. I worked as a waitress, a kitchen assistant, a baby sitter etc. As soon as I got my permanent residency, I started working as an administrative assistant and studying some courses about marketing, sales, customer services, English, Microsoft Word, Excel etc. Chile was a nice place but I always missed my parents, and every time I had the chance to go to Peru, I came back to Santiago with more energy to keep working and achieving my goals.

My life was changing, and I was enjoying life by visiting Mancora which has beautiful beaches and peaceful environment. But I was missing something. I had a good job, a nice place, good friends but I was still single so I started to pray to God to give me a husband with whom to share my life. I asked for a loyal, honest, hard-working man with a big heart, a good looking guy that would love me the way I am. I remember saying to God that it didn't matter where he was, even if he was on the other side of the world and guess what? I met the guy I was praying for on my last vacation to Alberta. In Canada I met my husband!

My Memoir

Maryam A. | Level 7 | Tuula L.'s Student

My name is Maryam, and I was born in Pakistan. I was not one of those kids born with a silver spoon in my mouth. My father passed away when I was only five years old. We were only three members in my family: a cute little brother, a caring mom and me. We were not a rich family but still we lived a happy and contented life. My mom devoted all her life to us instead of starting a new life with a new partner. In 1996, I had completed high school but unfortunately I could not get enough marks to get admission in a medical college. I chose mathematics as an elective subject in grade 11. I worked really hard and got good marks in grade 12.



I got married in 2000 when I was in my last year of college. There was a farewell party in my college on my wedding day. It was so awful that I could not attend that party, but the decision was not in my hands. I was in Pakistan not in Canada where everyone is free to make their own decisions.

Time marched on and in 2001 I moved to Saudi Arabia with my husband. It was the beginning of a new life with a new person in a new country. It was not an easy task to live in Saudi Arabia where a woman can't go out by herself; it is a completely dependent life. But I accepted this challenge and made many compromises. God blessed me with a cute little baby boy in 2002. He kept me so busy that I was hard to imagine how quickly time flew by.

We applied for Canadian immigration in 2011 because we wanted a better future for our son. In 2013, we got the immigration visa, and within six months we moved to Canada. In May 2013 we landed in Toronto. It was my dream, so I was very excited. We lived in Toronto for three months, and then my husband got a job in Saskatoon. It is a very beautiful and calm city. I got another baby boy after 12 years.

Now I am living a happy life with my husband and two sons. At the end, I just want to quote this saying "life is not a bed of roses". Life is full of ups and downs. The trick is to enjoy the ups and have courage during the downs.

Happiness Is My Name

Shadi V. | Level 4 | Ethel D.'s student



PHOTO CREDIT: Shadi V

My name is Shadi Vasigh. I come from the city of Qazvin, Iran. I have been in Canada for less than a year. I am married and have a son. I graduated with a degree in Optometry in one of the best medical universities in Iran. I had my own private practice and I worked for a prestigious hospital in my first country. One of the reasons why I came here was because of my dream to obtain a PhD degree from one of the schools in Canada or the U.S.A. This desire to study and live in a First World country has been stuck in my mind ever since I was a student back home. Another reason is that Canada is one of the best places to raise a family. My son loves it here because we have relatives here and he has met new friends in school. He wants to be an actor someday so I am encouraging him to join a children’s drama class.

One of the things that I appreciate most in Canada is the system of education

for the children, the youth and adults. You can get various ways of training and match these with your skills. Another thing that I am proud to mention is multiculturalism. People from different cultures live together here in safe and lawful conditions. On the other hand, most of the educated immigrants and I have the same issue of not being able to find jobs related to their original professions. This is also true for those who migrated as skilled workers. They end up having to work as labourers or to accept odd jobs for them to live through each day.



PHOTO CREDIT: Shadi V

When comparing my first country to Canada, the weather, religion and food come to my mind. Similarly, Iran has four seasons. However, spring and autumn are shorter and the summer is warmer. Religion is more diverse here unlike in Iran. Coming from an Islamic country, traditional women like me still have to wear a veil. Food from my first country is much more exotic than Canadian food. I am proud to say that our versions of kebab and kofta are tastier and more delicious than those of our neighbouring Middle Eastern countries.

In Qazvin, I was a successful and a well-known female optometrist. But here in Canada, I have settled to become an office assistant in an optometry clinic. Sometimes I feel hopeless and frustrated. Deep in my heart, I know I can do better than what I am doing now. I am looking forward to get accepted at the University of

Waterloo early next year so I can get my certification. I am fortunate to be a student of the LINC Home Study program so I can be more fluent in English. By taking small steps, having a positive attitude and working hard, I truly believe I will realize my dream someday.

“Shadi” means happiness, lucky for me that is my name. I think happiness is all in the mind. If we think positively, everything around us would be easy to understand. We can do more and achieve things that will make us fulfilled. We are happy when life is simple and less complicated.

My Life

Sergiy K. | Level 5 | Erin O.'s Student

My name is Sergiy K. I am from the Ukraine. I have two daughters. My oldest daughter's name is Inga. She is married, and has a son named Bronson. My youngest daughter, Sasha, is thirteen years old.

I finished high school in the Ukraine in 1992. I got my Heavy Duty Mechanic diploma in Ukraine in 1997. I worked in the Ukraine at so many places. I can do everything that I need to for my work.

In 2012, my family and I came to Canada. I began working at Border Line Feeders. My family and I live in Ceylon, Sask. I like Canada. I am enjoying my life in Canada.





Canada

Canada

Ayesha M. | Level 5 | Brenda V.'s Student

Canada is a large country by land area, but it's very small in population. People from all over the world come to Canada to work and to study. Canada has a very professional work place environment, and a high quality of education.

Canada is a first world country and has a very advanced infrastructure, strict laws and regulations against crime, equal rights for men and women, free health care and schooling for young children.

Canada is one of the most diverse and multicultural nations in the world. It offers immigration to people from all over the world to settle across the country. In spring or in summer there are many different festivals for immigrants to show their culture knowing that they are accepted in Canadian society.

Canada gives new immigrants the opportunity to learn and enhance their English language skills, to get a good job and to interact in their new home.



Canada

Nsele Q. L. | Level 3 | Erin O.'s student



There are many reasons that I like Canada. Canada is a very good country to live in and raise children. Also, it is a good place to educate kids. In Canada, we have four seasons: spring, summer, fall and winter, and every family cooks their native food in each season. The Canadians I like most are Mr. Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, and Mr. Brad Wall, Premier of Saskatchewan. I think the best places to visit are Saskatoon and Prince Albert in Saskatchewan. Canada is my country!

My Canadian Holiday: A Wonderful, Unforgettable Journey

Hanyu W. | Level 5 | Christine L.'s student



My daughter and I had a 10 day journey recently. First we went from Toronto to Vancouver by train via 35 stops and via five provinces: Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

In Winnipeg the train stopped for four hours. During the stop the guide from a travel agency took us to visit the Manitoba Provincial Hall, the English Garden and the most harmonized community in Canada.

At the Jasper stop, we got off the train and stayed in Jasper for two days. Following the guide, we visited Maligul Canyon, saw fossils over 360 million years old, and went to Maligue Lake which is the second biggest iceberg lake in the world. Then we rented a car to Jasper National Park and Banff National Park. These parks are very unique. At the famous icefield in Jasper National Park we viewed the nearest glacier to people in the world. It is just beside the road. People can stand on the glacier. It was exciting to see. In Banff National Park we visited one of the best hotels in the world. The hotel, Iceberg Lake and Lake Louise integrate totally to become a breath-taking landscape.

After the Jasper tour, we took a train again to Vancouver- to the train terminal. We stayed in Vancouver one night and one day. We joined "Hop-in and Hop-off coach" via 34 of Vancouver's premier attractions and visited famous Stanley Park. When we passed "Chinatown" the guide said the early Chinese workers contributed to Canada very, very much, but suffered from unfair treatment. These words caused me to respect their hard work and wisdom, and I was relieved to hear of the later apology from the Canadian government.

Then we went to Victoria by ferry and stayed in the beautiful garden city for two days. We enjoyed a very fresh and delicious seafood meal at Fisherman's Wharf, and we visited the Butterfly Gardens and very famous Butchart Gardens. Finally we took the Pacific Coach via ferry to Vancouver airport and came back to Toronto by plane.

On the way I heard from a guide that 99% Canadians live only 100 kilometers from the USA. I was so surprised and felt Canada should have huge development potential. However, how to develop the vast land is a serious problem. It was a wonderful and unforgettable journey.

Sweet Cherry Picking with My Family

Saiqa S. | Level 4 | Constance W.'s student

It was Canada Day holiday. We decided to go to Stoney Creek, which is a place famous for fruit farms. Our car entered the farm of cherries. We bought two large baskets for twenty-four dollars. We were then allowed to go inside the farm and to pick cherries directly from the trees. There were ladders in front of trees. My children and I picked and ate fresh cherries and filled the baskets. The cherries were very sweet and fresh. My kids were very happy and excited. There were lot of people picking and enjoying cherries. After three hours, we returned home. I gave some cherries to my neighbour. This was the most memorable day of my family's life.



Georgian Bay Islands

Khadijabibi D. | Level 3 | Deborah K.'s student

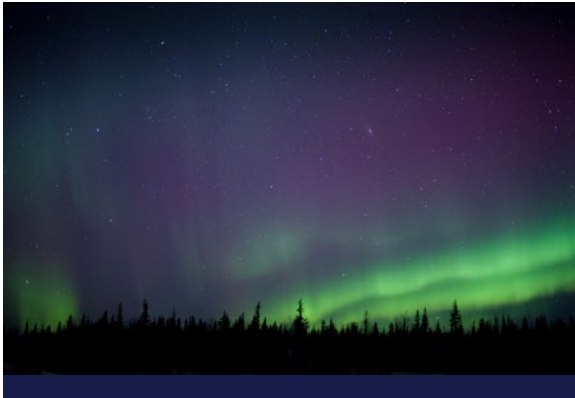


It was a Saturday morning when my husband and I decided to go to Georgian Bay Island National Park with our entire family. I had packed all our bags on Friday. Saturday morning we all woke up early, We had our breakfast. I got my children dressed and my husband put our stuff in the van. Then we went to pick up my mother in law. We reached Honey Harbour in about two hours, There were so many boats in the harbour. We were all very hungry so we had our lunch while we waited for the day tripper boat. The day tripper takes you from Honey Harbour to the park. After about 30 minutes the boat we arrived. We sat in the boat.

The distance between Honey Harbour and Georgian Bay Island National Park is about 15 minutes by boat. We really enjoyed the boat ride. Along the way we saw so many islands. Our boat was small and the captain drove the boat very fast. It was amazing. Finally the boat docked at Georgian Bay Island National Park. We decided to hike across the island to Christian beach. Hiking is very beautiful because you are walking through the wild wood. After about 25 mins of walking we reached the rocky shore of Christian beach. My kids put on their swimming suits and went into the water. They played in the water for a while and then we headed back towards the dock. There we found a playground and a very nice sandy beach. We had a great time and really enjoyed the drive there and the beautiful boat ride to the island and back. I definitely will recommend this trip for all my friends and family. Can't wait to go and explore the northern part of the Island next time!!!!

The Northern Lights

Mahsan A. | Level 7 | Lily B.'s student



The Northern Lights are beautiful natural features, and if I had the opportunity, I would go to see them in the northern territories of Canada. Because there is more to experience in the northern part of Canada, I would not only spend lots of time watching the Aurora Borealis. My dream would also be to try some exciting dog-sledding and test many new kinds of food.

The Northern Lights are one kind of amazing scenery that every Canadian should see. The shimmering green color that lights the night sky of the northern territories of

Canada is an attractive view. If I could go there, I would sit somewhere far away from the artificial lights of cities, homes, and cars and just watch the beautiful phenomenon for hours. Although I generally don't like cold weather, I think seeing the Northern Lights is worth it. Moreover, I could enjoy some activities like dog-sledding and try some local food during the day.

I have always wanted to try dog-sledding, but there isn't such a thing in the country where I come from as my native home is located in a warm area of the earth. I like dogs, especially Huskies, so I would definitely enjoy it. Dog-sledding, which is one of the northern aboriginal's transportation system, would be wonderful!

In my opinion, trying new food is an interesting adventure. Everywhere I go, I usually look for local food on a restaurant's menu. I especially would like to taste dried deer meat. I have seen people eating such meat in the movies and would like to try it one day.

In conclusion, if I had the opportunity to see the Aurora Borealis, I would see it while eating local cuisine and especially while sitting with my husky. Both of us would be staring forever at the beautiful phenomena in the sky! What an adventure it would be!

Having Fun in the Elora Gorge

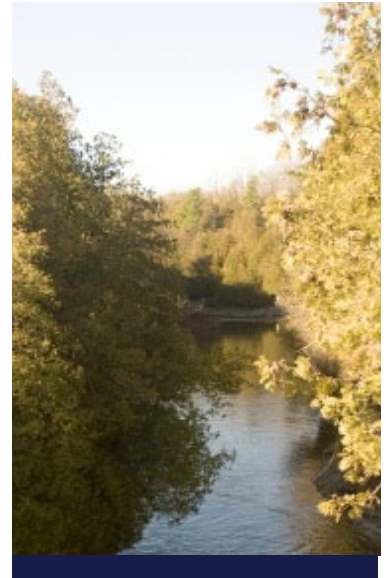
Lei Z. | Level 6 | Lily B.'s Student

If you would like to go somewhere to relax and have fun, I think the Elora Gorge is a good choice.

You can easily locate this beautiful conservation area in the Grand River Valley through Google. Looking down from above, you can clearly see a river named the Grand River and several high cliffs which circle the valley. When you walk into this natural area, the Riverside trails as well as the beautiful scenery will surprise you for sure.

There are lots of activities you can do such as camping, canoeing, fishing, hiking, cycling, picnicking and tubing. I strongly recommend that you try tubing.

It's both exciting and a bit scary to flow along the Grand River on an inner tube, which generates a new and different way to experience the scenery and views.



If you like the idea of tubing, you need to register at the concession and rent the equipment. Of course, you can always bring your own tubers and proper safety equipment. However, if you rent the tubers, they have to be returned by 7 pm. Trust me, tubing is a very popular activity.

If you arrive later in the morning, the equipment will have already been rented out because the tubers are limited, and rental is based on a first-come first-served principle only.

There is one more thing to remember. If you bring your kids to engage in this activity, please make sure that your children must be at least 44 inches tall. If you would like to do tubing more than once, a shuttle bus service can take you from downstream to upstream.

My other favorite entertainment in the Elora Gorge is fishing. According to the instructions, more than 400,000 brown trout have been stocked in the river since 1989. In addition, other species such as bass, perch, and sunfish can also be caught in the river.

In certain areas, you are only allowed to do 'fly fishing' on the lake. To be honest, I am deeply attracted to this method. As far as I know, fly fishing is an angling method in which an artificial "fly" is used to catch fish. The fly is cast using a fly rod, reel, and specialized weighted line. It's quite different from normal fishing, so I spent nearly one and a half hours grasping all that information.

If you like the outdoors, the clean fresh air, tubing and fishing, I highly recommend that you visit the Elora Gorge. You will definitely have lots of fun.

My Trip

Kostiantyn S. | Level 5 | Erin O.'s Student



PHOTO CREDIT: Kostiantyn S.

In each country there is a beautiful place where a lot of tourists come every year. These are places we need to see at least once that would then be remembered and admired again and again. In Egypt it is The Pyramids, in France it is The Eiffel Tower, in Canada, The Rocky Mountains. Four weeks ago, I visited The Rocky Mountains for the first time.

First, I went to a beautiful place called Banff, Alberta. This is a small town where there are a lot of attractions for tourists. You can swim in the hot springs, climb on the mountains and ride on a gondola.

If you have a desire to visit during the life of the garden, I suggest you visit Lake Louise. It is in a very secluded place surrounded by mountains, and the water colour will delight you. On the shore of the lake is a majestic hotel like the old castle of a king and you feel that you are in a fairy tale.

The next place is the small town of Jasper. It is very beautiful and charming. The town is so charming that after spending one day you will not want to leave. Around Jasper there is a huge amount of lakes with crystal clear water and hot springs where you can feel relaxed and healthier. There are many water sources in the Canadian mountains.

The beauty of nature is difficult to describe in words. Each of us will see something beautiful, and remember it always. After visiting these places, I was very surprised and shocked by what I saw. Nature has created a beauty that cannot be described in words.

My Trip with My Family

Wazira O. | Level 5 | Joseph N.'s student

We went to a short visit to Edmonton and Kelowna with my family. First, we went to Edmonton and visited the shopping mall that was the largest in North America and the 10th largest in the world is called West Edmonton Mall. We found a lot of attractions. They have including Galaxy Land, an ice skating rink, cinema complex, restaurants, water world with water slides, wave pool, brand name stores, kids play areas etc. The place is huge and busy. We enjoy this place very much specially the kids, they like the Galaxy Land and the water park. It's a great Mall to find something to wear and I found hundreds of stores. I bought dresses, shoes and jewelry. West Edmonton Mall is a good place to eat. The Mall has all kind of restaurants. We had a great lunch at Joey's Seafood restaurant with my family. It is a fun place to spend your weekend with your family and friends.



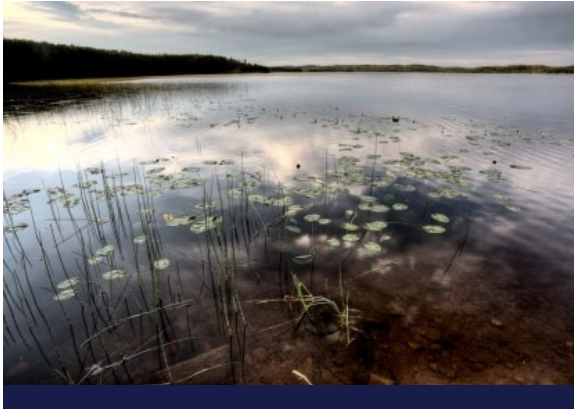
We made our second trip to Kelowna. We drove from Edmonton to Jasper for 4 hours. It was long and boring, but traveling from Jasper to Kelowna is 7 hours and it was beautiful. The road was especially amazing because it is between the high mountains. It were covered with the long trees and water. There are a lot of wild animals that live on the mountains and in the forest like bears, deer, moose, wapiti, mountains goats and wolves. We saw a bear, a wapiti and a mountain goat on the road, and we took some beautiful pictures. After we saw the animals, we drove very carefully especially in the slower zone, because sometimes you can even see there are animals crossing the road.

I loved our trip to Kelowna because I saw an amazing colour full water, waterfalls, big mountains covered with snow and trees and wild animals. I took a lot of photos of the beautiful natural scenery. We stopped at Athabasca Falls and Sunwapta Falls to see the attractive waterfalls. There are a lot of tourists and some people are camping there. We had nice road trip. It was fun. After our long driving, finally we arrived at our hotel in Kelowna. I was tired, but happy and excited. In the morning we went to see Downtown Marina Kelowna. It was very beautiful especially the Okanagan Lake. There are docks and rental boats downtown. I enjoyed walking around eating my ice cream. We stayed all day on the beach. We had a picnic and I built a sandcastle with my daughter. There was a splashpad nearby. My kids were very happy. It was a great place for family fun.

There are so many things to see and do in Kelowna's city park, e.g. walking, cycling, running, swimming, skating, playing volleyball. It's a great place to relax and enjoy yourself. We had a great time. It was unforgettable week with my family.

Waskesiu Lake, Prince Albert National Park, Saskatchewan

Aikaterini C. | Level 4 | Vinka B.'s Student



About two months ago, my family went on a vacation to Waskesiu Lake in Saskatchewan.

This is a place with a lot of green forests, clear blue lakes and small traditional log cabins. The visitors can see several animals such as a deer, a small bear, a reindeer and a lot of different birds. The lake's name, meaning "red deer," is also the name of a small village, which is full of natural beauty. We stayed in a small traditional wooden house, walked through the forests, listened to the sound of birds and other animals.

My family travelled around the lake with the boat. These were

two memorable days for us and even more for children who are looking forward to going back next summer.

Rotary Rib Festival at Amherstburg

Melva C. | Level 6 | Zakia S.'s student

I feel very lucky to live in a beautiful and historic town, Amherstburg, located in Ontario close to the shoreline of Detroit River and Lake Erie. It has many tourist attractions and attracts tourists not only from Canada, but also from United States as well because of its location.

Amherstburg is famous for many community events. One of its most popular events is the annual rib festival called, Rotary Rib Fest. It is an annual event that takes place every year in summer.

This year, it was the 6th annual Amherstburg Rotary Rib Fest. It was held from July 3 to 6, 2015. This festival is mainly held by the Rotary Club to support its community support programs.

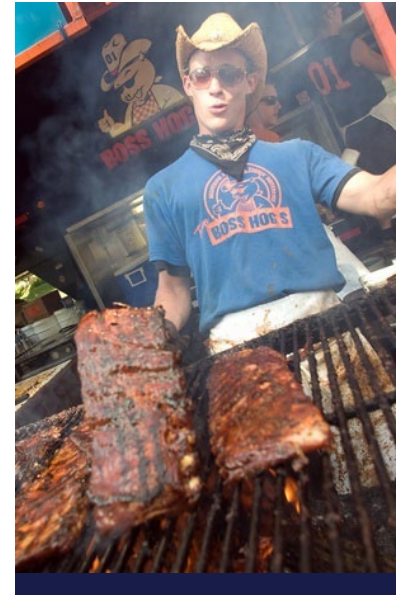
This is a family event and there is always something for everyone but the most special and the best of all are the great ribs!

This year 5 ribbers participated in the event. There were other food vendors as well. The competition was for the attendees to choose the best ribs and sauce.

We had musical events lined up for every night of the festival, such as bands playing Beatles and a Kiss Tribute bands.

I was there with my husband and a few of his friends and we had great time enjoying the music, the ribs, and having good conversation. At the end of the night, there were fireworks.

According to the newspaper, this year there were 14,000 people who attended this event. So if you happen to be in the area at the time of this festival, do not forget to drop by and enjoy this lovely festival.





Celebration

My First Experience at a Graduation Ceremony

Hala R. | Level 5 | Ana R.'s student

Graduation is the action of receiving an academic degree. Graduation is one of the most important occasions in our life. The graduation ceremony of conferring degrees or diplomas at a college or school is very important.

The graduation ceremony is conducted three times in a student's life. The first ceremony is when a student graduates from primary school to secondary school. The second ceremony from high school to university and the third is when they complete university.



I have two daughters, and the older one is graduating from high school and going to university. The ceremony was in her school, and it was attended by parents and family members. My husband, daughters and I were so happy and excited about the event.

First, the students came into the room and marched to the stage. They wore their academic dress like a black cap and gown. Then, the Vice Principal read a speech about this wonderful day. After that, they called all the students' names to take a picture with the Vice Principal and the teachers. Every teacher talked about the special students they had in their class and gave out awards. The moment they called on my daughter, I cried because this was the first time I attended this type of ceremony, and I was proud of my daughter. All the families were proud of their children. They were all nicely dressed up and they looked so happy. The ceremony ended with all the students throwing their caps in the air. Finally, they took a picture together. I am happy to say it was one of the most important moments in my life.

My youngest daughter's graduation ceremony was a little different. The female students wore nice dresses and they wore a blue gown and a blue cap on their heads. The parents dressed up nicely as well. Like my other daughter's graduation ceremony, the students marched onto the stage. After that the Mass started and all the students and parents took Communion. Then, the Vice Principal called the students' names to give them the honour roll medal and took a picture together. I was very proud of my daughter because her marks are all over 90, and I was proud of her because she finished primary school and she will go to high school next year. The ceremony ended with all the students throwing their caps in the air again.

In conclusion, I was a very happy mother to see my children happy and doing so well in school. I think I am a good Mum, and I am very proud of my girls.

Chinese New Year

Yi W. | Level 5 | Ana R.'s Student



The Spring Festival is our traditional and most important Chinese festival. It is on January 1 according to the Chinese lunar calendar. Before that day, we buy food and clothes, and clean and make decorations for the house. For example, people clean their houses in order to sweep away bad luck from the previous year and welcome the Chinese New Year.

We also put up couplers spring scrolls, which are attached to the door on both sides. E.g. the “Blessing or Good Fortune” posted beside the door means that luck will come for the family in the New Year.

On that day, we make dumplings, cook fish and noodles, and then we gather together, eat, talk as well as watch TV programs for almost the whole night to greet the Chinese New Year. Did you know that eating dumplings during the Chinese New Year has more than 5000 years of history? Dumplings are an important kind of food for the New Year in China and people make it in different ways. Some people use flour to make dumplings and they prepare it by hand; however, some other people buy them in supermarkets. This

flour can be mixed with some vegetables and meat or eggs and they all together make stuffing. Dumplings and noodles signify good luck in the coming year and they are very popular in China.

From the first day of the Chinese New Year, we begin to visit our relatives and friends. When we meet our relatives, neighbors or friends, we say, “Happy New Year!” The children are the happiest of all because they receive lucky money packed in red paper from their parents and grand-parents. It is said that money can suppress the evil spirit because the expressions “the age” and “evil spirit” are homonyms in Chinese. Younger people get some money and then they can be safe all year.

Generally, the Chinese Spring Festival Holiday lasts only three days, and then it changes back and forth together on Saturday and Sunday. The total number of holidays is about seven, and people are happy because they may have seven days off work. But the following Saturday and Sunday, people are all motivated to work and are still immersed in the atmosphere of the Chinese Spring Festival. All celebrations together last almost half a month during the Chinese New Year.

It is really a happy holiday for everyone in China. The New Year is celebrated by the young and the not-so young and it gives lots of happy memories to all.

Celebrating Workers

Banafsheh K. | Level 6 | Lily B.'s Student

I think that it is nice to celebrate Labour Day and all the workers of this country.

The celebration of events is generally considered as a symbol of recognition of values, and in my opinion working is a value.

Working correctly contributes to the improvement of individual and community life. For example, working hard as a teacher increases the capacity of analyses in different fields, and it also promotes social interaction among teachers. At the same time, good knowledge is transferred to next generation. It is important to remember these values.



Celebrating a value or an event at a national level is the symbol of identity of a community. By celebrating Labour Day, Canada represents a part of its identity to the world. It is a young country with energy, hope, and action. It moves with the serious work of its people. It is a community which does not stop.

This is the image that Canada presents through this symbolic day. Let's celebrate Labour Day and all our workers every year because workers make this country strong.

Why Labour Day Is Important For Me

Morteza S. | Level 6 | Lily B.'s Student



I would love to talk about Labour Day in a very nice way, but I cannot because I can just imagine what workers in this country went through decades and decades ago when they had terrible working conditions.

Workers worked for long hours and sometimes over 16 hours a day without breaks. They had no real rights nor anyone to stick up for them, and they couldn't say anything against their employers even if they were right and the employers were wrong. Can you just imagine how they worked so hard under harsh laws that were made by their bosses? Just think

about how much pain they had to go through to just win their rights for living as human beings!

However, there have been a lot of changes since then. These days, we do have the right to speak up for ourselves. The benefits we have today like Unemployment Insurance and Work Safety Insurance benefit us if we get injured during our duties. The Labour Board Ministry and the Human Rights Board are just a few of the places we can get help with today when we want to know about our rights as workers.

We need to be aware of our rights when it comes to safety and what will benefit us in the work place. Because I have had some really bad experiences at work, I am more aware of employee labour rights. However, the most important thing is that we always have to remember are the people who really fought for us over and over again so that we can now be safer when we are at work. This is why Labour Day is important for me.

Eid al-Adha

Maysoon E. | Level 5 | Nahed S.'s Student

Eid al-Adha is a happy occasion that many Muslims in Canada celebrate. It is also known as the Feast of Sacrifice or Festival of Sacrifice. Eid al-Adha follows from the annual pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

We celebrate Eid Al- Adha every year around the 10th to the 13th days of the Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijjah. The traditional celebration starts in the morning when people sacrifice an animal permitted for food (a lamb) as an act of thanksgiving for God's mercy. Some of the food is donated for charitable purposes.

It is a time marked by special prayers and many Muslims gather for special prayer services. Many people also visit family and friends, exchange greetings and gifts, and make donations to the poor and needy. Eid al-Adha is also a time for forgiveness and compassion.



Father's Day

Tamara A. | Level 6 | Sarah H.'s Student



When I had my first baby, my husband had just opened his own cabinet making shop. Despite being in a very busy moment of his life, my husband spent a lot of time around me and the new born baby in the hospital. When we got to the house with our new born baby, we didn't really have anybody who could help us out. So my husband took a big part in taking care of the baby. He loved giving the baby a bath. As well, he would change diapers which I never expected he would do. He was very helpful in this very difficult part of my first try at being a mother.

He was the most proud father. Every Friday after he closed the shop early, he took the baby with him for 3 hours and he'd introduce the baby to his friends. This gave me 3 hours of free time to spend alone. Every weekend he'd take us out to great areas like rivers, lakes and BBQs. He'd love to spend his free time with the family, showing his love for the family.

Then came the second baby, he was even more happy to have the second child than I was. I named her after his favorite aunt Rachel. He was even happier that the first born baby took his dad's example and helped with his new sister. He did plenty of activities like chess, soccer and tennis. No matter how busy he was he'd always spend time with the kids. I'm very happy that he doesn't let his job take away from his time with the kids.



General

If I Won the Lottery

Tie C. | Level 5 | Erin O.'s student



It is always a popular topic—if I won the lottery. For most people, it is like a daydream. People like to discuss this topic because they have some dreams that cannot be achieved. In my case, I could do some things that I cannot do right now due to time and money.

First, I would be a full-time university student. In my opinion, the best investment is education. Education is not only for children, but also for adults. After I moved to Canada, I really felt it was necessary to get an academic education if you wanted to work like a Canadian.

Second, spending more time and paying more attention to my family. My daughter thinks her dad is always busy. Life is no fun if we are always worrying about saving and working for the future. If I won the lottery, I would take the dream vacation our family has always imagined. I would enjoy the time that I spend with my family.

Last, I would still work. I would find a job or create my business after finishing my education of university. Maybe some people would promptly quit their jobs to embrace a new life of leisure, but according to a U.S. news story 51 per cent of people said they would still work after winning the lottery, even if they did not need a job financially. I agree with this because life would be boring if I did not work. Similarly, work gives us a sense of purpose and accomplishment.

In summary, winning the lottery could be a game changer for a lot of people. We should consider carefully what we could do with the windfall. For me, not making any irrational decisions is the best choice.

Toronto and Buenos Aires: Two Multicultural Cities

Susana A. | Level 5 | John W.'s student

My name is Susana. I am from Argentina. More precisely, I was born in the province of Buenos Aires, but most of my life, I lived in the capital. As in other countries, capital cities are preferred by people because they have more jobs, better services and more opportunities for a better quality of life.

I came to Canada in 2012, and the feature that most attracted me in Toronto was its multicultural side. As I'm a scriptwriter and writer, I began to write about this topic. This reminded me about the articles I had written about European immigrants who arrived in my country between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Between 1890 and 1920, more than two million people came to Canada and many settled in the west. This immigration was due to the economic and social crises in Europe. This wave of immigration included Italians, Hungarians, British, Polish, Russians, Ukrainians, Slavs, Hungarians, Finns and others. They settled in cities, the countryside, and on islands, contributing to the growth of Canada.

In contrast, the main ethnic groups that came to Argentina were: Italians, Spanish, the French, British, Armenians, Syrians-Lebanese, Polish, Russian, German, Swiss and Welsh. In addition, there was a large number of immigrants from Jewish communities of the various European countries. The Italians were the most numerous group at nearly 50%. This is, of course, one reason why they occupy an important place in the economy and culture Argentina. Interestingly, Italians hold a very important place in Toronto because they worked in construction and built the city of Toronto after World War II. However those who progressed fastest in Argentina were the British immigrants, Swiss, German and Welsh, who arrived before 1860. This latter group arrived in very small numbers, however. This immigration has contributed in both cities rapidly increasing in population, and these newcomers have made improvements in agricultural production, business development and in the construction of the two cities.

Time has passed, things have changed. This is especially true in regards to technology and communications. These technological changes have caused new and great changes in society and in the economics of the world. However, one thing that has not changed is the reason why people immigrated in the first place. Without ignoring the differences that exist between Toronto and Buenos Aires, there are others things that join these two distant cities: the immigrants from Europe, a passion for film, theater and all artistic expressions, regardless of where in the world it was derived.

One example of an art form that joins people together is the tango. The tango emerged mainly in the area of the Rio de la Plata, in the cities of Buenos Aires (Argentina) and of Montevideo (Uruguay). This musical

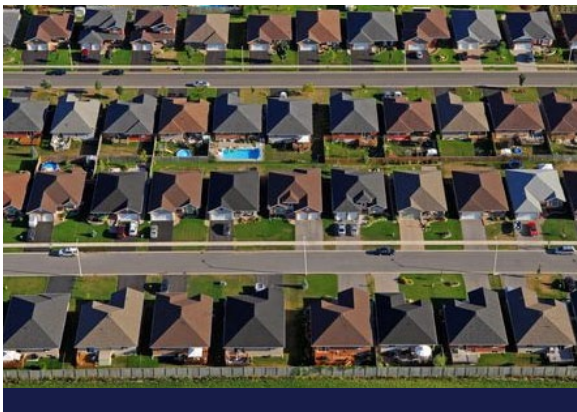


genre was born of a cultural fusion of different communities and cultures: the gaucho culture, African, Indian, Spanish, Italian, and the ethnic diversity generated by immigrants who arrived from Europe. For this reason, the tango is nostalgic. When Argentinians listen to the tango, they remember where they came from, including their feelings of joy, sadness and melancholy.

It is not only in Buenos Aires where you can listen, dance and enjoy the tango. In the multicultural city of Toronto, there are over twenty schools where you can learn tango dancing. There are also three festivals each year, and a lot of tango events where you can enjoy this dance and music. Of course, in Toronto people revel in the tango for its music and its romantic, sensual dance! Obviously, Toronto and Buenos Aires are very attractive places for immigrants, and for tourists due to their beauty, culture, and multicultural elements.

Living in Tiny Houses

Lei Z. | Level 6 | Lily B.'s student



Tiny houses are becoming very popular these days. To be completely honest, living in a “tiny house” can be a good idea. It is cozy, easy to manage, and eco-friendly. However, I doubt it can fit into reality for many people. Most parents will feel unsafe about their children’s safety because the space is too small, and if kids sleep in an upper bunk, there are safety concerns.

Living in a tiny house in the city can put people in potential danger because of the lack of physical security. A tiny house is tiny. It may not be that difficult to break into such a small structure. However, if someone decides to build a tiny house, the house should be set far off the road or far away from the city. On the other hand, if the tiny house is far from a city or town, then the problem is how to get to a hospital if a child is seriously hurt. A tiny house outside the city can also be broken into.

I also think it is still inconvenient for people to use electronics in such a small area. If you live in a tiny house and live off the grid, the lack of running water and other necessities are sometimes a problem. I can just imagine trying to heat water from a nearby river and charging batteries constantly even though you can probably buy batteries or a wooden stove in a local supermarket or hardware store in the nearest town. I can’t imagine people having a party with friends in such a small space. If someone loves gardening in the backyard, there will be few chances to do this unless you are near a lot of open land.

I must admit that choosing a tiny house can bring some people a creative and unique lifestyle. However, there are many disadvantages and difficulties that people will face if they consider such a decision.

Rules in the Kitchen

Ariana Z. | Level 7 | Lesley H.'s student

The situation was a mother and son cooking lesson in the family kitchen so I started teaching some basic rules on kitchen safety. I don't have an academic education in Gastronomy or any professional training, but I have been cooking since I was 13 and I love cooking and giving happiness to people with my food.

I started with the hygiene rules and then explained some basic safety, considering that my son was only seven. The first thing that I told my boy was, there are, in my opinion, three kinds of rules in the kitchen: Must, Could and Should.

The Must rules are related to hygienic and safety practices. For instance, "When you're cooking you must cover your head because hairs in the food is one of the most unacceptable mistakes in cooking". Second: "You must wash your hands often and keep your working area clean". "You must be organized, no matter if you're going to make a sandwich or a Thanksgiving dinner". Before starting, "Remember your recipe, step by step and if it's necessary, read it again and then go to your fridge or pantry and pick what you are going to use". Finally, one last thing "Wear shoes and an apron". There are some more rules, but he's only a kid and I don't want to bore or scare him.



The other two kinds of rules have to do with creativity and things that you can change such as ingredients. For instance, I'd like to use a recipe to cook a meal, but sometimes I use a recipe only as a guide to know the cooking times and the right temperature. Then I go to check my fridge and my pantry and I find out that I don't have the specific ingredients that the recipe says that I have to use. So, how to replace an ingredient for another? Easy, if you're capable of remembering the main flavour - acid, sweet, sour, spicy - then you can substitute it for another similar ingredient resulting in a similar flavour.

Another example is replacing dry herbs and spices for fresh ones, especially if you're going to cook fast. What do I mean by "cooking fast"? It's when you cook something that doesn't require a long preparation but it doesn't mean you have to get just a plain flavour. You can have a wonderful cheese sandwich using your regular ingredients and adding a couple of tomato slices, fresh basil and pepper.

You know how easy it is to cook an omelette with ham and cheese. So, you could add a different flavour adding spinach or goat cheese instead of regular cheddar. But you don't have to buy goat cheese to prepare an omelette. That is an idea that came to my mind the day after a party and I got leftovers, small pieces of cheese that I couldn't use by themselves, and I added flavour to my ordinary Sunday breakfast.

Finally, the key is to know your ingredients and their flavours, use your imagination to help yourself to create new dishes or to turn these everyday dishes into new flavour adventures.

Devastating Nepal Earthquake

Chhiring L. | Level 5 | Nahed S.'s student



On 25th April 2015, Nepal was destructed by the earthquake with magnitude of 7.8 mw. It has been the most powerful disaster in Nepal since the year 1934. Hundreds of thousands of houses are flattened; more than 7000 people lost their lives and the number is still rising. Historical temples and towers are collapsed; people are all left with stories of loss, pain and sorrow. Some are left without parents, spouse, children, families and their loved ones. It's really devastating, heart touching when we view the pictures and videos, but the ones who has been feeling and living this kind of disaster must be completely shattered.

Many remote places have not been reached by any rescuer or support, so the victims are spending their days and nights in the open sky without shelter, food or aids. Some are dying too. We can only pray, encourage, give hope and support by donating to those victims for their faster recovery.

Although there was a powerful earthquake in the entire country, the airport was not damaged so that our country was able to receive help and support from all over the world. We all Nepalese are very much thankful to all the foreign countries for their great support. Many more lives have been saved by its occurrence at the day time on weekend as many people were out of their houses. If it was on a weekday, the schools would have been running and many teachers, students and children would have lost their lives. It is a natural disaster that no one can control or handle, so we all human beings have to tolerate.

These types of natural disaster can occur any time in any part of the world, so without differentiating any body and without saying mine let us say we, us and ours and support each other in the needs. Why we people are greedy, selfish and create violence in this world? Nothing will benefit us in hurting others. We cannot carry the wealth or property with us when we die. Whether we are rich or poor, high or low level, we are equal. At the moment, when this kind of natural disaster hits us, so why not help each other and give a hand as much as we can. The wealth is just dust of our hand, it comes for some time and it disappears within a second so let us start helping each other and who are in need. We were all born naked on this world and we have to go naked after we die. Only good deeds are carried away so let us reunite, pray to God for all wellbeing and spread peace, compassion and save each and every living being of the world.

Life is unsecure anything could happen in any moment so let us all pray together to God for it not to happen in the future in any corner of the world.

Let us always keep in our mind; Unite, Save, Love, Pray, Support...

Poverty

Wangyan L. | Level 4 | Theresa R.'s Student

There are a lot of poor people in the world. Most of them live in the developing countries. They work hard but get little money. For example, in Dongguan City, located in the south of China, there are many clothing factories there. The sewing workers come from the poor countryside. They work 12-14 hours every day and are only off 2-4 days every month. But they are still poor and can't buy a house or a car and there are no vacations or time to stay with their families. The clothing factories usually pay the workers piece rate wage. There are more than 40 steps which include drawing, cutting, tailoring, sewing, ironing, checking, packaging...etc.



When a piece of famous brand clothes is made in the factory, like North Face or Burberry, the factory owner can get RMB50(1CAD=5RMB) and one sewing worker can share 1/40 of it which is RMB1.25, CAD0.25. If they work for common brand clothes, the client pays the factory less than RMB10,CAD2 for one piece. That means one worker only gets several cents for each. Today as a Chinese sewing worker, they can earn CAD500-600 every month, some get a little more. This change is because the Chinese government issued laws and regulations in the area of production. The factory must pay CAD220 to every person every month. The worker needs to do overtime work if they want to get more than CAD220. This is the new way that the owners think. At the same time, the factory also asks the clients to pay more. The clients don't agree with it and so they move to India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Bangladesh. I think the sewing workers there earn money as Chinese workers do before.

Why did all this happen? It happened because they were born in distressed areas. They can't get a fine education. When they grow up, they go out to find a job in order to change their bad life. The factory is the best place where it is easy to get in. There they meet a partner and marry. When the kids are born, they will take the kids back to their parents. Then they just see their kids every New Year holiday, 3-7 days. Finally, their kids' life becomes similar. This is a weird circle. Who can change it? The government, The rich man? The poor can only depend on themselves, but it is so difficult.

Education is a privilege and not a right

Lin X. | Level 6 | Fernand V.'s student



These days as higher education tuition fees rise progressively, most people complain that a government fails to fulfill its social responsibility granting low-income families sufficient financial support to pay for post secondary education. This leads to university and college graduates burdened with whopping amounts of student loans immediately after graduation. A considerable mass of youth is liable to live in misery, plaguing the whole society; they can end up living with their parents all their lives simply because of the inability to afford increasingly expensive house mortgage loans. So they further suggest that governmental financial assistance should cover the whole education expense so that everybody has a chance to enjoy a free education from grade school all the way to the end of any higher education. Here, the word 'free' is the point. Of course, not everyone agrees with it. One may argue that education is a privilege but not a right.

In terms of commodity or any other commercial service, there is good reason to believe that education has to be paid by the customers who acquire the ownership of the commodity, or who consume the service, at least in principle, much the way that people pay surgeons for a surgical operation even if it is a bad one, as goods have to be paid for at a shop. It is a world in which people live by exchanging labor efforts, mental or physical. It happens in accordance to law of value and on a daily basis. As a matter of fact, people are buying things invariably on their own. They pay teachers for knowledge, philosophers for wisdom and priests for spiritual comfort. So, why not pay for education?

'Right', in itself, does not necessarily mean FREE. As US President Barack Obama says, 'Freedom is not free'; even the bare fundamental human right like the freedom of speech is not exempted. People do pay for it, and it is highly priced. A dozen of French cartoonists recently lost their lives to it swiftly, while the US-led military coalition has been spending billions of dollars and years of time arduously promoting worldwide human rights either through fighting against fierce ISIS terrorists or through intervening into Iraq territory deeply.

Granted, a few world powers such as Switzerland and Germany already begin to realize that they can invest a great mass of wealth in education in the hope of getting back a return in the form of a large group of enlightened young men and women who are potential future leaders. Naturally it is a rational practice to free people's educational loan burden, of course, as long as these lucky guys live in a rich enough country.

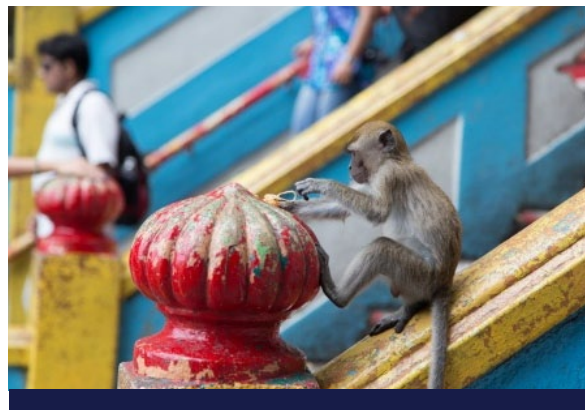
However, this is not the case at all in some underdeveloped countries, where national resources are constantly scarce and demanding, to the extent that one has to go to great length to imagine. Opposite to the few most affluent nations, people living in these regions have to rely solely upon themselves to pursue higher education though most of them do fail to achieve their development goals on account of financial deficiency. When one lives in such a nation, it seems to be the only realistic, practical and possibly feasible way, just to pay education independently by one's own family and there is no other choice. Concerning turbulent areas like the Middle East, where people killing or being killed recurs year in year out, to argue about who gets to be responsible for paying education is positively whimsical, even ridiculous.

The topic about education fees is not simply a matter of privilege or right, but a complicated social issue requiring comprehensive investigation and study of social circumstances of concerned countries, involved in enormous socioeconomic, possibly political considerations.

Our Trip to Malaysia

Saida K. | Level 6 | Rima B.'s Student

About 4 years ago I traveled to Malaysia. The landscape was beautiful, with birds and animals roaming around like they do in forests. One of the most unforgettable moments in Malaysia was when we went to the Monkey Island. So you wonder what's so great about "The Monkey Island". Well everything, but for me the best part was how the monkeys were free, no cages and no fences, just natural wild life. Be brave and never bring food with you because of what happened to us. My daughter had a bag of chips, and suddenly the monkey skipped all the way and jumped up and stole the chips. All of us were panicked and I just stood there doing nothing.



I kept laughing for a few minutes because my kids were just stuck to me, afraid. Then another thing happened when the monkeys jumped on my husband and grabbed his ice cream from his hand. At this moment all the kids started laughing and kept laughing at their dad all day.

One of my memorable moments in Monkey Island was when a wonderful lady came to us and asked us if we wanted a family portrait, and we all replied with a very big yes. So instead of waiting for her until she finished drawing all of us together, we took turns sitting and waiting on the lady. The lady was grateful to us, so we thanked and tipped her.

It was a great and adventurous trip for us, and next time I will be ready for the monkeys.



Heritage

Memories from Syria

Abeer A. | Level 6 | Junko T.'s Student

I was born and raised in Damascus, the capital of Syria. Syria is an old country and it has the oldest capital in the world. The most important civilizations on the planet had been discovered on this land, as evidenced by enormous archaeological discoveries, some of which dates back to more than eight thousand years BC. There are more than 4,500 important archaeological sites.

For example, Al Amawi masjed (mosque) is one of the most famous monuments in Syria, and one of the largest and oldest masjed in the world. It is located in the old city of Damascus, and its ceiling and walls are decorated by mosaics.

Syria is an Arabic country located in the northeast of the Arabian world or the Middle East as it is known, and it is part of south western Asia. The nations that border Syria are Turkey to its north, Lebanon to the west, Palestine and Jordan to the south, and Iraq to the east. Syria is divided into fourteen provinces, and a population of nearly 18 million.

The official language is Arabic, but there are some other languages that are not as popular such as Kurdish language and Armenian language. Not as many people speak these languages and they are not taught in schools. They teach English in all the schools for all grades.

Syria has a climate characterized by a unique combination of cold winds coming from The Mediterranean Sea from the northwest and hot winds coming from the desert side on its east. The highest temperatures can reach up to 43°C in the summer, however nights are cool. Winters are fairly cold; snow may be found from late December to April. In addition, Syria's average annual rainfall is less than 25 centimeters.

The Syrian people are generous and love even strangers; they like to help and render aid. The Syrian woman is a good wife, and she has expertise in keeping the house clean and having a pure heart just like the jasmine flower which has a pure white colour and a refresh smell. The Syrian man is strong, brave and has a strong connection with his family.

Another thing that is special in Syria is the flavour of fruits and vegetables and diversity of the traditional dishes such as hummus, tabbouleh and shawerma.

I like Syria and proud I came from there. I hope everyone can get a chance to visit that country to experience my three favourite things which are discovering the history, smell of jasmine flowers and taste of the delicious food.

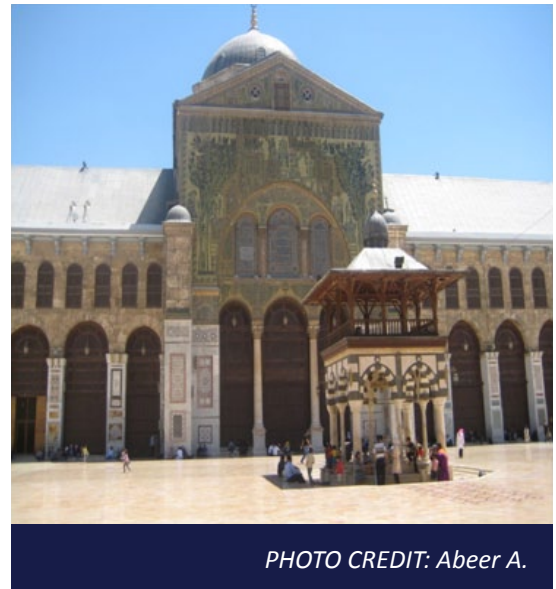


PHOTO CREDIT: Abeer A.

Beautiful Memories

Hong C. | Level 5 | Nahed S.'s Student



I want to share with you some information about my homeland. I am from a small village in Hunan province, a province in the south of China, which I have left it when I graduated from the high school. I had spent my whole childhood and teenage years in there, so I have lots of memories in this old beautiful small place.

As a small village in the south of China, there are four distinctive seasons. I had spent my colorful childhood in the mountains, ponds and other wild fields. When I was ten years old, there was a farm cattle fed by my family, so I had to look after it after school.

I would drive it with other partners who had the same mission to wild fields where thick meadow was. After we had arrived to our destination, our happy times had begun for we needn't to worry, the cattle eating and we tried to explore the mysterious world in the trees, caves and shrubs. We had heard a story which described that there was a huge snake in a cave which was just behind the mountain where we used to play, so we looked forward to checking the truth though the elders had told us not to do so. After 2 weeks of preparation, six of us planned to explore the legend place, and we had prepared flashlight, long rope and sticks which we might fight with the unknown dangerous snake. It happened in the summer, but when we stepped into the cave all of us felt cold as if the mysterious life had created a dangerous environment, while we were so young and pure to find out the unknown things that we kept moving into the cave. The entrance at the beginning was so narrow that we had to creep through it, after 30 meters there was a huge square lying at the front of us, stalactite was hanging in the roof, and our flashlight couldn't reach the end. When we were shocked at the magnificent scene, there was some unknown terrible sound rising in the darkness, and we were so scared that we had to return back to the entrance. After several explorations, we had known there were thousands of bats living in the top of the cave, and there was no such snake in it, just a huge underground river in the deep of the square. We had figured out the old who couldn't pass the entrance and heard the sound from the cave, so they guessed there might be some dangerous animals living and made a terrible story to stop the curiosity of us.

There were not only exciting explorations but unforgettable games as well. In the wild, we were tracing each other, picking plants and observing the wildlife. After leaving over 20 years, I have known there are tremendous changes that happened in my village, but I still miss the old nature and pure scenery.



Recipes

Tuna Cutlets

Jeba R. | Level 7 | Jonathan B.'s student

Ingredients (for 8 servings):

Canned Tuna - 2 tins
Potato - 2 small (boiled with little salt, cooled and mashed well)
Red Onion - 1 large (thinly diced)
Green chillies - 1 (thinly diced)
Ginger - 1 inch
Garlic - 2 big cloves (if you ginger garlic paste- 1 and half teaspoon)
Turmeric powder - 1/4 tsp
Red chili powder - 1/4 tsp
Coriander Powder - 1/4tsp
Garam masala - 1/4 tsp
Black pepper powder - 1/4 tsp
Cumin seeds powder - 1/4 tsp
Salt to taste



For coating with Batter for the cutlets

Egg white - 1 (beat well until bubbles are formed)
Bread crumbs
Canola oil for frying

Method of Preparation:

1. Open the tuna cans and drain the excess oil or water. Keep them aside.
2. Heat a non- stick frying pan on medium heat.
3. Pour 1 tbsp of canola oil and first add the onions. Sauté them until the onions become transparent.
4. Next add ginger garlic paste. Once it turns mild brown in color, add all the spices. (Red chili powder, turmeric powder, coriander powder, black pepper powder, cumin seeds powder, salt and garam masala). Mix well.
5. Then add the tuna chunks and mix well. Each tuna piece has to be coated well with spices and onions. Cover and cook for 1-2 minutes. Allow it to cool.
6. When cooled, finally add the mashed potatoes and mix well with clean and dry hands.
7. Make small round flat cutlets (balls) and gently pat it to form a disc shape of even thickness and keep them aside in a large tray.
8. Heat the oil in a pan in medium heat.
9. Dip the cutlet into the egg white and coat it with bread crumbs. Do this one by one.
10. When the oil is heated, fry until the cutlets are brown and crunchy. (You can either deep fry or shallow fry them).
11. Serve hot with ketchup or mint chutney.

Enjoy your yummy tuna cutlets!

Egg Fried Rice

Nasira L. | Level 5 | Lesley H.'s student

Ingredients:

Rice 2 cups
Water 1 ½ cups
Salt according to your taste
Green Peas ½ cup
Carrot (1) ½ cup
Cabbage 1 cup shredded
Green Onion (2 or 3) 1 cup
Green pepper (1) 1 cup
Ajino Moto (Chinese Salt) 1 tbsp.
Crushed red chili flakes 1 tbsp.
Black pepper (powder) ½ tsp.
Cooking Oil ¼ cup
Eggs 2 large size



Method:

First wash all the vegetables and cut in same shape.
Secondly, put oil in a non-stick pan and fry all vegetables in it to become soft.
Thirdly, put Ajino Moto, crushed red chili, salt, black pepper and vegetables into it.
Next, beat the eggs and put a pinch of salt in them and fry them in 1 tablespoon oil and keep them separate.
Finally, boil the rice in water, then mix the vegetables and eggs in the rice.
Egg Fried Rice is ready to serve.
Serve it with ketchup.

Tasty Mexican Guacamole Recipe

Claudia V. | Level 4 | Zakia S.'s student

Ingredients:

2 avocados
A quarter piece of one medium onion
1 large, or 2 small tomatoes
1 Jalapeno or Serrano chilly
Half a lemon or lime
Few coriander leaves
Salt

Method:

The first thing we should do to make this rich guacamole, is to peel and chop the avocados and remove the inner pulp that we will use for our recipe. With the help of a fork mash the avocado until smooth.

Then chop the onion and cilantro fine, separately. Do the same with tomato and chili. Add all these ingredients to the mashed avocado.

Add a few drops of lemon juice or lime, and a pinch of salt or as per your taste. Mix all these ingredients well.

And you will have tasty guacamole ready to enjoy!





Seasonal

Canadian Autumn

Zi Sheng C. | Level 6 | Jessica W.'s Student



PHOTO CREDIT: Charles Z.

Canada is a beautiful country. We have amazing sights for the whole year. We have green in the spring; also, we have a hot summer too. However, we have a very colourful autumn. We like it so much.

During the Canadian autumn, we have awesome sights everywhere. When you go to a field, you can see a golden land; that's the autumn harvest time coming soon. When you go to a forest, you can see many leaves of different colours. They are greens, yellows, pinks, blues and purples... Oh, it's just great time to see the leaves, because you can't count how many colours they are. You only know they are so pretty. You feel just lovely and would like stay there forever. Sometimes, you can see a yellow carpet on the floor, sometimes, you can see a purple carpet on the floor, and sometimes, it is a golden carpet. A gust of wind blows, and the air is fill with a faint fragrance. Everywhere there are gold leaves, and the flowers and grasses have many colours too.

Canadian autumn has great weather, you will feel very comfortable. It's not hot or cold. You just fell cool. Sometimes, when you look at the sky, you can see many geese flying to the south to get ready for winter. That is Canadian autumn.

Myself in the Fall Season

Ruba A.Y. | Level 6 | Terese C.'s student

I feel appreciation to Mother Nature when I walk or drive to see the colors of the leaves that show off their fiery colors before winter settles in and extinguish this miracle of fire.

I feel so comfortable and calm when I am drinking my coffee and meditating about this magnificent scene.

I feel so healthy when I am walking and racing with the trees to see more incredible fiery colors.

I feel so happy when my children and I collect the leaves and play with them.

I found myself these days among these trees.

I feel that God creates this season for me and for everyone who loves to live this life ...



PHOTO CREDIT: Charles Z.

An Endless Dream

Nasim N. | Level 6 | Terese C's Student

I used to live in the dry part of a country where you only see sand. It's really nice because you are surrounded by just desert and wherever you look, it is only dry land around you. You can hardly hear any other noise except your breath.

During my whole life I had always seen the colorful leaves just in photos. It was only a wish for me to walk on the dried leaves.

We arrived in Canada on September 24th. It was really fabulous. Red, green, yellow, and orange leaves, and they were everywhere. You didn't need to reach for a colorful leaf. You just needed to stretch your hand to touch it. Wow, fall was really amazing. I could hardly hear my breath. It was only the rustle of leaves and it was endless.

It's really nice that you can see it, touch it and feel it. It's not a dream for me any more to face fall.



PHOTO CREDIT: Charles Z.



Settlement

My Settlement

Zi Zhe L. | Level 6 | Tamara W.'s Student



On December 11th 2011, I came to Canada. Since then, during the last 4 years I have been changing a lot. Some of these changes are good and some are negative.

First of all, the biggest change is the language environment, I don't have my mother tongue environment anymore. It's the largest change I have ever faced. Now I am doing better compared to the first couple of months. However it's the 4th year of living in Canada, I could be better. I should arrange some time specific to improving my English.

Second, like all coins have two sides, on the positive side, I feel myself being more social than before, I would like to know more people and make friends. Most people here are nice. There is some difficulty in language, however I don't find this challenge tiring.

My current life is slower and better than my former life in China. Now, instead of wasting 3 to 4 hours on the way to work, I only need to walk for 10 minutes. I have more free time to spend on my hobbies and expanding my life.

Last but not least, I have a chance to learn lots of information which I could never learn previously. My view is much wider and information from different areas is giving me a change to know myself, my country and this world.

There are more changes to come and I am still changing. Changes make life interesting. I hope my life still changes in many ways, and I like how it has changed so far.

My First time in Canada

Denise G. | Level 5 | Sarah H.'s student

It was in mid-October when our plane landed safely in North Bay, Canada. That was my first time I felt the wind-chill on my cheeks; I was pretty excited then. As I got in the car and passed by different places, I was fascinated by the environment. It's really clean here with no pollution unlike my hometown.

I got hungry so we decided to drop by the nearest restaurant. When we got inside, I noticed how people showed their politeness and were courteous to customers. We just stayed there for a few minutes and took to the road again. I was delighted by the beautiful scenery. I saw many animals on the side of the road. The leaves on the trees were getting colourful. The lakes were starting to freeze. When I got home, we strolled in the bush. I was so afraid at first but they reassured me that there are no snakes in there. I also saw different birds and footprints from some wild animals.

It is really enjoyable to stay here. As the days go by, I'm learning new things about the culture and traditions here, even though it's a lot different from my country. And I'm looking forward to going to the other parts of Canada to learn more about it.



Successful passage of immigration obstacles

Gita M. | Level 7 | Diane N.'s student



Gratefully, I have overcome to some barriers in the immigration process to Canada.

In this essay, I am writing my story about the most significant and honestly, a worthwhile change in my life during the past two years of my immigration to Canada. It is a weird situation when you have no idea what is going on in your life after you immigrate to a foreign country particularly if you are not able to speak a foreign language. Anyway, this is an opportunity that I always want to share with other people who may decide to immigrate in their life.

Depending on the point of view of immigrating to a foreign country, there are several obstacles. Even though I had studied English for a long time in my life, during school and university, the language barrier was the most important aspect I dealt with in Canada as a newcomer. I couldn't communicate with others in a shop, the doctor's office and even at the bus for the first few months in Canada. I had been disappointed and thought I won't be able to do anything in my life anymore.

Choosing a place for living was the second barrier I struggled with during the first few days in Canada. I decided to land in Toronto as it is the most important city in Canada. At this point, we were in a terrible state because we chose our place out of the blue with no research. It was the first and only place we went to see for renting at that time. So we turned a blind eye to other choices around us. It was the biggest mistake which I has made in my new life.

After settling down in an inconvenience place, I went through the next obstacle in front of me. Looking for an appropriate job opportunity was the next step. Despite the opinion of most people, I never looked for a survival job at the beginning. I believed that I could utilize my expertise without fail. So, I enrolled in a co-op program which gave me Canadian experience on my resume, but luckily before the end of the program, I got a full-time job in the company I was working for as a co-op student in the coating industry which I had over 12 years' experience back home. The only difference was that I had a lower level position than my former position but that was predictable.

In this paragraph, I am happy to share my story of getting a full-time job in Canada which is always interesting and a big miracle in my entire life. Before enrolling in the program that I mentioned above, I started expanding my networking through LinkedIn profile. As I was surfing the Canadian specialists in my profession, a person, who was the president of Canadian Paint and Coating Association, accepted me unexpectedly. It was my honour to connect with him at that time. After a few days, I asked him if there was a position available in his institute or in a plant which was in the coating industry. He replied with the following message: "Somebody

is looking for a chemist in Toronto and I can connect you to them if you wish.” Finally, I got my first interview. I followed up with my application in a few weeks but there was not an acceptable respond to me. After a while, I offered to enter the company as a co-op student and they gratefully accepted my offer out of the blue. Finally, after two months, I became part of their team as a full-time employee.

Now, it was time to set up my lifestyle as I had back home. So, first of all, my kids needed to be enrolled in a reputable swimming program to achieve their goal to be professionals in swimming. Afterwards, I moved to an area which has the best schools in the city. In summary and an unexpected way, the rest of my life was enjoyable a year after my arrival in beautiful Canada. I have almost passed all the difficulties of my immigration process successfully and now I am so happy to be in a beautiful country.

During above procedure, I am pleased to add the “LINC Home Study program” to this successful story. My English has been improving gradually by following the program everyday which is appropriate for my busy schedule. My friendly native teacher has given me a chance to get in touch with her when I have any needs in English. Such an accessible program is incredible and I would like to give my appreciation my teacher and everyone who is in charge of “LINC Home Study program.”



Skills

Comparison of University Learning and Skilled Trades Training

Pehn M. | Level 6 | Erin O.'s Student

The contrast between university learning and skilled trades training in Saskatchewan are confusing for some people. Many students enter university education courses expecting better job opportunities. Some people realize that university learning costs more, presents more academic challenges, and prepares students for a higher standard of employment skills than skilled trades training.

First of all, in terms of cost, university is more expensive because of tuition and living expenses. Anyone who wishes to attend university must pay fees, whereas it is free to attend skilled trades training school. In Regina there are no tuition fees for skilled trades training. You can even get paid while you are taking the skills course because employers are already lined up and waiting for workers. University tuition can start at roughly \$1,500 per term and can wind up costing as much as \$2,000. University students must also worry about the residence or rental costs for living close to the university's campus. In Regina, rental costs for a bedroom basement apartment can range from \$800 to \$1000 per month (some not including utilities). In contrast, skilled trades training students do not have to worry about their living expenses because they can pay their own rent as they get paid while they are taking the courses.

Secondly, the workload in university is more challenging than the workload in skilled trades training school. University students are faced with the task of having to complete an average of three to five assignments per week, whereas skilled trades training school students average only one assignment per course. There are more assignments in university, and they are also more challenging and can take up to eight hours to complete successfully. In contrast, skilled trades training school students do not have to commit as much time and effort to their assignments and can often finish all of their homework in an hour.

Thirdly, university offers jobs skills that are more famous than skilled trades training skills. More than that, university students have the benefit of being able to join many types of jobs. For example, doctor, engineer and lawyer are all the jobs for university graduates. In contrast, the Regina skilled training centre offers courses for labour jobs only. Recently, they offer many courses such as; electrician, plumber, and roofer. These kinds of jobs don't require university degrees. As far as I know, most people think that a university education has more prestige in our society.

Overall, both students have amazing results when they achieve their goals. Today, we see many employers in our community. Some of them have university degrees and some of them they don't have a university degree. In this case, some people have a hard time to decide which way is the right way that can lead them to victory.



Joining the Parent Council at your Children's School

Tilak B. | Level 7 | Diane R.'s Student



As a new immigrant, I didn't know about the school council board. One day, I got a letter from my children's school about a council member nomination. I asked my English teacher, Diane, about it, she advised me to apply to be a council member. As per her guidance, I applied and was nominated by the school principal after two weeks. It was a great opportunity for me to be a member of council. It helped me to interact and to communicate with others. Moreover, it gave me a chance to learn about the school environment in a new community.

Being a member of council, I was involved in all meetings year round. All the meetings were interactive and after extensive discussion we made a plan for upcoming events. Each meeting I recommended involving parents, involving is a great opportunity for the school to gain their perception towards school activities. I also suggested sending survey questionnaires to parents to get feedback on school activities. Our principal highly appreciated my ideas. She is going to approve these ideas and implement them for the upcoming academic year. It was my great accomplishment.

It would be a great opportunity for newcomers to be a member of their children school's parent council. It will provide a platform to get involved in different activities and show their abilities in a new community.

Face Painting

Dulce G. | Level 6 | Lily B.'s student

My name is Dulce, and I am a professional face painter. I really enjoy my face painting business. This is my hobby, my part-time business, my volunteer work, and my relaxation time.

I have loved art, especially painting and drawing, since I was 11 years old. I have learned how to paint with oil, acrylic, pencil, and pastel, which are some of my artistic favourites, but my love of art is not limited to these.

My adventure with face-painting started when my daughter asked me to face paint her face at her birthday party. It was then that I got my very first amateur face-painting kit, and gradually over time, friends started to know about my love of face-painting, so this is how my part-time business started. Now, I have very professional face-painting equipment, and I have painted many faces at birthday and other events. It's so much fun, and I really love doing this.

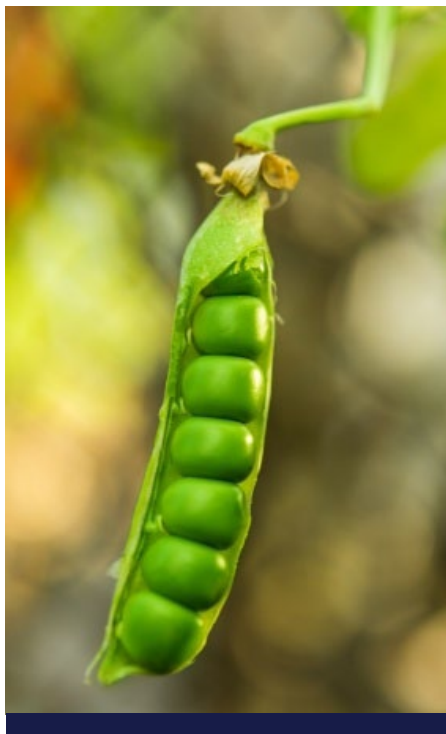
I also participate as a volunteer face-painter at such events like "The Terry Fox Run" and the Alzheimer Society's "Walk for Memories," as well as for various charity events organized by the city municipal services in my city of Sault Ste. Marie, which is located in northern Ontario.

I really enjoy face-painting, not only as a hobby, but as an opportunity to work with kids. I love to talk to them while I paint their faces, and I always enjoy asking them what characters they would love to be painted as. Their answers as to why they choose different characters are amazing! Kids are wonderful, full of energy, honest, and very positive. What a pleasure it is to work with them.



My Job

Innocent G. | Level 5 | Inara M.'s Student



Before coming to Canada I had a degree in agriculture and food production. I arrived in Canada in the end of 2011, I looked for a job in my field that I didn't find. That's why I made the decision to go back to school to update my knowledge and learn new Canadian standards in agriculture and food processing. I went to the University of Guelph at Alfred campus for six months to learn the Canadian agri-food systems. It is with this program that I could find a job with Belle Pulses Ltd. where my occupation is the production and quality control of split peas and their flour.

Let me give you a summary description of this job: for my job, I have two main tasks: splitting and quality control. Splitting: first, I transfer the peas to the dryer for drying. Second, the peas go to the dehullers to move the hulls. After, the peas continue to the roaster for roasting. And then, the peas are transferred to the drum for cleaning with warm water. Finally, the peas pass through the colour sorter for sorting the good and bad peas with the camera. Quality control: I take the sample at each stage of production and I compare the quality in accordance with the standards.

In conclusion, I like this job because I don't have any pressure and it is not physical work. But, I have to work day, evening and night shifts in rotation. So, this schedule is not good for someone who has a family with young children.

My Work is My Passion

Esperance A. | Level 5 | Milanka V.'s Student

For each person it is always very important to live freely and happily. Several factors play an important role in realizing this goal. For example, doing work that you are passionate about is one of these factors.

From a young age I loved playing with kids. I knew how to take care of them and how to make them happy. I always remember my mother's words when she saw me play with children. "Girl, you must have your own kids." She knew my passion, and couldn't wait to see me with my own children one day.



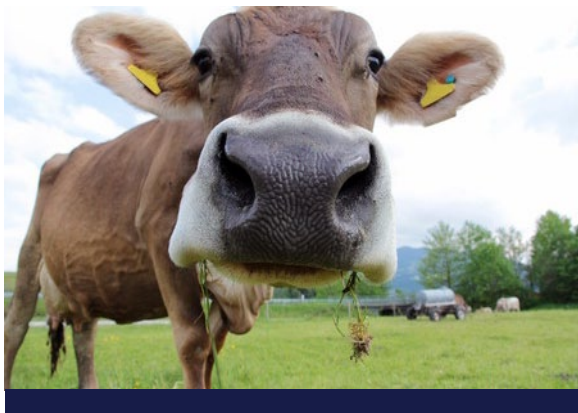
I studied economics and after my studies I worked in my field, but I always felt that I was missing something. It was not really the job I was passionate about.

Once in Canada, it was time for me to look for work. I consulted a settlement councilor that helps new arrivals in their integration, especially in the search for employment. She gave me lots of advice about what I need to do to get a job. My question was: "Is there a way to work with children?" She told me that there are francophone daycares as I spoke French. I then went to school and took courses related to early childhood education to strengthen my knowledge about the field that I was passionate about.

It's been 2 years since I started working with children and every day it's a pleasure to have them by my side. It inspires me to see them grow and receive their sincere love. Their happiness affects me and gives me strength to grow socially and I convey that to others. I am free and happy to have fun with my best friends, the children that I care for.

My Life as a Dairy Farmer

Manuela S. | Level 6 | Rima B.'s student



Would you like to be a part of a dairy farm and create good quality food?

My name is Manuela and I am an employee on Gruen Valley Dairy in Vernon, Ontario. I love my work. I am responsible for the health of cows and calves, to produce good food and also for management.

First, the health of cows and calves is very important for the future. A healthy calf produces more milk than a calf that was sick from diarrhea, pneumonia etc. My work is to monitor and treat the sick cows or calves with medication before they get worse.

My second responsibility is to produce food of good quality. For that, you need to write down every needle that you give the cow or the calf. On some medication, there is a meat or milk withdrawal ingredient. This means a cow that got needled a week ago could not be shipped to the sales barn, because most cows get slaughtered right after the sale and the meat is distributed to the wholesalers. My job is to make sure that no cow goes to the sales barn that had been needled in the past week. This is a very important rule for producing good food quality in Canada.

The final responsibility is management. This is not an easy part for me because you need to be on top of everything, for example, employees, cows and calves health and many more other things.

These three points are my work and I love it. Every day is different and it never gets boring on a dairy farm. Now that you know what my work is on a dairy farm, would you like do be a part of a dairy farm and produce good quality food?

Glossary

Here is some vocabulary from this month's newsletter. Do you know what the words mean?

Trade-off (pg.7)

a balance between two opposing things, that you are willing to accept in order to achieve something

Ornithologist (pg.10)

someone who studies birds

Caste (pg. 14)

a group of people who have the same position in society

Ample (pg. 14)

more than enough

Protagonist (pg. 14)

the most important character in a play, film, or story

Motif (pg. 14)

an idea, subject, or image that is regularly repeated and developed in a book, film, work of art etc

Pace (pg.16)

the speed at which something happens or is done

Bankruptcy (pg.20)

the state of being unable to pay your debts

Optometry (pg.22)

healthcare profession concerned with the eyes and related structures, as well as vision, visual systems, and vision information processing in humans

Infrastructure (pg.25)

the basic systems and structures that a country or organization needs in order to work properly, for example roads, railways, banks etc.

Dock (pg.27)

a place in a port where ships are loaded, unloaded, or repaired

Gorge (pg.29)

a deep narrow valley with steep sides

Angling (pg.29)

the sport of catching fish with a fishing rod

Secluded (pg.30)

very private and quiet

Wapiti (pg.31)

a large North American deer

Windfall (pg.42)

an amount of money that you get unexpectedly

Melancholy (pg.44)

a feeling of sadness for no particular reason

Gastronomy (pg.45)

the art and science of cooking and eating good food

Hygienic (pg.45)

clean and likely to prevent bacteria, infections, or disease from spreading

Apron (pg.45)

a piece of clothing that covers the front part of your clothes and is tied around your waist, worn to keep your clothes clean while cooking

Whopping (pg.48)

very large

Affluent (pg.49)

having plenty of money, nice houses, expensive things etc

Residence (pg.67)

a college or university building where students live

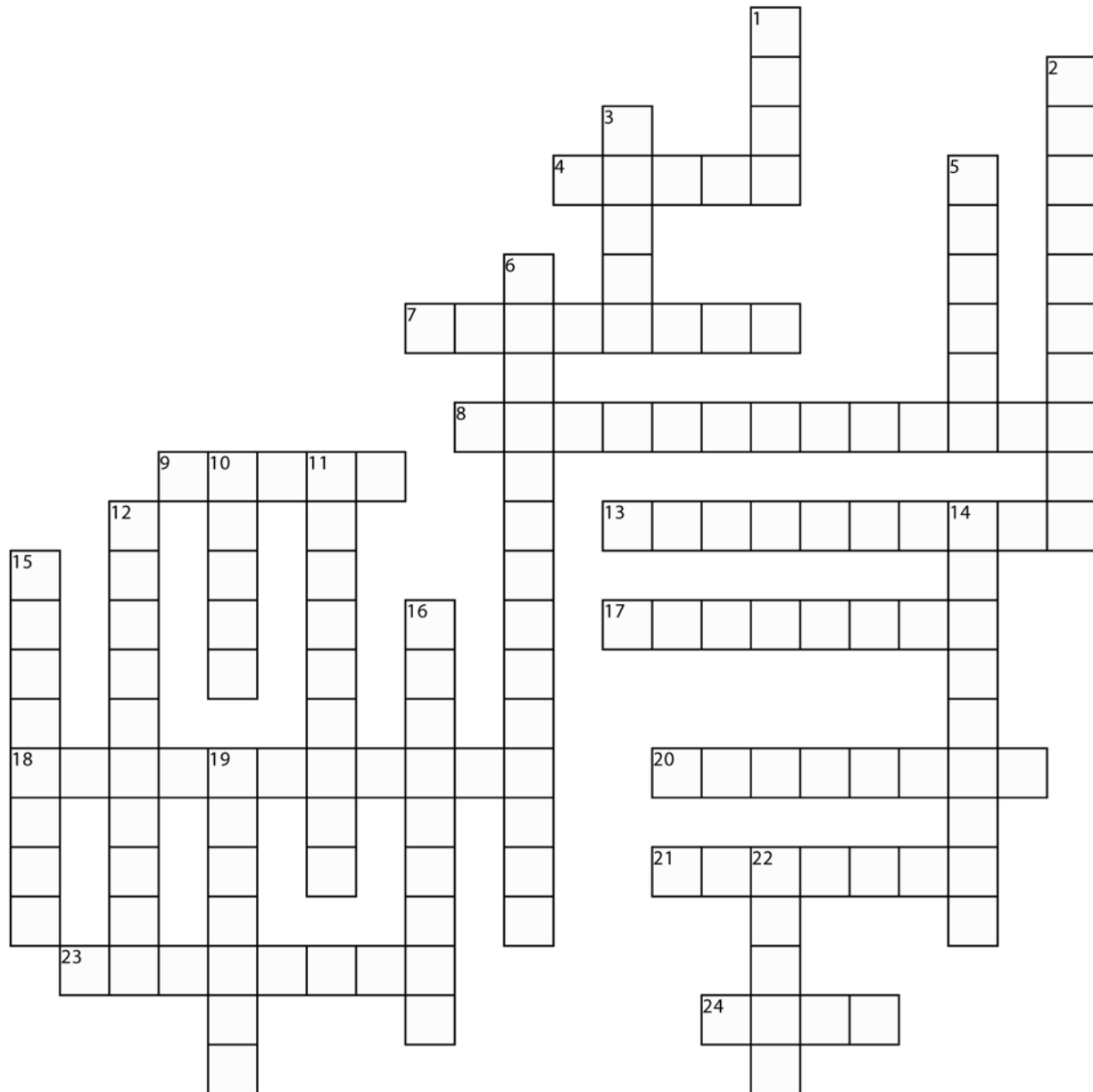
Amateur (pg.69)

someone who does an activity just for pleasure, not as their job

GLOSSARY CROSSWORD

Glossary Crossword

Complete the crossword below



Created on TheTeachersCorner.net Crossword Maker

Across

4. a deep narrow valley with steep sides
7. an amount of money that you get unexpectedly
8. someone who studies birds
9. a group of people who have the same position in society
13. a feeling of sadness for no particular reason
17. having plenty of money, nice houses, expensive things etc
18. the most important character in a play, film, or story
20. very private and quiet
21. someone who does an activity just for pleasure, not as their job
23. clean and likely to prevent bacteria, infections, or disease from spreading
24. a place in a port where ships are loaded, unloaded, or repaired

Down

1. the speed at which something happens or is done
2. the state of being unable to pay your debts
3. an idea, subject, or image that is regularly repeated and developed in a book, film, work of art etc
5. a large North American deer
6. the basic systems and structures that a country or organization needs in order to work properly, for example roads, railways, banks etc.
10. more than enough
11. a balance between two opposing things, that you are willing to accept in order to achieve something
12. the art and science of cooking and eating good food
14. healthcare profession concerned with the eyes and related structures, as well as vision, visual systems, and vision information processing in humans
15. very large
16. a college or university building where students live
19. the sport of catching fish with a fishing rod
22. a piece of clothing that covers the front part of your clothes and is tied around your waist, worn to keep your clothes clean while cooking

CONTACT US

Comments

We'd like to hear from you. Send us your feedback, thoughts, comments and suggestions.

E-mail: help@linchomestudy.ca

LINC Home Study Forum

You can find more student writing on the LINC Home Study Forum.

Website: <http://www.linchomestudy.ca/online/forum>

Submissions

The deadline for the Winter 2015 issue is December 11th.

Note:

- Writing should not exceed 500 words.
- If submitting your biography, do not include information about your birthday or age.
- To avoid copyright infringement, only personal photographs will be considered for publication.

A special thank you to all the students who have contributed to this publication and the forum.

