

# University of Houston

## Language and Culture Center



**Voices** - Spring 2013



# Voices - Spring 2013

## Inside This Issue:

Director’s Message .....	3
LCC Scholarship Recipients .....	4 - 5
Voices from the Office .....	6 -7
LCC Teachers and Staff .....	8
LCC Unsung Heroes .....	9
LCC Classes—Group Pictures .....	10 -18
“Super 30” .....	19
My Spring 2013 Semester: 5C and 5D .....	20
Culture Festival Pictures .....	21-22
Culture Bump .....	23-26
Houston Rodeo.....	27
Valentine’s Day .....	28
Culture .....	29-31
How to Improve Your English.....	32
“Holes”.....	33
Easter.....	34
Wedding .....	35-36
Field Trips .....	37-38
Spring Break.....	39-41
If I Could Be an Animal .....	42
Haiku.....	43-44
My First Impression of Houston .....	45
3A/B Poets.....	46
Free Writing.....	47-51
40 Years from Now.....	52-53
LCC Singers.....	54
Who Am I?.....	55-59
Free Writing.....	60
Book Review.....	61-62
Find Your Teachers.....	63



### Director's Message

Congratulations as you complete the Spring 2013 term of study in the Language and Culture Center. You have spent your time in an accredited and respected Intensive English Program with an excellent history and tradition of service to students. You have studied with classmates and friends in a dynamic university, which celebrates and welcomes international students. We hope you have had an excellent experience.



**Dr. Renu Khator, President of the University of Houston, with Joy Tesh, Director of the Language and Culture Center**

The LCC Culture Festival is one of my favorite events each term. Students bring food from their countries, dress in their national dress, and sing and dance to music from the different countries represented in the LCC. This spring, during the Culture Festival in March, we were surprised and delighted to have a visit from Dr. Renu Khator, President of the University of Houston and Chancellor of the University of Houston System. As President of the University of Houston, she is responsible for all the academic and research programs on this campus of nearly 40,000 students. As Chancellor of the UH System, she oversees three other universities, in Clear Lake, Downtown, and Victoria. We were honored by her presence, and many of you were able to speak with her and have your picture made with a great university president.

I feel very fortunate to be the Director of the LCC at the same time that Dr. Khator is President of the University of Houston. She, herself, was an international student who faced the challenge of learning English and pursuing her education in the United States. She clearly enjoys international students and encourages and supports international educational exchange. She is a wonderful example of the possibilities for an international student in this country. Dr. Khator has brought inspiring leadership, great excitement, and important achievement to our university.

At our First Assembly, I promised you that you would learn far more than English at the Language and Culture Center. As you have worked and studied with students from all over the world in our classes, you have engaged in intercultural communication, and you have made friends. These friendships will be important to you throughout your lives. I want you to know that, as I see you in the halls of the Roy Cullen Building and walking around on our beautiful campus every day, I realize how fortunate I am to know you and to work with you. Your teachers and I thank you for choosing to study with us and for giving us the chance to learn about you, your language, your culture, and your country.

If you are leaving our program for any reason, we encourage you to stay in touch with us through Facebook, email or through our web site <http://lcc.uh.edu>. We are eager to hear from students who continue their studies at the University of Houston or at another school in the United States or who return to their countries to continue their journey. We invite you to join a great network of former LCC students, now living and working all over the world.

This spring, we have been delighted to have 412 students from 47 countries in our program and on our campus. As the spring term of 2013 closes, we wish you a safe and productive academic break. Spring classes will end at the close of graduation ceremonies on April 26. The LCC office will be open throughout the break. Online registration for the summer term will begin on May 7. We look forward to seeing many of you again in May for the Summer, 2013 term in the

# LCC Scholarship Recipients

**Ioanis Cuko, Fabiola Pinto, Mohammad Almour, and Li Gao** Receive LCC Scholarship

The Language and Culture Center awards four scholarships each term to returning students who best combine academic excellence and leadership with international awareness and cross-cultural understanding. Traditionally, one full scholarship honors Joyce Merrill Valdes, the founder and first director of the LCC. A second full scholarship honors Joseph O. Davidson, who served as director of the LCC for 22 years before retiring in 2006. These two full scholarships cover the cost of tuition, fees, and medical insurance for one term of study in the Intensive English Program. In addition, the LCC awards merit scholarships of \$1500 each for one term of study in the Intensive English Program. At the fall graduation ceremony on Thursday, December 13, 2012, the LCC awarded the Valdes scholarship to **Ioanis Cuko**, the Davidson scholarship to **Fabiola Vidal Pinto**, and the two merit scholarships to **Mohammad Aldmour** and Li Gao.



**By Sandy Woodson,  
Associate Director**

**Fabiola Vidal Pinto** was awarded the Davidson scholarship. **Ms. Vidal Pinto** is from Venezuela. She is studying in level four having skipped from level two the term before. After completing the intensive English program, she would like to complete a master's degree at the University of Houston in engineering. **Ms. Vidal Pinto** remarked that receiving the scholarship was the result of effort, dedication, and commitment. She said, "It was one of the proudest moments of my life. It gave me the motivation I needed to reach my goal. In addition, I am trying to encourage that enthusiasm in my friends so they can have the opportunity that I have had. I am grateful for this chance, and I am having an excellent term."





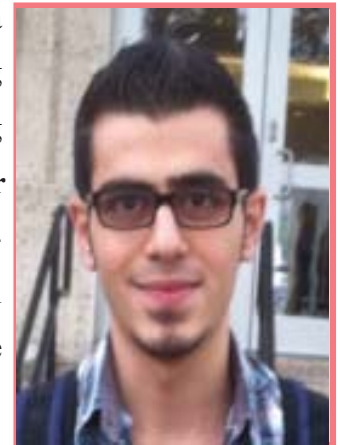
**Li Gao** was also a recipient of a Merit scholarship. **Ms. Gao** is from China. She is currently studying in level five having skipped from level three. This is her second term of study at the LCC. She plans to pursue an MBA after completing her study of English. **Ms. Gao** commented, “I am deeply honored to receive the merit scholarship. It will help me achieve my dreams and inspire me to do my best. In the past semester, I really enjoyed learning in the LCC. Different cultures, different languages, and different ways of thinking made English learning more effective and interesting. Thank you to my teachers and classmates.”



**Ioanis Cuko** was awarded the Valdes scholarship. **Mr. Cuko** was born in Albania, was raised in Greece, and is studying in level four. This is his second term at the LCC. Upon completing his study of English, he will pursue a degree in kinesiology. **Mr. Cuko** said, “It was a great honor for me to receive the LCC scholarship. I thank the LCC for supporting me financially and giving me the opportunity to fulfill my goal to complete the program and enter the bachelor’s program in kinesiology.”



**Mohammad Aldmour** was a recipient of a Merit scholarship. **Mr. Aldmour** is a citizen of Jordan. This is his second term at the LCC, and he is currently studying in level two. He intends to begin his undergraduate degree in computer engineering at the University of Houston after he completes his English studies. **Mr. Aldmour** remarked, “I was very happy when I received the scholarship because I felt rewarded for my hard work, and my family was proud of me. I was very thankful for the LCC staff for helping me to improve my English skills which allowed me to receive this award.”



We congratulate **Ioanis Cuko, Fabiola Vidal Pinto, Mohammad Aldmour, and Li Gao** on their outstanding records in the Intensive English Program at the Language and Culture Center, and we wish them great success as they continue to study in the United States. We all look forward to learning who will be the next LCC scholarship recipients at the spring graduation ceremony.

# Voices From the Office



**Brad Powell —  
International  
Student Counselor**

## **Student Activities**

The LCC went to the Rothko Chapel and the Menil Collection during Check-In Week to allow new and continuing students to meet and mingle with teachers while viewing interesting art pieces. After leaving the museum, we went to the Galleria, the biggest shopping mall in Texas, for lunch. We also stopped by the Waterwall, where Nahid Ghamini showed several students how to “fly”.

In March, we attended the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo and had the LCC Culture Festival. At the Rodeo, students had a lot of fun, and many students bought cowboy hats and boots. The performance by Tim McGraw was energetic and entertaining. At the Culture Festival, we shared culture, food, and music. There was a lot of good food from all over the world, and we were all surprised when University of Houston’s president, Dr. Renu Khator, dropped by to say hi to LCC students.

At the time of this writing, we are preparing for the final field trip of the term to Huntsville State Park, where we will have a picnic, play games, and hopefully, go canoeing. I believe this will be the most fun trip of the term, and I hope that everyone enjoys it. After the field trip, we will have our graduation ceremony and reception.

## **Soccer Team**

The LCC soccer team, the LCC Eagles, have had a great season. Players hail from Angola, Burkina Faso, Columbia, Congo, Mali, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, and Venezuela. At the time of this writing, they are going into the playoffs having won all four of the games that they have played.

If you see Eri Calderon, Elvard Mouba, Francisco Rivera, Jimmy Torres, Mamadou Almeida, Abdullah Al-rumaih, Amidou Diakite, Edivaldo Henriques, Hyung Cheong Kim, Jaimov Germano, Juan B. Ortiz, Luis Pacheco, Mahamadou Sissoko, Martin Borja, or Abdullah Alkhayal, congratulate them on their great play.

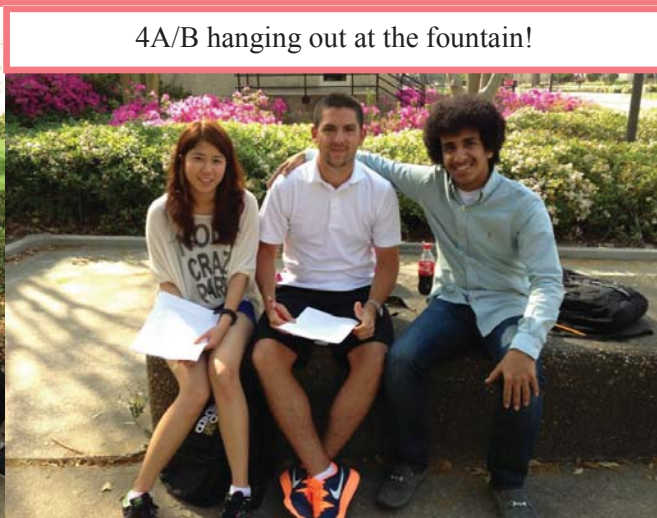
Go Eagles!

## **LCC Singers**

I would also like to recognize the LCC Singers. They have worked very hard this term to learn many different songs. The student and teacher members of the LCC Singers should be proud of their accomplishments.



4A/B hanging out at the fountain!





# Voices From the Office



**Sam Long -SEVIS  
compliance coordinator**

Students in F-1 status need to make sure they maintain their student status. If you are planning to travel during the break, please see a student counselor so we can update your travel plans in our system. If you are traveling outside the U.S., you must bring your I-20 to an LCC student counselor so we can sign it and give you permission to return to the U.S.

If you plan to study in the LCC for the summer (May 14 – August 8), you must register online for classes beginning May 7<sup>th</sup>. If you do not register on time, you cannot attend class. Please go to the LCC website for more information about registering for the summer.

The LCC has three terms throughout the year: spring, summer, and fall. As an F-1 student, you are required to study in every term unless you are given permission to take a vacation term. If you want to take a vacation in the summer, you must first ask for permission. To ask for permission, please go to the LCC website and log into the LCC Student System to request a vacation. The LCC will then check to see if you qualify for a summer vacation.

If you plan to transfer to a new school for the summer or fall, please see a student counselor in room 118 or 120 for more information. You have 60 days from graduation to complete your transfer to the new school.

If you have any doubts or question, please see a LCC student counselor. It is very important that you maintain your student status. It is not easy to get your student status back if you lose it.

Enjoy the break. We look forward to seeing you in the summer!



**Level 6 students hanging out!**

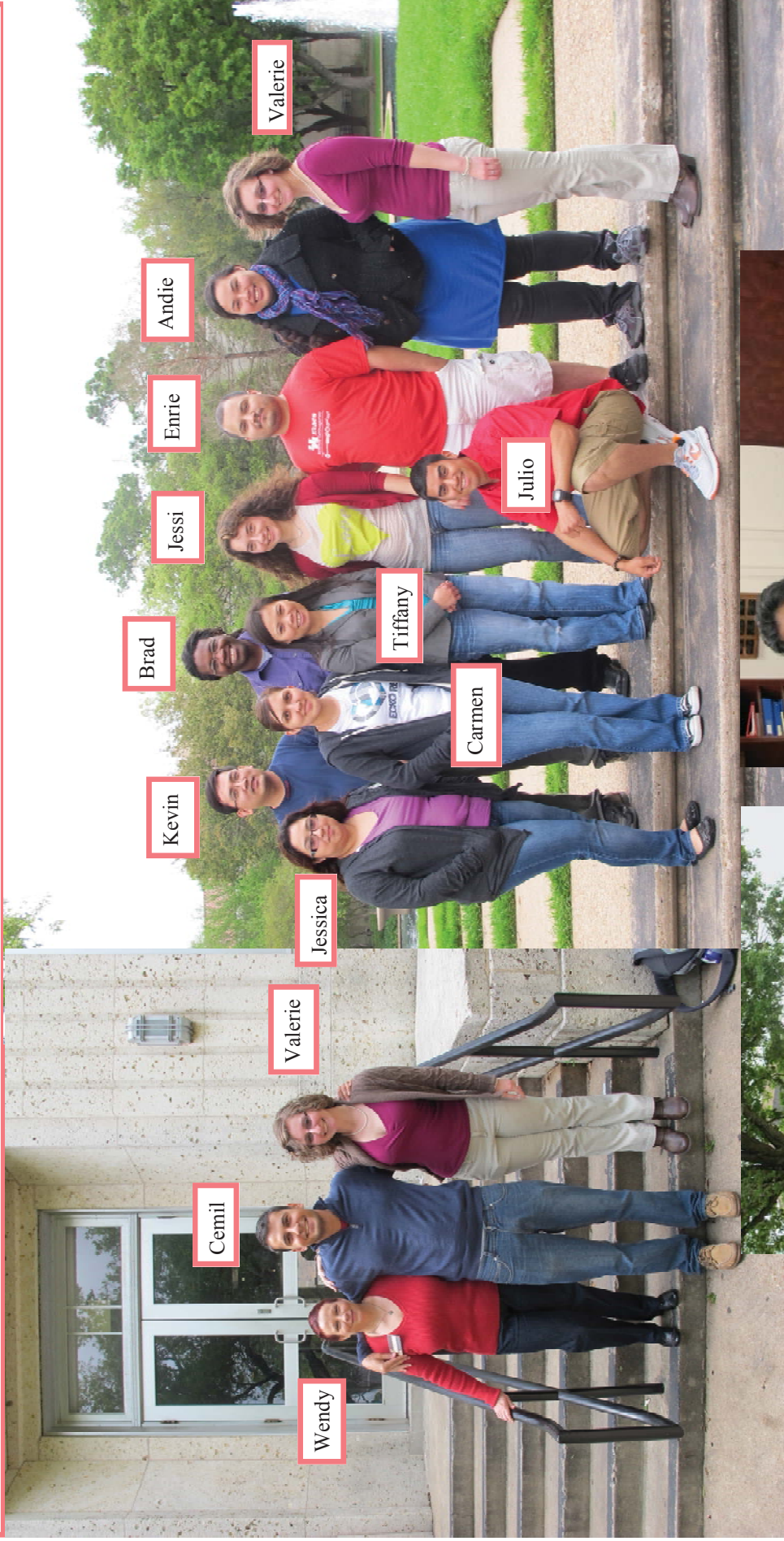
# LCC Instructors and Staff—The best in the world!



**From left to right front row:** Joy Tesh, Farideh Darvishi, Kathryn Porter, Nahid Ghanimi, Michalina Mrugala, Sandra Carrettin-Mulvany, Sandy Woodson  
**Second row:** Susan McAlister, Emaida Krvaric, Dola Young, Anna Lauzon, Christen Savage, Saima Khan, Kitty Barrera  
**Third row:** Alida Nakic, Holly Cin, Barbara Kennedy, Cory Stewart, Jana Munoz, Sandra Buckner, Velva Fallin, Geneva Tesh,  
**Fourth row:** Vincent Tran, Thong Dang, Douglas Jones, Dale Craven, Greg UrUrquhart, Jeane Peine



# UNSUNG HEROES OF THE LCC!





# The Language and Culture Classes



Class 1A, Instructor:

Geneva Tesh

It's difficult to come to a new country when you don't know the language or the culture, and for this, we admire your courage. You worked very hard this term, and we are so proud of your achievements! We wish you the best of luck in the future. --Christy and Geneva

Class 1B, Instructor:

Christen Savage

"The most important part is the beginning."

--Plato



Class 2A, Instructor:

Alida Nakic

I am the class representative of 2A. I think the meetings in the Language and Culture Club are a great way to help students give information to other students. We collect ideas and discuss about activities that we will do in the future. This type of meeting, which is interesting at the same time, helps us learn more American language and culture. I think the Language and Culture Club works hard. In conclusion, Language and Culture Club is a good way to for students to communicate with each other.





## Class 2B, Instructor:

Dola Young

My name is Sawadogo Abdel Aziz Mikael, and I am from Burkina Faso. My classmates chose me as class representative for Level 2B. That means they trust me, and I feel good to have this responsibility. I have the attention of all of my classmates every time I give them some important information from the Language and Culture Club. Another thing that I really appreciate is the cross cultural experience with my classmates. I think I receive leadership experience that I can use in the future. In short, I think that I benefit from this responsibility.



## Class 2C, Instructor:

Emaida Krvaric

What we have enjoyed most were the fun teachers and having the opportunity to meet new friends. We had lots of fun during our trip to the zoo and our Valentine's Day lunch with 2D. The administration and students in general were very friendly and helpful. We had the opportunity to learn about other cultures inside and outside of our classroom. The day at the Rodeo was exciting, fun, and the best way to begin our Spring Break.



## Class 2D, Instructor:

Jana Munoz

What we enjoyed most about this term is that we had great classrooms, new friends, and many opportunities to learn English. We had fun during our visit at the zoo and the Valentine's Day lunch with 2C. The Conversation Club gave us a chance to practice English with other people outside of class. The Culture Festival was a great success, and we met the president of the university, Dr. Renu Khator. Finally, we had some great teachers who made our class interesting and fun.





Class 2E, Instructor:

Jeanne Peine

We have a nice class. The teachers are very good, and we spend a nice time with them. We learn a lot of things together about other foods, religions, music, and beautiful countries. Now it is really good to feel that we are a family. We will miss these days.

Students in Class 2E



Class 3A, Instructor:

Michalina Mrugala

3A and 3B are 30 students together  
Who came to class in all kinds of weather  
They came in the wind and in the rain  
Even Alfredo, all the way from Spain!



Class 3B, Instructor:

Sandra Carretin-Mulvany

Misia: teacher, student and mom, too

Pushed grammar, verb tenses and words through and through.

Sandra C. made us read so many, many

Pages.

And write, write, write – no chance to be lazy.





Class 3C, Instructor:

Saima Khan

The only thing that interferes with my learning is my education.

Albert Einstein



Class 3D, Instructor:

Judy Kleeman

My name is Sultan Almowallad, and this is the first time for me to be a class representative. This has been a very good experience because it has taught me how to be responsible for a group. At this time, I have become able to lead my classmates to participate in the student activities. Now both my classmates and I want to learn about the final field trip that all the LCC students will take when the semester ends. Thank you for this opportunity.



Class 3E, Instructor:

Velva Fallin

My name is Ibrahim Keita. One way that has helped me improve my English this semester is watching movies on Netflix. It is cheap and really easy to use. Netflix has a large collection of movies, documentaries, and TV shows. It helps you improve your pronunciation, listening, and vocabulary.



## Class 3F, Instructor:

Dale Craven

My name is Santiago Julian, and I am thankful for the opportunity to be a class representative because it allows me to interact with students from different levels at the LCC. It is a big responsibility to encourage my classmates to participate in events that happen at the LCC like the Rodeo or Culture Festival. I think that class representative meetings are very useful because we are the voice of our classmates. In class, my classmates often ask me for information because they know I am the class representative. To sum up, it is exciting to be a class representative.



## Class 4A, Instructor:

Jenifer Edens

Students from 4A enjoyed seeing livestock and cowboys at the rodeo, talking to native speakers in the LCC's Conversation Club, spending time under the trees in Houston's parks, seeing butterflies at the Museum of Natural Science, dining at Houston's restaurants, and spending time with friends from other countries.



## Class 4B, Instructor:

Nahid Ghanimi

Classmates from 4B enjoyed attending the Culture Festival, riding rollercoasters at the Kemah Boardwalk, visiting NASA, becoming more independent, working out at the Wellness and Recreation Center, taking pronunciation classes, ice skating at the Galleria, practicing English in the CALL Lab, and spending time together.





Class 4D, Instructor:  
Farideh Darvishi

Class 4C, Instructor:  
Jussara Demagalhaes



Being the class representative has given us the opportunity to learn about other cultures. Trips, festivals, birthdays, meetings, and different events have made all of us more than just classmates. We work together very well and help each other when we face challenges. We feel that we are a big family. Our classes are sweet and happy, and we have learned a lot from our teachers and classmates this term. **Alina, Castle , and Jorge**

Class 4E, Instructor:  
Vincent Tran

Being the class representative was great. The meetings were a good way to practice English with LCC students from different levels because we shared different ideas with each other. I want to say thanks to all teachers and students who have helped me and gave me the chance to be a class representative.

**Ahmad (Max) Ghandorah**





## Class 4F, Instructor: Barbara Kennedy

As the 4F class representative, I can honestly say that this was one of the best semesters at the LCC. As a class, we made big progress in our subjects. The best part is when we argued. We fought for the answer until the teacher told us the correct answer. All this progress would not have been possible if we hadn't had our co-teachers: Ms. Barbara, Ms. Katey and of course Mr. Vincent. They are some of the best coaches I have ever had. As a student/player and as a team/class we scored high in our English game!

**Ioanis Cuko**



## Class 4G, Instructor: Kathryn Porter



## Class 5A, Instructor: Greg Urquhart



The candle flickers towards its last,  
Our time together's ended;  
The evening spent so swiftly passed,  
No richer way to spend it.  
Before we head our separate ways,  
I'd like in truthfulness to say:  
You've made this day a special day,  
With songs and kindness splendid.



*Here's to song, here's to time;  
Here's to both with friends of mine;  
Here's to friends who raise their voices  
high.  
Kings have riches widely lain,  
Lords have land, but then again,  
We have friends and song no wealth can buy*

*-From Here's To Song, by Allister MacGillivray*

In 5A and 5B, highlights of the semester included our Friday Fun Days (including our Valentine's Day special edition), class picnic, class party, reading the novel *Holes*, and discussing body language.





Our 33 students come from China, Vietnam, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Congo, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela and Bolivia.



Focus on your goals, dreams, and hopes for your future. Then, GET OUT THERE!.....and do the next thing.

Blessings for all your next things in life. (Your Teachers)



Class 5B, Instructor:

Holly Cin



Class 5C, Instructor:

Susan McAlister



Class 5D, Instructor:

Sandra Buckner

What is Level 5? It's .....well, it's that semester that is in the way of Level 6, that is in the way of the next thing. The spring term of Level 5C/D formed, stormed, normed, and performed every day by doing the next thing. But, how was it possible to just do the next thing and then the next thing when there were so many "next things" to do? The answer: one thing at a time and one day at a time and some days better than others.





# Graduating Classes: 6A, 6B and 6C



Class 6A, Instructor:

Kitty Barrera

Class 6B, Instructor:

Thong Dang

Class 6C, Instructor:

Cory Stewart





# “Super 30”

3A and 3B are 30 students together  
Who came to class in all kinds of weather  
They came in the wind and in the rain  
Even Alfredo, all the way from Spain!

We came to LCC from 13 nations  
Each one with different expectations  
Sandrine, so polite, from Cameroon  
Hiba, our superstar, from Lebanon.

Jaimov from Angola to class rep, no hesitation  
Language and culture and new communication.  
Hinako, our only one from Japan  
Rides Houston Metro wherever she can.

Yun is poetic, Haiku her specialty,  
Quan from Vietnam, tells us all about his country.  
Inspired to writing are Ayat and Aziz  
They write from the heart, readers to please.

Colt plays amazingly great music from China  
Classmates were awestruck, string sounds so fine-a.  
Enormous vocabulary has our own Eid,  
He'll tell you the word and spell it if you need.

Bader's moustache, Mohammed's big hair,  
Fasal's orange jacket, Sarah's smile to share.  
Rashed's wide grin and excuses unique  
Food, music and culture, language: Arabic.

The tallest of all, Theyab, our Kuwaiti  
Adriana from Mexico, my what a lady!  
Odai never walks; he just dances  
And Nhi in wild shoes, it seems that she prances.

Abdulaziz needs a wife or maybe a shock  
'Cause class is 8:30, not 9:00!  
Perfect attendance has Rakan in 3B  
While Ray, the engineer, has ten questions for me.

Ruyin is a writer, perhaps future fame  
Shahinda's a new wife, culture shock she claims.  
Melsy's like sister to the boys in the corner  
Helps Rakan and Dhiyaa become better learners.

From Algeria, Mouloud, waits for friends for lunch  
Encourages many to spend time as a bunch.  
Marc is big brother, sincere, kind and tall,  
He taught us to LISTEN once and for all.

Finally, Misia: teacher, student and mom, too  
Pushed grammar, verb tenses and words through and through.  
Sandra C. made us read so many, many pages  
And write, write, write – no chance to be lazy.

2013, Spring term LCC  
I'll remember you. Will you remember me?

By Sandra Carrettin-Mulvany

## My Spring 2013 Semester: 5C and 5D

It's been a great semester with helpful teachers.

**Hassan Mohammed**

Being an LCC student has been an amazing experience because I have been able to improve my English and to make friends from different countries.

**Kev Dücker**

We are almost at the end of the semester. It was my first semester, and I appreciate the LCC. I like the way our lovely teachers care about us. It was very amazing to be with people from other countries and share our knowledge and values.

**Samir Stephan Soura**

Spring 2013 was an entertaining semester. I learned a lot of new things about English and culture. I made a lot of new friends from different countries. This semester was the most wonderful semester I have ever had in the LCC. Thanks to all my friends and of course my great teachers, Ms. Susan McAlister and Ms. Sandra Buckner.

**Maryum Ahmed**

I will never forget this great experience in my life because LCC students are a small community that reflects the wonderful experiences around the world and different cultures in one place.

**Shabbab Algamdi**

Studying in the LCC makes me happy. I have studied in the LCC for two semesters, I met wonderful teachers. The LCC not only offered me a good environment to study English but also a chance to join the LCC Singers. Therefore, I have had more opportunity to make friends and know other cultures.

**Christine Meng**

Hey, World, do you know the connection between where the stars go in the daytime and where we put our love for Ms. Susan and Ms. Sandra? Yah, they're all in the sky. Sometimes they're hard to see, but they're always there.

**Nguyen Nguyen Doan**

Being in the LCC means you will learn more than English. It means meeting people from different cultures, learning about their cultures, experiencing college life which is full of entertainment, and being with the most wonderful teachers. I will never forget it. I really enjoyed my time!

**Essa Alhamad**

Studying in the LCC with enthusiastic teachers and multicultural friendly classmates in level 5 has been the most wonderful experience since I came to the US. It will be an unforgettable memory.

**Van Vo Nguyen Tuyet**

I had the most wonderful semester in the LCC with the most amazing classmates and teachers. Being here with you guys is a blessing.

**Sarah Alhawas**

Since I came to the LCC to study English, my language has greatly improved with the nice teachers in our great school.

**Nader Mohammed**

I won't forget Sandra's hoarse voice when she had soar throat! I won't forget Susan's smile she inherited from her great-great-grandmother. I won't forget the friendship between all my classmates in 5D. I wish you all good luck, success, and health!

**Gao Li**

My experience at the LCC this semester has been rewarding. I have had the opportunity to meet great teachers and classmates.

**Ana Alvarez de Zordo**

I won't deny having enjoyed this semester. It was all about the experience and learning for me. It was great sharing this with you guys. Definitely it's been a good one.

**Shelly Ouedraogo**





# Culture Festival Spring 2013!









# Culture Bump

## Culture Bump

A culture bump occurs when two or more people enter a situation with different expectations about a behavior. It can be caused by: communication styles, behaviors involving the use of time, space or speaking, physical objects such as clothing or artifacts, or even the architecture or decor of a location. In short, it is a cultural difference - a "hiccup" in our interactions.

People go through an adjustment cycle when they move from one culture to another. One model is the W Curve of cultural adjustment. While there are other models, this one seems to fit most folks. In the order in which they occur, the stages are:

### Honeymoon

Feelings of a dream come true. Everything is new and exciting.

### Culture Shock

#### Physical culture shock

Tiredness, inability to concentrate, change in sleep patterns.

#### Psychological culture shock

Extreme homesickness, fear of being able to succeed.

### Initial Adjustment

Still missing back home but more connected, more self-confidence.

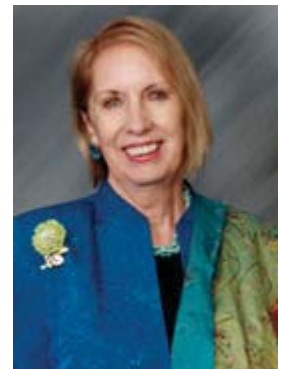
### Mental Isolation

Feelings of disdain and anger against host culture, feeling of self-doubt.

### Acceptance and Integration

Stop trying to change host culture or making constant comparisons and develop strategies for day-to-day living

Archer, C. *Living with strangers in the USA: Communicating beyond cultures*. (1990) Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.



Carol Archer Ed D

## What stage of the Cultural Adjustment Cycle are you in now?

After being in the United States for more than eight months, it is still hard for me to get used to it. Studying far away from parents and friends is not a piece of cake. I used to think that living miles away from parents would be cool, but the fact is, it is more difficult than I thought it would be. The Mental Isolation stage is where I think I am now. In the first place, considering where I stand now, I didn't think that I would have these kinds of problems---whether physically or mentally. But in reality, I have found it difficult to adjust to life in America. For example, two months ago, I experienced homesickness, which I was very upset with. I felt that I couldn't live here anymore. I called my dad, and while I was crying, he told me, "Son, not everybody chooses his career, but once he chooses it, he should be confident with his choice." Once he talked to me, I felt confident in myself. Furthermore, when I take a comprehensive exam like TOEFL or IELTS, and the result is not good enough for me to enroll in the university, I get very angry and upset. In addition to that, sometimes, I might not be able to study hard before the test or focus during the test. These kinds of troubles can make any human being lose his faith in every new step he takes. But once I understand what mistakes I make, it makes me stronger. I always tell myself that I learn from my failures.

**Ahmed AlShanmari-5A**

I have been in America for three years already. I think I'm in "Final Adjustment". The American culture began to make sense after my English got better. I knew how to use English to deal with most situations. After some time, I learned to accept the American culture in a positive way. Now, I have a lot of friends from all over the world. We share the culture and hang out together. A friend is a really important element for cultural adjustment, so you don't feel lonely anymore. When you feel homesick, call your friends or hang out with them. You will feel much better. Because of friends, I was able to accept the culture more easily and faster. I have gotten used to everything. I can still remember culture shock. It was kind of scary for me. I need to tell everyone, "Don't be scared of everything that looks new to you. Just try to make more friends. Share your feelings with them. I believe you will feel much better."

**Danping (Rita) Fang-5A**

As a Chinese student studying abroad, I have stayed in Texas more than two years. I remember I was so excited when I landed in the U.S.A. First of all, the first two weeks were so sweet. I met many friends here. I really enjoyed life when I lived on campus. Just like enjoying a "honeymoon" with a wife. However, I found a different problem. I couldn't really interact with American people. I missed my family and friends in my hometown. I felt I had lost my heart. I was struggling in a maze where I didn't know the exit. I was in culture shock. Then, I decided to change myself. I thought I really tried my best to adapt to the new environment. I shared my stories with my American friends. I wanted to do something in my new life. I felt I was in initial adjustment when I tried to escape from culture shock. But the situation went bad quickly. I became very silent. I didn't want to talk to anyone. I hated the city. I hated the food. I even hated the culture. I regretted coming here. I was a person in mental isolation. Finally, I found a light in the endless dark: "*If I can't change the environment, I will just change myself.*" It helped me face the situation bravely and calmly. Final adjustment: I'm enjoying final adjustment now. I hope I can stay in this situation to live here.

**XiaoWang-5A**



## What stage of the Cultural Adjustment Cycle are you in now?

As a “freshman” in the U.S., I have encountered the first three stages of the Cultural Adjustment Cycle. I came to the US to continue my education. The first day I got here seemed like a dream that I just came to accomplish. Everything around me looked perfect, and I felt excited to explore this new world. The only sentence that came into my mind was, “I made it.” At that time, I couldn’t think about what was different or new to me. This was the stage that specialists call the “Honeymoon Period”. A few months later, life started to focus on many other points. Now, it was a question of identifying the environment in which I was and distinguish the differences between it and where I was from. Indeed, after having taken a look at the American lifestyle, I noticed that it was completely different from the one of my country. I had many difficulties to adapt myself to this new environment. The language that they spoke was totally different from mine. Also, the kind of food that Americans ate was unfamiliar and different from the food I used to eat back home--- a couple of aspects of sources of Culture Shock. The third stage that I had to deal with was “Initial Adjustment”. It is actually the stage that I am in right now. Although life in the U.S. has many different aspects, I figured out that I had to accustom myself to it if I wanted to be a successful person. Primarily, I started to talk to people and tried to understand why they behaved like they did. Second, I looked for friends who could explain the habits of Americans to me. Thirdly, I viewed myself as a newborn, who needed to learn and understand the life cycle around him. The purpose was to be familiar with American culture. To sum up, my coming to the U.S. made me understand the first three stages of the Cultural Adjustment Cycle. This allowed me to understand how life can be different outside of my country.

**Jean Eba-5B**

## Topic: Describe a culture bump experience you have had.

The moment I knew that I was going to come to the U.S., I started to groom my kids and myself to be able to accept what we were going to face here. It is a huge step and a great decision to be in a totally different country, a mystery, and a new culture with new traditions. Being physically and psychologically transferred from the land and the air that I was used to put me (and of course my kids) in a position to have culture bumps. Being about 27 weeks pregnant, with a big belly, walking around with two kids forced me to respond to people who showered me with personal questions. For example, the first time I went to the Galleria, the greatest mall in Houston, people who passed by kept asking me if I was expecting, and if I would have a girl or a boy! It wasn’t rude, but it was a little bit awkward. My seven-year-old son faced many culture bumps, even though I thought I had prepared him enough. One of the funniest ones that he had was when he first went to school. The idea of having a co-ed school and having an old female teacher teaching P.E. surprised him the most. It threw me into laughter when he came back home and his eyes opened wide while he was telling me that his old teacher who taught him “sport” as he said, was dressed like the boys. I asked for more clarification, so he told me that she wore sneakers and jumped all around the place without any fear of getting hurt. That situation, among others, made me feel bedraggled for a period of time, but now, I have adjusted a lot to the American culture, and those memories sound funny to me...and to my son.

**Suzan Aboalkhir-5B**

## Topic: Describe a culture bump experience you have had.

I hadn't realized that people act differently until I left my country. I didn't know it was important to learn about other cultures because I didn't expect that I would leave my country one day, and also, I wasn't interested in cultural studies. After I arrived in the United States, I became familiar with the culture bump. I experienced many culture bumps, but I will talk about one I when I first came here---giving tips to the waiters. As anyone who is new in a country like a visitor or a student, I had to find a restaurant to eat in until I could find a place where I could prepare my own food. I went to many restaurants with my friends, but I didn't know why the waiters/waitresses looked upset every time I left the restaurant. I asked my friends, "Why do the workers look happy at the beginning, but they look upset when I leave?" I found out that most people here in the U.S. pay a tip to the waiter/waitress. It was a culture bump for me because we don't do it in my country. Also, I felt sorry for the waiters/waitresses when I discovered that the tips have a big value to them because they get very low wages. Even though it was something simple in my eyes, it was important to them, so I decided to give tips to the waiters. To sum up, there are many differences in the way that people behave in the U.S. and in my country, Saudi Arabia. I am going to learn more about American culture so that I might avoid culture bumps in the future.

**Hamzah Salwati-5B**

I have been in the United States for seven months. A lot of differences in many aspects of the culture are new and strange for me. It's not a question of right or wrong with these cultural habits. They're just culture bumps. The first experience which "shocked" me actually made me feel "protected". I walk to school every day. One day, I stood on the left side of the road waiting for a chance to cross. Cars were running one after the other. Suddenly, a car slowed down and stopped. The driver let me cross first. There were no signal lights, so the driver didn't have to do that! This was totally different for me, and would never happen in China. Drivers in China never stop for the safety of pedestrians. I felt protected. The second culture bump was kind of interesting. It's about food. It seems that Americans eat chips as a main dish. Of course, there are many other foods, but how can they eat chips to replace rice or bread or pasta? For me, those chips are only a snack, and they can never make my stomach as satisfied as a lunch or supper with bread or rice. The third culture bump was amazing to me. Once, an old man in his seventies and I wanted to go through a door at the same time. We both noticed that, and we stopped at the same time. However, our reasons were different. He explained, "In my country, ladies go first." I said, "Usually, we let elders go first to show respect." Then, he took a step to go through the door, saying, "In order to make you comfortable, I'll go first." These culture bumps confused me when they first happened to me. As long as I figure out what those different habits mean and I am aware of those differences, I give myself a chance to learn this culture and accept my new life here.

**Kexin Zhang-5B**

Before I arrived in the U.S., I had read a lot about it, which made me willing to deal with the differences, or what I thought the differences would be. But they were much different from what I had read, and that caused some culture bumps for me. My first example deals with the supermarket. In Saudi Arabia, there are always people there to help you put your items in the bag and then deliver it to your car. However, here it seems that you have to do everything by yourself. A second culture bump happened where I lived. In Saudi Arabia, I knew all my neighbors, and we visited each other. However, here, when I tried to do so, I found that people seemed to be scared. A third experience in which I *expected* a culture bump, but it did not happen was when I first came here. I thought that Americans would never forget what happened in 9/11, and because of what happened in 9/11, it wasn't easy for me to believe that they would like to deal with Saudis anymore. Thank God, they understand that not all Saudis are bad. I have learned a lot from what has happened to me the last few months. I understand how to deal with Americans better than before. It is a good experience to be here. I hope to know more American people.

**Talal Almadani-5A**



# Houston Rodeo 2013!





# Valentine's Day 2013





# Culture

## Korean and American High Schools

Korean and American high schools are different, but both have advantages and disadvantages. First, Korean high school students are so busy. They usually wake up at 6 a.m. and go to bed at 1 a.m. Can you believe it? They have to go to school at 7:30 a.m. Then they normally go back home at 10:30 p.m.! Korean high schools have eight hours of class. The classes usually finish at 5:30 p.m., but students still have more classes. They have dinnertime until 7 p.m. and then study until 9:30 p.m. In Korea, high school is more important than college, so students have to study more when they return home. They don't have any free time. In contrast, American high schools seem to be more comfortable. Students also have eight hours of class, but after that, they just go home or stay at school for tutoring, sports, and other activities. So, American students have lots of free time. Second, most American public high school students can wear whatever they want. Of course, some private high schools are strict, so those students have to wear a school uniform. However, in Korea, both public and private high schools have uniforms. Do you know why? Thirty years ago, Korean students could wear anything they wanted, but the schools had some problems because of the clothes. The rich and poor students looked quite different, so the poor students felt bad. The Korean educational system changed the rule because they wanted students to pay more attention to their studies. Actually, this change is a good thing. In sum, Korean high schools are stricter than American high schools, and the students are more respectful of their teachers. However, American high schools have more freedom, and the teachers and students are friendlier. Although Korean and American high schools are different, they have the same purpose. They want students to learn for their future.



Sue Park-3D-Korea

## Cultural Connection Project

**(Different nationalities from 4F got together to discuss a topic.)**

I learned a lot participating in this project. The students talked about different topics, from birth to death and during this life. I learned the similarities and differences between countries. The most surprising topic was when I heard about the practices in different countries when people die. In China, the customs are very different from mine in Libya. The funniest topic was about the food people eat on special days. Every day we learn about culture and how we are the same and distinct.

**Radhia Al Radhi**

A great experience of my life was the Cultural Connection Project. It made me feel more comfortable with all my classmates. My group and I had an amazing connection. They changed my way of thinking about all of them. They are wonderful people, and we worked hard every day to make a good presentation. When we practiced, we had a lot of fun that made us laugh every time together. I will miss my classmates if I have to choose other students for another presentation. It was great to see how my classmates could develop themselves.

**Fabiola Vidal**

# Culture

## Dubai

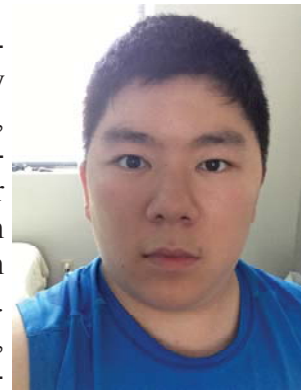


Abdullah Aldhafeeri-2E

Dubai is a good place to spend your vacation. If you like climbing, Dubai has the tallest tower in the world. It is called Khalifa Tower, and you can climb the tower when the weather is good. If you like shopping and fashion, there are famous malls where you can shop. Also, there are malls inside the tower. If you are an outdoorsy person, you can go to the desert to camp, ride ATV (all-terrain vehicle), ride camels, and hike. Also there are amazing beaches for relaxation and recreation. In reality, every year Dubai earns its money from business and not trading from oil. That's what makes Dubai grow very fast and become one of the most successful cities in the entire world. Some people would say we cannot visit Dubai because it is expensive. That's right, but if you go there and enjoy your time, you will not feel remorse. In conclusion, it is a good idea to take a vacation and relax in Dubai.

## Differences in Food Culture

Korea and the United States of America have three differences in their food culture. First of all, Korea has many different spicy foods. Korean people like spicy food, and they usually eat a lot of it, so they don't feel the spicy taste. However, American food is often salty and sweet. Second, Korea has food delivery service. If you want to eat delicious food and not go to a restaurant, you can order the food. After you order, a deliveryman brings it to your home. Finally, Korean people dislike waiting when there are many people in a restaurant. Korean people also have some bad habits. For instance, they always eat faster and faster. They're very busy, so they don't have enough time for lunch. On the other hand, American people don't mind waiting, and sometimes they do eat slowly. In conclusion, there are some differences in the eating habits of Koreans and Americans, but the most important difference is that Korean people always eat rice!



Sejin Park-3D

## My Experience with the Cultural Adjustment Cycle in Houston

Hello reader! I would like to share my experience with the cultural adjustment cycle in Houston. I started to study English and learn about culture this term in the LCC although I had been in Houston for six months. My first impression was that life in Houston was going to be remarkable. In my mind, the fact that Houston is a town of oil business was very exciting to me. I mean I expected to see a lot of businesses, glass buildings, big cars, businessmen, and more. That was my honeymoon state: everything was great. After a few months, I began to see things differently. I had judgments about people, cultures, transportation, business, etc. I was shocked when I saw houses and apartments built of wood, usually on one floor and extended over a lot of land space, trees preserved through the streets, and people of different cultures living here. That was my culture shock. Then about three months later, I began to integrate into this culture. I accepted the reality of Houston: The weather is irregular, public transportation is complicated, and people are busy. All in all, for me now, Houston is a unique, exciting, and beautiful city to live in, to learn a lot of cultures, and to make friends. **Alfredo Pijuan Ngu-**



# Culture

## Alambamento

How do you feel when someone close to you gets married? What is it like? In my country, Angola, when someone gets married, we have to do something very important before the marriage. It is called the *Alambamento* or *Pedido* which means engagement or the presentation to the families. The man asks the woman if she wants to marry him. If she says yes, he is supposed to go to his fiancée's parents' house to ask if he can or cannot marry their daughter. The following story is about my brother. First of all, my brother went to his fiancée's parents' house to converse with them. After that, he had to send a letter to ask if he could marry their daughter along with some money as a gift. The girl's older sister had decided on the amount because her father had died, and her family accepted the envelope. Also, the bride's family made a list of what my family was going to give them. That was when they reached an agreement and set the engagement date. Next came the engagement day. In the afternoon, my brother went to his fiancée's parents' house to offer his gifts. After that, the bride stood in the middle of the living room next to another girl who looked more or less the same, with a white cloth covering the entire body, and then my brother had to choose which one was his fiancée. If he couldn't choose the right girl, nothing would really happen, but people say that it is a bad sign. Fortunately, he chose the right girl! Then both families applauded and greeted each other formally by shaking hands. After this, the girl's uncle started to read the letter which was in the envelope. If the groom's side does not follow the rules, the man will not receive the girl. After all of this, both families decide on which day the big wedding will be. After the family conversation and formal greeting, we went to a restaurant in a hotel. We listened to classical music and celebrated. It was an amazing and thrilling day. We enjoyed it so much. I loved that day. I hope that my *alambamento* will be like this one.

**Rosa Martins-4G-Angola**

## Cultural Days in Gabon

Cultural days are important celebrations for Gabonese people because they help them maintain their traditions. Gabon is a small country located in Central Africa. It consists of nine provinces, and each of them possesses its own traditions. In effect, tradition is a necessary element for identifying tribes in Gabon. During celebration of traditions in Gabon, many people come from other countries, such as France, Spain, and even America to watch or to take photos. Tourists sometimes write magazine articles about Gabon's traditions. There are fantastic shows where people wear traditional clothes and sing unusual songs. They use some instruments, such as drums, the zither, and the balafon. Others dance to the musical rhythm. Vendors sell drinks and food to starving people. I'd like to emphasize that people are joyful when they eat cultural food, for it reminds them of their origins. Finally, I appreciate our culture, for it has a positive influence on people. Also, people examine their true origins despite the trend toward imitation that is taking over nowadays. To sum up, cultural days allow people to maintain harmony with their traditions.

**Arnold Endamne Nguema-3C-Gabon**

# How to Improve Your English

**What is one tool or method that you have discovered to help you improve your English more quickly and easily?**

For me, the best way to improve in English is listening to English songs because it expands my English vocabulary. I usually listen to a song many times and try to write down the lyrics. Then I listen to the song again and check what I wrote. For example, I listen to “The Script- Six Degrees of Separation.” In addition, I play the song a few times and sing along to practice my pronunciation. **Aliyah Alghamdi-3E**

Yesterday I went to the UH Law Center, and I had an opportunity to join a Constitutional Law class as an observing student. Honestly, at first, I did not understand every topic in the class, but I caught two or three things. I also interacted with the students, and we gave our opinions about justice and capital punishment. In addition, the teacher was friendly and invited me to go again to observe if I wanted to. In conclusion, it was a good experience to go there because it helped me improve my listening and speaking. **Santiago Julian-3F**

One method that helps me to learn English more easily is watching movies or TV shows with English subtitles. I use a dictionary to get meanings of words I hear from TV. Also, it helps me to develop my listening and pronunciation skills. I repeat the word many times to get the correct pronunciation. After I understand the context, I sometimes choose one conversation from the show, and I write it down. After that, I try to imitate each character and repeat the conversation that I wrote down. I do that many times until I correct my accent and pronunciation. I do this about two times per week. This method improves many English skills at the same time.

Reading stories is a good method for me to improve my English language. Sometimes while I am reading a story, I am surprised to find out how the writer uses one word with different meanings in several different sentences. I also enjoy finding different meanings of words. In the stories, I can study sentences and use them later. I found this way is better than learning the vocabulary out of context. Reading helps me know how to use vocabulary in many ways. **Ghaffer Alali-3E**

My American roommate helps me a lot with my English. He takes me with him to the library to study with his friends. I also learn a lot of English words. I usually spend the evening with him watching television or movies to increase my English vocabulary. When we watch movies, he explains to me some new words that I do not understand. I learn a lot about American culture by watching movies and talking with my roommate. We talk a lot about our cultures, such as clothes and food. **Khalid Alsuhaibi-3F**

I watch American TV every day, such as Fox, CNN, and sometime movies. On Tru TV, I watch Cops, Stupid Videos, and game shows. When I don’t understand a word or sentence, I use a translator to help me. So, I benefit from TV, and I know how people in America speak. For example, last night I watched a reality show about tow trucks. I wrote “I’m all ears” in my notebook. **Turki Alhuwaimel-3E**



## 5A and 5B Performing Scenes from "Holes"

In 5A and 5B, we read the novel *Holes*, by Louis Sachar, this term. In addition to learning lots of new vocabulary (about 500 words!) and completing a novel in English (which was the first for many of the students), we had fun acting out the scenes and playing games related to the story. **(Holly Cin, 5A/B Instructor)**





# How to Dye Eggs and Enjoy them!

1. Place eggs in dye.



2. Take eggs out.



3. Let them dry.



4. Show them off!



5. Share them with friends.



6. Go Crazy!



## 4E, 4F and 4G

Last day of class—writing last messages to each other!



Barbara and Katey playing tricks on April Fools—No, Katey didn't get married!





**Students in 1B watched the film, *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. They were asked, “How is the wedding in this movie different from weddings in your country?” Here is how they responded:**

In the movie, Toula and Ian struggle over which culture to follow. Toula is from a big Greek family, and Ian is from a small American family. Ian is not Christian. Toula’s family decides that Ian must become Greek Orthodox in order to marry Toula. In my country, Burkino Faso, the man is free to choose his religion. In Burkina Faso, the woman should take the culture of her husband.

**Samira**

In Mali, our weddings are a lot like the one in the movie, but we don’t go to a church. We go to the mayor to get married. The bride will go with her groom after a week. During the wedding, you must greet the groom and bride’s aunts and uncles in their house. It is the rule. Everybody will go together. We have coffee for breakfast. We only eat beef and rice for lunch, and finally we eat chicken for dinner.

**Moulaye Simpara**

In the movie, the bride and groom have one single wedding with both men and women, but in Saudi Arabia, we have two separate weddings. One wedding party is only for men, and the other party is only for women. In the movie, the wedding guests drink alcohol, but in my country, we can’t drink alcohol.

**Hussain Alabushaheen**

Russian weddings have much in common with the wedding in the movie. A Russian wedding has a lot of drinks, food, dancing, and people. Russian weddings are very passionate, loud, and emotional. But in Russia, the bride and groom do not need to go to church to get married.

**Iurii Afonin**



## Writing prompt: Describe a typical wedding in your country.

Everyone in the world needs to find the other half in their lives. Different cultures have different ways. In Saudi Arabia, a man tries to find a wife by asking his mother or sisters to help him. If his mother or sisters see a girl that they think is good for him, they talk with him about her and describe her to him. Then, if he wants to marry her, he should go with his family to the girl's house. The two families will talk about the marriage. After that, the man should call the minister to come write the contract between them, but before that, the minister has to ask the woman if she wants to marry this man or not, just to confirm. After the contract, the man and the woman are a couple. During this time, the groom has to pay some money for the bride, maybe \$25,000 or \$30,000. At the wedding party, the groom usually pays for everything, for example the food, the venue, or anything related to this party. On this day, the bride wears a beautiful white dress with some flowers in her hand. The groom wears a *thoob* and *ghatrah*, which are traditional clothes for men in Saudi Arabia. They should invite many people from both their families to their wedding party.

**Abdulkarim Alzahrani**

Every country has several different traditions for weddings. In my country, Saudi Arabia, we have a nice way to celebrate weddings. For example, we celebrated my own wedding in a special hall for marriage ceremonies. The wedding was at 2:00 p.m. People came to eat lunch. After lunch, I went with my relatives to decorate the wedding car. Next, I went back to get dressed in special wedding clothes. At 8:00 p.m., I went to the hall for a concert and to eat cake. At 10:00 p.m., I left the hall to take some pictures with my wife in her hall because in Saudi Arabia, the men and the women are in different halls for the wedding party. When I was with my wife in her hall, we switched the engagement ring from the right hand to the left hand. At midnight, I left the hall and went home. This is my wedding story.

**Mojtaba Almaqdad**

In Burkina Faso, the man usually offers a dowry to a woman if he wants to marry her. Traditionally, he will offer her an engagement ring. If she accepts his proposal, she will wear the ring on her left hand. The man and woman are now engaged. Sometimes a wedding in my country lasts two or three days. First, there is the traditional wedding. After one week, there is the ceremony and the reception. The bride wears a long or short white wedding dress. The groom wears a black or gray suit.

**Amidou Diakite**





# Field Trips around Houston!



Waiting at the Contemporary Art Museum



Ice Skating at the Galleria



3E, 3F at the Museum of Natural Science



Posing at NASA Space Center



Rock Wall Climbing!



# 1A & 1B: Day at the Zoo





# Spring Break

## Space Center

During spring break, I spent my time doing many activities. One of these was visiting NASA Space Center in Houston with my friends, Shaheen and Saad. In NASA, there is a big specific place for children that contains a lot of games and activities. For adults there are three different tours –white, red, and blue- and we chose the white tour. On the white tour, we saw a very big room with a very huge space vehicle in the middle, and the walls had many posters that show the history of NASA and their accomplishments. Also, I learned a lot about space and trips of NASA such as Apollo 11, which was the first manned mission to land on the moon, and I learned that the first steps by humans on the moon were taken by Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on July 20, 1969. Also, Apollo 16 was the fifth mission to the moon, and they collected samples and took photographs with the first ultraviolet camera on the moon. The guide of the group was an American guy who has worked for two years at NASA. He showed us a short video of the space and the earth from different directions. I was truly thunderstruck when I saw our world and space and their immensity. In addition, an amazing thing was the video of sunrise from space. I really liked this kind of trip and that will not be my last visit. I recommend this great place to my friends and my classmates because this place combines knowledge and entertainment. In conclusion, that visit was the best activity I did during Spring Break, and it is the best place to spend your free time.

**Muteb Alanazi-3F**

## My Trip to New York

Last week I traveled to Albany, the capital of New York, with my sister because my brother lives there with his wife and kids. The trip took seven hours, and when we arrived at 11:00 p.m., suddenly the sky turned dark, a storm blew in, and heavy snow poured. The temperature was - 20 degrees Fahrenheit (-6 degrees Celsius), so it was very cold and foggy.

The next day we went to New York, and the first place we visited was Times Square. It was a busy and crowded street with huge lighted screens, but the majority of the people were horrendous. Not only did they treat you like an object, but also they didn't follow the rules of driving.

However, I was impressed by the M&M store in Times Square because it contains a lot of delicious candies and toys, and I took some lovely photos there. The funniest and coolest part was when a great artist drew my sister and me. He was professional and did a good job.



After that, we stopped at Friday's Restaurant to eat. While I was sitting, I noticed a woman was smiling at me and I smiled too. She told me, "I admire your scarf (my *hijab*) ,and you look beautiful in it." She had tried it before, and we had a conversation about several topics such as our major, customs, and traditions. She was very friendly and wanted to know about other cultures regardless of how they looked or what their religion was. Her name was Kathy from Florida. She gave her number to keep in touch with me. We also took photos with each other.

After two days in New York, my sister and I drove back to Albany. In Albany, we spent most of the time watching TV and playing with the kids. We couldn't get out because of the bad snowstorm. I really enjoyed the time with my sister and my brother's family, and, most importantly, I made a new friend who has changed my view about American culture and thinking.

**Aliyah Alghamdi-3E**

# Spring Break



Last weekend my brother's car had a problem in the engine, and I had to take it to the mechanic. The mechanic's name is Robert. I asked him how he would repair the car's problem, and he explained to me that the car had a problem with the pistons. Also, he showed me the pistons and the way they work inside the car. In addition, it was the first time that I saw a mechanic use the same tools that a doctor uses to hear the sounds of the human body. In this case, the mechanic used it to hear the different sounds that the car made. However, my interaction with him was easy, and I had an interesting conversation. If any other student wants to have different kind of experience, they can try this one. **Oriana Gonzalez Piazza-3E**

During Spring Break, my niece, her friend, and I went to a little park near my neighborhood. This place is where children come from around the area. My niece and her friend from Argentina enjoyed a good time. In the park, other children the same age as my niece suddenly appeared, so they played together then. Their grandmother, a friendly and polite lady, also came. She began to talk with me, first about the weather and then about the park. Then she told me she was born in Houston, but her parents were from Mexico. They came to the U.S. in 1930. She has been living in California for 35 years, and she has been married to an American since 1965. She has two children, but right now one is living in New York, and the other son is in Wisconsin. She has never visited other countries, and she thinks that her grandchildren have to learn other languages to be successful in life and their careers. Actually, she said the world right now is different than when she was young and the children need to learn more in life. My experience with this meeting was so interesting, and now I have a new friend who wants to know more about South America and its customs and traditions. **Claudia Cardoza Butron-3E**

## Kemah

In Kemah, you can find several kinds of seafood. That is why I went to Kemah on the fourth day of Spring Break with my family, my cousin, his wife, and two friends. First, we drove around the area. Then we chose a restaurant for dinner called Seafood House. We chose a table near the sea so we could see the beautiful view. After that, I ordered fried fish, shrimp, salad, and Sprite for my family. The food was fresh and not very expensive. The smell of the seafood filled the place. When we finished, we walked on the board walk. The weather was mild and slightly cool. When the sun set, we went to another place in Kemah which is a specialty store that sells fresh seafood. I bought fresh seafood products to cook at home during the next few days of Spring Break because this shop is very cheap. For example, I bought 3.5 kg of fish and 1 kg of shrimp for \$30. Finally, in Kemah, you can walk, enjoy the view, and breathe fresh air, as well as eat delicious food and buy some fresh fish to cook at home. The address is Golden Seafood, 511 Water Front Dr., Seabrook, Texas 77586. **Ghaffar Alali-3E**

## Saint Patrick's Day in Dallas

Last week, I went to Dallas, Texas to visit my sister who lives there. I went with my other sister, my brother-in-law and my nephew. We went all together in the truck and it took almost four hours from Katy, Texas to Dallas. On Saturday morning, we went to the St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival in downtown Dallas. There were floats, people who **were** wearing something green, and also people drinking in the street. Because of the parade, drinking alcohol was allowed. The street parade was very crowded and there were girls with a sign which said "Free Hugs." You could feel a warm atmosphere. To sum up, the Saint Patrick's Day in Dallas was very colorful, interesting and fun. **Santiago Julian-3F**



# Spring Break

## Galveston

During Spring Break, I went to Galveston with my friend to see the beaches for the first time. When we got there, we saw many people on the beaches. We also rode the ferry. When we went upstairs to see the view, many people were standing there and taking pictures and looking at the sea. I saw a woman standing next to me, and I tried to make a conversation with her because she was beautiful and she was American. I said “Hi” to her and asked her, “Have you been here before?” Then she said, “Yes, I have. I always come here when I have free time.” After that, I said, “This is the first time I came here.” We just talked with each other about ten minutes. Then she left with her friend. She told me where I needed to visit and some of her experiences when she stayed there. I tried to talk with many Americans to improve my pronunciation, and it helped me a lot. I had a good time with my friend when we stayed in Galveston.

**Nhung Truong-3F**

This Spring Break, I went to San Marcos with Rikku and K. I love to shop, and the Houston Premium Outlets is too small for me, so I decided to go to the San Marcos Premium Outlets. Anyway, we spent almost three hours driving there. My friends told me San Marcos is the largest shopping outlet in Texas. When we reached there, I immediately saw that it was exactly the right place I wanted to go. The first store I went to was Juicy Couture. There are many clothes there are, and it is so big! I spent at least forty-five minutes just picking clothes that I wanted to try on. After that, I went to H&M, Coach, and other stores. The outlet was so big, and I knew one day would be too short for me to visit every store. There were also many tourists in most of the stores. When I went into the LV and Gucci store, there were just a few customers in there. When I walked in there, the employee looked at me for a few seconds, and quickly walked to me with an uncomfortable smile. I knew they must have thought that I did not look like the customer who had money to buy those goods. I also felt very uncomfortable to stay there, so I left within three minutes. Unfortunately, time went too fast. I looked at the sky, and it was turning dark, I carried all the bags, and had a great dinner with Rikku and K in the food court. After dinner, I started shopping again until the last second before the outlet closed. That was a great time, and I would like to tell all of my classmates that they should go there at least once because San Marcos Premium Outlets has everything you want!

**Xiaowei Sun-3F**

## My Exciting Trip to Florida

This experience was like a journey for me, and in these few lines I would like to describe how it was. As always, my first real emotion was when the plane departed. Even though this feeling is usual for me, sometimes I freak out, but this time I was really looking forward to the adventure. Once we arrived, I was astonished because the city looked wonderful. The only thing that I didn't like so much was that most of the people there spoke Spanish, so for me it was easy to start to speak in my native language, and I really wanted to focus on English at that time. However, I still spent a truly thrilling time there. Additionally, when I went shopping, I enjoyed it at first, but after a while I felt tired. I don't know why women never feel bored with shopping. They can really spend a lot of time shopping without getting tired! In my last two days, when I went to the theme parks, I considerably enjoyed my time even when I was waiting for the rides. A few of the rides were scary but amazing at the same time. I can truly say that it was a place worth the visit. In addition, the shows were even better, but you need to see them with your own eyes.



**Rayniero Rivas (and girlfriend)-3B -Venezuela**

# If I could be an animal...(4F)

If I were an animal, I would be a cat. I could be lazy all day long. I could get up whenever I wanted to, and I wouldn't have to wake up early for class! In the morning, I could stretch my body first, and then I would gracefully walk around my host's house. After my favorite breakfast of milk, I could walk to my host and play with him. Then, I would enjoy the sunshine by the window.

**Jenny**

If I were an animal, I would choose a lion because it is the KING! Also, nobody could talk to my children, and I would be safe because no one will make trouble for a lion. I would have a good life eating many kinds of meat!

**Hamood**

Since I was a child, I have wanted to be an elephant. I would wonder around all the time as a huge animal using my trunk perfectly. I have read a lot of stories about elephants to gain information about them. I like that they live in groups and help each other. They run and play although they have huge bodies. The mommy elephant takes care of her child and gives him love and care. I learn from elephants that even huge mammals can have a warm heart.

**Radhia Al Radhi**

If I could be a bird, that would be great because birds are friendly and cooperate together. They are never single as you rarely see one without its group. They can go wherever they want to. They fly as a team and match each other in the sky. They fly and migrate, and no one is left behind.

**Mohammed Ali**

If I were an animal, I would be a bird. I could experience such great feeling when I could fly in the sky with unlimited sunny blue space. I really like this kind of freedom going without limits in this world, watching the earth, mountains, seas, deserts, rivers, and forests from the sky. I could reach unreachable areas.

**Yuonis**

The animal I want to be is a koala. I could live in Australia. I would have big ears and eyes like a ball. Koalas look so fat, and most of the time they are sleeping. I think koalas are the cutest animals. If I were a koala, my life would be more interesting because I could sleep 20 hours a day. I like sleeping. I could forget about my studies and tests, and I could just watch TV and sleep! It is a fun plan.

**Olivia**

If I chose an animal to be, I would probably be a dog. I would like to be a strong dog. I would hope to work for the police or a fire station to help out with their job. I would like to get the job done when a criminal is running and is caught. For this reason, I would like to be a dog to help the community and give service with safety.

**Ionis Cuko**



The page is framed by a vibrant, colorful border of stylized flowers and leaves in shades of green, yellow, orange, and purple. The title 'Spring Haiku' is written in a large, pink, bubbly font with a white outline, centered at the top.

# Spring Haiku

Warm winds blow the doors.  
Flowers blossom everywhere.  
Birds' songs in blue sky.

**Van Vo-5D-Vietnam**

Birds twitter on trees,  
Weather's warmer and nicer,  
Say goodbye, Winter...

----o0o-----

Look!!! Birds fly on sky,  
Buds, flowers appear again,  
Oh!!! Spring is coming.

**Trinny-4E**

Red guys walk on grass  
Sunlight penetrates the cloud  
Spring comes secretly.

**Fred-4E-Taiwan**

**FRESH AIR**

On her way sweet home  
Cherry Blossoms are shining  
Here Lady Spring Comes!

**SMILING**

Soft wind is blowing  
Carries lilies' gentle scent  
Leaves heavenly air.

**REALITY**

Spring Break is over  
Again exams and teachers  
Welcome back on earth!

**Nguyen Nguyen-5C-Vietnam**

# Spring Break Haiku – 4F

Take out tonsils-Ouch!  
My drugs made me so dizzy  
I can't swallow well  
**Hamood**

Played paintball with Ango  
I went to San Antonio  
Yummy lasagna  
**Olivia**

Gentle sun on me  
Met friends to chat and eat rice  
How awesome was the day!  
**Romario Pereine**

I went to Disney  
I like Harry Potter Land  
I saw the Castle  
**Jenny**

I drove one hour  
I lay in Galveston sun  
Beach crowded and HOT!  
**Nasser**

Went to DPS  
Submit documentation  
Sadly didn't pass  
**Ioanis Cuko**

Great couch I sat  
I was like a lazy bone  
Loved the sunny day  
**Jolly**

My friend came here  
He is a tall, heavy man  
Played a lot of basketball  
**Feras**

Florida by car  
Seafood, cars, beach, sun, markets  
Three pretty women  
**Yuonis**

Friends picked me up  
Cooking on fire, talking with friends  
Fun time camping  
**Mohammed Aljasim**

Went shopping a lot  
Summer clothes were all I bought  
How amazing they are!  
**Fabiola**



# My First Impressions of Houston

My first impressions of Houston were a bit strange. I came to Houston on August 21, 2012. This is my first time in the United States, but I did not want to come here because I would be away from my family and boyfriend for a while. I say that it was a bit strange because it was a total change. First, the language... I speak Spanish, and I knew only a little English when I came here. Second, the food... I don't like just any kind of food. I'm picky about what I eat. Third, the places (malls, supermarkets, beaches, beauty parlors, night clubs, etc.)... All the places in Houston are very far apart, so I need a car. I know that I can take a bus, but I don't know exact directions in Houston, so it's difficult for me. Fourth, the people... I didn't know anyone when I came here, but for me it's very easy to make new friends because I'm outgoing. I have gone through culture shock. I know it's about adapting, and with time, I have learned many things about Houston and the US. Now I have a lot of friends from different countries. I have fun in many different places. I have had good and bad times, and sometimes I feel homesick. However, I am going to learn English; this is my goal. It's neither easy nor difficult. I know I can do it.

**Maria Perez-3C**

I remember when I came to Houston, it was late at night. The weather was very hot. I felt I was in Vietnam, not in the U.S. I saw that Houston was a very big city. There were a lot of cars, bridges, houses, people, and trees. When I arrived at my aunt's house, I discovered that the houses in Houston didn't look like houses in Europe, where I lived before coming here. A few days later, my aunt's family and I went to Chinatown. I was surprised because there were a lot of Asian restaurants there. The food was delicious. On the way back home, my aunt showed me a few places in Houston. Now I like to go to the market on the weekend because we can try free foods! At first, I felt very bored, but these days I feel better. Every day that I go to school, I can meet new friends, learn interesting new things, and improve my English. Now I really like Houston.

**Kha Mi Bui-3C**

## The Story of Yuefei

Yuefei was a famous strategist and army general in the Song Dynasty in China. When Yuefei was a child, he didn't like to study. Because his family was very poor, he wanted to work to improve the family situation. When his mother found out that he had given up studying, she was very angry and said, "Only if you get more knowledge, can you improve the family situation and protect the country." After talking with his mother, Yuefei began to study hard, and he also learned Kung Fu. When he was a teenager, he joined the army. Because of his bravery, he became an army general and had a lot of victories. His army was called Yuejia. One time, another country attacked the Song Dynasty, so Yuefei led his army to defend the dynasty. Yuejia army only had 10,000 soldiers, but the enemy had more than 100,000. Because the enemy's army was so powerful, other army generals felt scared and didn't come to help Yuejia. However, Yuejia army defeated the enemy many times so much so that the enemy was so scared and would say, "Defeating the Yuejia army is more difficult than destroying a mountain." It took Yuefei ten years to retake the land snatched by the enemy. When Yuefei finished retaking the land, the king of the Song Dynasty believed the prime minister's words that Yuefei would rebel against the Song Dynasty, so he asked Yuefei to quit. At first, Yuefei ignored the order and wrote a letter to tell the king that this was a very good opportunity to retake the land. However, the king didn't believe him. He sent twelve orders asking Yuefei to go back to the capital. Finally, Yuefei had to give up and return to the capital. The king was going to arrest him for the crime of rebellion as soon as he got back to the capital. However, the prime minister didn't find evidence that Yuefei had really rebelled against the country. In the end, though, the prime minister killed Yuefei with the reason that Yuefei *might* have rebelled against the strong Song Dynasty.

**Jiawei Chen-3D**

# 3A and 3B Poets

Spring departing

The birds cry out

And the eyes of the fish

Are full of tears

A Thing of Beauty

Be it flower, or drop of dew, or word of love

It is so fragile, and yet so strong

It takes your heart, but leaves a storm behind

When it is gone.

**Nhi Nguyen -3A-Vietnam**

**Summer**

Hot and boiling sun,

Pushing away the cold,

Summer is beginning.

**Autumn**

Last leaves falling,

The wind singing and blowing,

Yes! It is autumn time.

**Snow**

White and thick,

Covering the ground like a blanket,

Makes noise when I walk.

**Yun Zou-3A -China**

Beautiful flower

I love you when you shine

It is your power

You are my princess

When you dance with me,

I'm full of happiness.

**Marc Massamba -3B-France**

**Mother**

Warm hug in the morning

Great example of tolerance

Best friend ever.

**Books**

Will educate us

Go to our imagination

Wonderful time together.

**Shahinda Hakim-3B-KSA**

**Love**

Unpredictable

And difficult to find

But you always want it.

**Rayniero Rivas-3B-**

**Sparrows**

As sparrows fly low

I hear their sweet melody

Music to my ears.

**Ruyin Shen-3B-China**

**Night**

The night has fallen

The daylight has left us

Shadows above us.

**Summer**

In the heat of noon

Animals look for water

Or a shady place.

**Life**

When midnight has come

The process of life repeats

And life can go on.

**Ayat Aljafar -3A-KSA**

**Butterfly**

Delight in garden

Colorful, speedy, peaceful

Beautiful butterfly.

**Spring**

Swaying leaves on the trees

Warmer air, blooming flowers

Spring's finally here!

**Hiba Bhar-3B-Lebanon**



# Free Writing!

## How to Become Successful

Many people want to become successful, but how to do this is a good question. To be successful is both an easy and a hard task. Difficulties are like springs; they yield to pressure. If you do things in the right way, I believe that success will be viable. The following points are important considerations. First, you should believe in yourself. Confidence is a wonderful power to make you move. Before you begin, you need to say to yourself, "I can do this." Then you can do it. In addition, when you have an obstacle that prevents you from going forward, you should tell yourself, "It doesn't matter because when I finish it, it will cheer me up." Thus, you know the most important thing is confidence and the belief that you can do everything. The second essential quality is patience. When most people start to do something, they feel great and have endless power, but then, they find it really hard, and they may give up. For example, most girls like to lose weight. When they start, you will see them just eat fruits every day, so you think they are working very hard, but don't be so sure! After three days, they will find that losing weight is difficult, and then they will find every reason to stop trying. Most people don't have patience. Therefore, when you start to do something, don't stop. You have to keep it up until you finish, and then you will have a sense of accomplishment. The third thing to consider is that you should know how to make positive friends. A good friend can support your efforts and help make you successful. In fact, negative friends can't help you; on the contrary, they might do you harm. All in all, if you want to become a successful person, you should depend on yourself and not be influenced negatively by others. You should have self-confidence and patience. So, when you have a goal, you just need to decide to do it, without being afraid. And, of course, you should strive. Success doesn't fall in your lap; you have to chase it, so don't give up!

**Ruyin Shen-3B**

## Art Car Museum

The highlight of our class trip was to the Art Car Museum. There were two Texas cars with very creative decorations. The car done by David Best was the best. It won a championship in 2006 and is absolutely the best car I have ever seen. It is decorated with glass, miniature toys, and coffee cups up the trunk of the car. Thinking about it, you can be left in the desert, and you can make coffee and drink it in your car. What is amazing is that the elaborate cars we saw all move still. The most incredible part of this day was to hear how they made these cars.

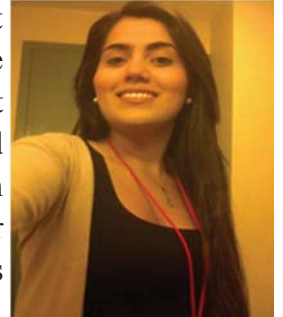
**Ioanis Cuko-4F**



Checking out Cool Cars at the Houston Car Show Museum!

## The Influence “The System” on Venezuela

In Venezuela there is a music program called “The System” that is intending to change people’s idea about how an orchestra can represent an ideal society. “The System” is a publicly financed voluntary program of music education which was founded in Venezuela in 1975 by Jose Antonio Abreu. Abreu’s vision is that “Music has to be recognized as an agent of social development in the highest sense because it transmits the highest values: solidarity, harmony, and mutual compassion. It also has the ability to unite an entire community, and express sublime feeling.” The principal goal of “The System” is to give every child a musical instrument. “The System” has spread throughout the world, and many governments have adopted it because they want to give the neediest kids an opportunity to change their lives for the better through music. In 2010, the Venezuelan Cinema Society made a documentary about “The System” and the big phenomenon of youth orchestras around the world. The name of that documentary is “Dudamel, the Sound of the Kids”. It shows how the neediest children from different parts of the world, like Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, and South America perform amazing music and learn about Venezuelan culture through “The System”. Before “The System” was created in Venezuela, poor areas never enjoyed classical music, but now it is so exciting to see big concerts with musicians who are from those places. Little by little, our society is changing with “The System”, and people can see the big power of music.



**Ada Espinoza Suarez- 2E–Venezuela**

## My House

There are many kinds of houses. However, no matter how much they look different, they all have the same definition: the place where you feel safe, comfortable, and settled. I like our house because it is modern and attractive. I live in a spacious modern two-story house in the center of Riyadh, capital city of Saudi Arabia. When people look at my house from the street, they see right away the high trees around my house and the brickwork roof on it. They also see lights and a big wall surrounding it. When you enter the front door, you can see the huge chandelier on the top of the entrance hallway. Also, you’ll definitely notice the white marbled stairs up to the first floor. On the first floor, there are two bedrooms, one bathroom, and a large living room. The living room, which is the room that I really like the most in my house, has two big sofas and a very nice massage chair. Moreover, with an amazingly huge LCD screen in it, it is quite nice for watching movies and having some popcorn at night! My home is very important for me. Every day when I go back from work and close my front door, I have a nice feeling that my day was special. My family and I like our house so much, and I am very lucky to live in this house.



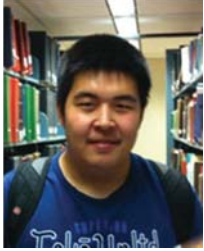
**Abdulaziz Alanazi-3A-Saudi Arabia**





## My Warrior

Kings, emperors, or generals can have their own warrior. Although I am not one of them, I have a warrior. He is not my bodyguard, but he works for me. He is smart and powerful. He can tell me whatever I want to know and can play games with me. He is my *computer* and my treasure! His design (hardware and software) attracts me and makes me fall in love with him. The beautiful and solid appearance is the most wonderful part of it. It is smooth just like a knight's sword with a sharp blade. The whole body is black, which makes it look mysterious. My computer has the best CPU in the world. The CPU has 3000hz main frequency. It has an original 8G memory and at least 1 TB hard drive. Also, there are three available slots. The screen is not only 18" but also high definition. Last but not least, my keyboard is my favorite, which can support the computer to work better. The software is just like a dancer's dress. If the dancer doesn't have a suitable dress, the show may be boring. When a warrior goes to war, it should have a flexible brain, strong body, and powerful equipment. Then it can come back with honor of the victory. My computer is one of the best warriors in the world.



**Cheng (Castle) Gong-4C-China**

## A Special Gift- My Old Blue Book

In my family we have a custom of giving a gift when there is a birth. So, when I was born, my grandfather chose to give me a little blue book. I don't remember when and where he gave it to my mother to keep it for me, but I just know that my mother told me about it when I was five or six years old. My mother gave it to me when I started to read. At that time, I didn't realize its value because I was very young. However, after ten or twelve years, when my grandfather died, I discovered the importance of this book.

I remember how much I loved that book. It was a small blue book with many pictures that were very colorful, and the cover was hard. I remember the texture of the pages, which were very soft between my small fingers, and it smelled very good, a perfume that I can't describe. The last time that I saw that little book was when I was cleaning my bedroom before leaving my parent's house for France.



For me, this little blue book has a lot of importance and meaning today. I don't remember the title exactly, but I remember that this book included many stories and at the end of each story there was a lesson or some advice. The author may have been Jean De La Fontaine. Today, I can say it was a special gift because now I'm able to understand many things about life, and I realize the importance of this book. It's like a message to me from my grandfather.

**Marc Massamba-3A**



## The Little Louse



I'm glad to share the true story of *The Little Louse*, which happened in Xalapa, capital of the state of Veracruz, México. Xalapa is a little city in the mountainous region of this state. Here you can find green land, hilly narrow streets, and cool weather most of the year. That's why we call it the *Little London of México*. The year 1898 was very important for Xalapa and other nearby villages that wanted better routes for quick and safe trade with México City. On the inauguration day, the train passing through had a very special guest -- the President of México, General Porfirio Díaz. However, this route offered more than a picturesque trip. It offered the local people the opportunity to transport their products to other regions and even to other nations. A lot of people were poor, so everything was very simple. There was no schedule, only one trip per day which was of course very slow. In the train wagons, you could find unusual guests, such as chickens, pigs, ducks, and any other animal a farmer could sell in the city! Thus, people started to call the route by the affectionate nickname *The Little Louse* since it was possible to pick up a louse by the time you finished your trip! As the years passed, the route began to have bad times. With the construction of roads, the era of the train was ending, and the era of bus lines was starting. *The Little Louse* had its last trip in 1945. Nowadays, if you have the opportunity to travel to Xalapa, you can find a tourist trip named *The Little Louse*, and you can hear more stories about the history of this train and all its travelers filled with hope and goodwill in search of a better tomorrow. But don't be afraid. I promise that you don't have to travel with unwelcome guests. Today, we've kept only the name. You are invited to come and have a terrific trip with us!!!

**Carmen Huerta-3D**

## How Technology Has Influenced My Life

I believe that technology is a double-edged sword. Actually, the importance of the use of technology cannot be denied in our lives both at work and at home. Technology plays a very important role because it facilitates many tasks at the same time and provides us with entertainment. On the other hand, technology also affects the family unit and time with others because it is easier and faster to send a message or make a call than to go to visit people. For instance, in my family, things have changed. When my siblings and I are at home, we always spend time on the computer watching TV or texting on the cellphone. It is crazy, but sometimes, when my sister is in the next room, instead of going to her room, I just send her a text by cellphone. My parents always tell us to live more like a family, so we have agreed to dedicate one day per week to getting all the family together regularly. Indeed, technology can give us many things in our lives, but we must also know that everything has a limit, and we need to maintain a balance in our lives. I always think technology is a necessary evil, so you have to learn to live with it. **Adriana Rodriguez -3B-Mexico**





## My Father's Education

Like the majority of his generation, my father was born and raised during the Vietnam War, which forced people to struggle to get full education. However, this did not mean they were not able to overcome the difficulties in order to learn. There were a lot of obstacles that my father faced to reach his school. For instance, he had to wake up really early because he had to walk two hours to get to class every day. The war had destroyed everything including classrooms, so there were just a few schools left for the students in Vietnam. In addition, there were not so many instructors either. That was the reason why a teacher was typically responsible for three or four grades if he/she was capable of doing that. Books were dreams of all the students at that time. They learnt in the most traditional way with only chalk and board. After class, my father would spend the rest of his day working for an agricultural factory near his school. That was the way my father as well as other students funded their education. As workers, they did a wide variety of jobs, such as gardening, planting and harvesting. That was the way education was supported.

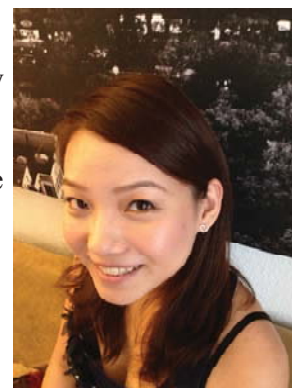
At this point, you might be confused about how students could have received full education in this difficult situation. But, believe it or not, they did. Teachers were rare, but some were the most experienced ones. They explained everything to the best of their knowledge, which included both their knowledge about the books and their life experiences and practical skills as well. The students learnt not only what had been written in books but also invaluable skills which were useful in facing difficult circumstances. They knew how to climb the highest mountains, how to protect themselves from the angriest storms, how to read the sky map from the stars, etc. Also, they were taught how to enrich their souls by helping others. My father even became a Boy Scout and clearly understood that obstacles were in fact challenges he could overcome.



Nguyen Nguyen-5C-Vietnam

## Education

My grandfather is a lawyer, and he is 82 years old now. I remember every time when he tried to encourage me to study harder, he would tell me how hard it was to find a book to study when he was young. My grandfather was born in Beijing, China. Because of the civil war in China, he joined the army and moved with the government of the Republic of China to Taiwan in 1927. He told me that because the war between Taiwan and China still kept going, there was not enough food or money. No one could have a satisfying quality of life. Even though he had a rough time for a long time, he knew if he wanted to succeed, he couldn't give up. There was only one way to achieve his goal, and that was education. He tried every way to find any useful textbook to study. He even exchanged his meals for books. To get textbooks was one thing; to find the time to study was another. Because my grandfather was a soldier, he spent most of his time drilling or fighting. It was not easy to find extra time to study, so he just used some of his sleep time. After studying hard for a while, he passed the national exam and became a judge advocate. After that, he got his license to practice law.



Meng (Christine) Ching  
Hsuan-5C-Taiwan

### **Café Bet in Saigon, Vietnam – A Special Place for Drinking Coffee**

Ho Chi Minh City, or as the Vietnamese usually call it, Saigon, is one of the biggest cities in Vietnam. People living in Saigon really love coffee, so there are many coffee shops with many different decorations there. However, there is a place serving coffee in a special way in the center of Saigon which is called Café Bet. Café Bet is in a park surrounded by many modern buildings located in the center of Saigon. People go there, choose a place they like, sit on the ground, and enjoy the coffee while they can look at the beautiful views around them. Because of its special style, many people, especially the younger generation living in Saigon, are attracted to Café Bet and choose it as a place to relax and chat with their friends in their free time. Another advantage of Café Bet is that this is a place where people can make new friends and share their hobbies. Every Sunday morning, when you go to Café Bet, you can see a group of people playing the guitar and singing together, and you can join them without any reservation because they are very friendly. It is really a good way to relax after a long busy week studying or working. In the evening, however, there is a different interesting attraction. People sit as a group and chat together. It is quiet in the evening, and it is really a beautiful scene under the streetlights. Café Bet has become the best choice for people in Saigon and visitors from other countries as well. It seems an ordinary place, but it has its own attraction. I think it is a good place to try if you visit Saigon, Vietnam.

**Van Vo-5D-Vietnam**



### **USA and KSA**

There are many similarities and differences between Saudi and American universities. In Saudi Arabia the university is free for all, but that depends on the result of the entrance exam the students take. However, in the US the cost is very high, and you have to pass a difficult test to enter. The second difference is the facilities such as library and gym. Some US universities, but not all, have such amazing amenities as UH does.

**Radhia Al Radhi-4F**



**Five or ten years from now, when you're talking to your children (or 40 years from now when you're talking to your grandchildren!), what will you tell them about your time in the United States?**

If I have children, I will tell them that some of my best and worst experiences were in Texas. Although some friends helped me when I first moved here, I still missed my parents. Another challenge was trying to understand daily conversation. I got lost many times and spent a lot of time on the bus trying to find the way back to my apartment. Despite these difficulties, I learned how to take care of myself and think independently. If my children want to study overseas, I will encourage them to do so. It's a chance for them to increase their knowledge while learning how to overcome many obstacles.

**Khanh Bui-4B**

If I have children, I will tell them that I had some positive and negative experiences in the United States. When I first moved to the United States, it was difficult to locate new places and find new friends. On the other hand, after I had familiarized myself with the city, it was easy to get around and have fun. I will tell them that living in a different country can be a good experience because it can help them become more responsible.

**Irineu Francisco-4A**

If I have children, I will tell them that some of my best and worst memories are from the United States. I will tell them about the times I misunderstood what native English speakers said and what they did. As soon as I arrived in the United States, I found myself alone because I had problems communicating with Americans. Despite the challenges, I still benefitted from the experience. I became more independent, and I met some wonderful people in the United States..

**Abdullah Alsaffar-4A**

If I have children one day, I will tell them about my unforgettable time in the United States. Before I went there, I had carefully prepared my luggage and my mind. However, there were several surprises that I couldn't have prepared for. When I arrived in Houston, there were many challenges that I had to face such as transportation, housing, and food. Nevertheless, these difficulties were insignificant to me because when I went to the LCC, my friends and teachers gave me a lot of advice. They shared their experiences and their feelings, so I felt more comfortable. I especially enjoyed the teaching methods in the LCC, which made me want to learn. I would also tell my children about the great kindness of Americans who helped me during my stay in the United States.

**Phiphi (Phi) Doan-4A**

If I have children, I will tell them that some of my best and worst memories are from Houston. When I arrived in Houston, everything seemed strange. Although I knew enough English to have a conversation, I still had to communicate with gestures at first. Because I didn't comprehend every word I heard, I frequently misunderstood people. Also, I had trouble finding the ingredients I wanted from my country in American grocery stores, so I missed the special flavor of my favorite foods. Even though I had challenges in the United States, I will encourage my children to study overseas. In fact, I will teach them English when they are young so they will not face as many difficulties with the language as I did.

**Badrieah Alamri-4A**

**Five or ten years from now, when you're talking to your children (or 40 years from now when you're talking to your grandchildren!), what will you tell them about your time in the United States?**

If I have children, I will tell them about all of my experiences in the United States. I will tell them about the difficulties of moving to another country and also the excitement of living an independent life. Although it was hard in the beginning, I quickly found friends from my country who helped me. While I was in the university, I tried to make American friends. I met some great people who showed me what I could do in Houston. I will tell my children that there are great experiences waiting for them abroad. Even though there are problems with moving to a place where people don't speak your native language, there are also many great things to discover.

**Ali Albohמוד-4B**

If I have children, I would like to tell them about my life in the United States and the culture shock that I experienced in Houston. The first few weeks, I felt excited and was curious about everything. I was interested in tasting foods that I had never eaten before. Shortly after that, however, I began to reject the new environment whose customs and language were so different from my own. I started to complain about the transportation, people, and food. I easily became angry since I was negative. I went through a stage where the only place I went for meals, shopping, and recreation was Chinatown. I preferred to speak only with Chinese people, and since it was no trouble for us to understand each other, we could talk freely. Unfortunately, I struggled in this stage for a long time. Eventually, though, I could open my heart to accept everything and everyone in American culture. Even when I did not have advanced language skills, it did not stop me from talking with native English speakers and my classmates from other cultures.

**Catherine (Lan) Jia-4A**

If I have children, I will tell them about my positive and negative experiences in the United States. Some of the positive things are that I learned about new cultures and traditions, not only from Americans, but also from my classmates, who had come from all over the world. One of the difficulties I faced while living in United States was learning how to handle new responsibilities, but that was also one of the main benefits.

**Cheetah (Fahad) Alajmi-4A**

If I have children, I will tell them about the challenges I faced in the United States. While it was wonderful to go abroad, it was painful to leave all my friends and family in Thailand. When I first arrived in the United States, I wasn't very good at English. Sometimes I couldn't understand what native speakers were talking about, even when they spoke slowly. However, since I started learning English in the LCC, my English has definitely improved. I have met a lot of people and made friends from many countries. I hope I can tell my children that after we had graduated from the LCC and returned to our own countries, my classmates and I remained close friends.

**Candy (Parapasiri) Methalwala-4B**



# LCC Singers



The LCC Singers have been busy during the spring, preparing for their performance at LCC graduation. They normally practice at least two (and sometimes three) times a week. Students from all levels, as well as some former students, have participated this term. This term has not been as busy as the fall term, when the LCC Singers performed at the Houston Zoo for the Christmas Zoo Lights event, at the UH Satellite for International Education Week, at a Reunion Concert, and at LCC graduation. Sometimes the singers also attend concerts or other local musical events. Students enjoy the performances and special events, but they also enjoy just meeting new friends and learning more about music and English pronunciation. **(Kitty Barrera - Director of LCC Singers)**



3A/B students and teachers pose !



Students from 4C and 4D gave a group presentation on “Our Purposes in Our Lives”, “Who Am I?” and “Why Am I Here?” comparing and contrasting their thoughts and ideas. Then they wrote what they had presented.

### The Goals of Our Lives

It is said that “The secret of happiness is freedom, and the secret of freedom is courage.” We believe it is very true. In our opinion, people always interpret life differently, and we take the chance to express our ideas freely in this article. Although we were born in different countries in Asia, we have a common goal: We are both eager to travel all around the world in order to learn new things as well as pursue our dreams.



**Tippy:** When I was a child, I always dreamed of being a flight attendant. I was interested in this job because of its high salary and also having the chance to travel around the world. However, after I grew up, I found out that flight attendants have to sacrifice their health and personal lives, so I changed my mind. Now I would like to continue and develop my family’s business of frozen food in Thailand.

**Truc:** Since my older brother’s death was the biggest sadness I had, my life seemed to be a series of terrible moments, and accordingly, I did not know who I wanted to be. Moreover, I had communication problems because for a long time, I did not talk with people around me. However, before my brother passed away, he said to me, “Keep moving forward.” After some time, I decided to try to take my brother’s advice and follow my dream. I believe when we are younger, we seem to be confused about our dreams and do not know who we are, but we find them when we get older. Now I would love to open and run my own coffee shop and create my own brand name.

As you see, these are the reasons why we have come to the US to study MBA. We wish we could learn about management to run our own business successfully in the future. To be honest with you, we have to say that achieving the goals we just mentioned is no big deal. What matters to us is to have determination and a purposeful life. In our opinion, we must move forward and look for opportunities proactively. We should also have courage to follow our dreams. Furthermore, studying in a free country (the USA) gives us the freedom to achieve our goals more easily.

**Thippanarat (Tippy) Saesiw-4C-Thailand, Truc Le-4C-Vietnam**



Have you ever asked yourself why you are in this world? I have been thinking about this question a lot, and I want to share with you what I have found. First of all, the important purpose of my life is to thank God. I say my prayers and take care of the earth and nature to show my appreciation. In my religion, marriage is the most important commitment, so I will marry and take care of my family to show praise to God. Secondly, I am going to make my parents proud of me. They raised me and supported me all the time, so I will show them my appreciation. Finally, it was always my childhood dream to come to the United States and continue my studies. Now that I am here, I know that I am making this dream come true. After I graduate from college, I am going to open my own business to make a lot of money.

**Khaled Awad-4D-Jordan**



Students from 4C and 4D gave a group presentation on “Our Purposes in Our Lives” “Who Am I?” and “Why Am I Here?” comparing and contrasting their thoughts and ideas. Then they wrote what they had presented.

### What Is the Purpose of Our Life?

Introduction: Have you ever wondered *who you are*, *what you are in this world for*, and *where you are going*? Actually, all these questions can be put into one: "What is the purpose of my life?" It is not an easy question. In fact, it could be one of the most difficult questions that we may face in our life. However, what really matters is that we enjoy our life every day. Each person is different and has distinct beliefs, so their purpose of life would be unique and special. In this article, we want to share our points of view regarding *the purpose of our life*.

#### **Ana's point of view:**

*First, I believe that each person has a mission in life, and that God has given us unique talents to help us develop our purposeful life. We need to know what we enjoy the most, or what our passion is because it will help us understand what the meaning of life is. I have learned that if you love what you are doing, even the small details, you are on the right path towards happiness.*

*Second, we need to learn from our mistakes to be better people. Every detail in our life has a meaning, and we need to discover what the most important things are to us whether it is family, work, others, or a life with determination. Now, I only hope that when I am 80 years old, I can look back and be proud of my family and the legacy that I will leave behind. I want that someday people will remember me as a great person who helped them and changed a little part of their life for the better.*

#### **Nouf's point of view:**

*The importance of life to me is to live it to the full. I believe the purpose of life is happiness. We all try to be happy whether it is through earning money, reaching fame, or getting married. Even a person who commits suicide is trying to be happy thinking that it will end his/her misery. So, I think the purpose of life is to stay as happy as possible in any given circumstances.*

*I also believe the meaning of life is to grow physically, mentally, and spiritually; it is about traveling down different paths of our life and making decisions. We may make mistakes, which is inevitable, but we should learn from them and grow stronger. The meaning of life is about being true to ourselves. It means to love those around us, to help people as much as we can, to be trustworthy, and to do our best. If we do not feel sadness, we could never experience happiness; if we do not get upset, we would never know peace, and if we do not trust our heart, we would never know love. Life is not just reproducing; it is much more than that if we open our eyes and heart, and if we listen!*

Conclusion: As you can see, the ultimate purpose of life could be achievement of happiness in everything we do but in our own way or to the best of our ability. For us, it was interesting to learn that even though we are from different cultures, we may think similarly about what the purpose of life is but each of us in unique ways.



**Ana Porras-4D-Venezuela and Nouf Alhawas-4D-Saudi Arabia**

Students from 4C and 4D gave a group presentation on “Our Purposes in Our Lives”, “Who Am I?” and “Why Am I Here?” comparing and contrasting their thoughts and ideas. Then they wrote what they had presented.

### Why Am I in This World?

To answer the question *why I am in this world*, I should say I am here to worship God.

Based on my religion, Islam, I believe God sent Prophet Mohammad to spread the message of Islam. After that, God revealed the Quran to His prophet to guide people. God has explained everything regarding what we should or should not do in our life. According to the Quran, God created humans and life as well. This life is not the eternal life because all things such as the seas, mountains, and rivers die except for human beings. After we die, we will have another life, either in heaven or hell; it all depends on our deeds here in this world. Also, God gave us examples about the people who disobeyed Him and what their punishment was. The purpose of these examples for us is to learn from their mistakes.

God said to us if we want Heaven, we have to worship Him five times a day representing five pillars of Islam. The first pillar is to testify that there is only one God who deserves to be worshiped, and that Prophet Muhammad is the final messenger sent by God to spread the religion of Islam. The second pillar is praying five times a day to thank God for all the blessings He has given us such as health, happiness, and family. The third pillar is fasting during the holy month of Ramadan when Muslims read the Quran to cherish the month when the Holy Book was revealed to our prophet. The fourth pillar is Zakat which is giving money away to the poor and the needy for cleansing our soul. The fifth pillar is Hajj which is pilgrimage to the Holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia at least once in our lifetime. Finally, I believe there are angels from Heaven in this world who record our deeds. After we die, we will be in another stage of our eternal life which lasts until the Judgment Day when God decides who deserves to go to Heaven or Hell depending on our deeds in this world. So, this life is just a test for us to pass. Our real life starts after we die.

**Zahra Alsaigh-4D-Saudi Arabia**



### Our Purposes in Our Lives

Do you have a purposeful life? Everyone has their own purpose/s in their life, and each one is distinct from others. We are going to share with you our different purposes in our lives.

**Mohammad:** I have many purposes in my life. My long-term purpose is to have a successful marriage. My short-term purposes, though, are first to finish L.C.C program and then to continue my education at the University of Houston.

**Henry (Hyung):** My purposes in life are to be a good father for my future children and to succeed in my job. After that, I want to travel around the world with my family.

**Dhuhayan:** My main purpose in life is to have a beautiful and small family.

We showed three different kinds of purposes in our lives. We believe we should respect each other's ideas, no matter what they are.



**Mohammad, Henry, and**



Students from 4C and 4D gave a group presentation on “Our Purposes in Our Lives”, “Who Am I?” and “Why Am I Here?” comparing and contrasting their thoughts and ideas. Then they wrote what they had presented.

### Who Am I?

"It is hard to move forward when you don't know where you are headed or why." Once I read this anonymous quote, I wondered if it would be easy to answer the questions, “Why am I in this world?” or “Who am I?” Then I realized that many questions were followed by that such as “Do I reach happiness?”, “Do I have values and faith?”, “Am I successful?”, and “Does my character represent what I hope and look forward to?” If I am able to find the answers to all these questions, I know that I can have joy, hope, and satisfaction. My family has always taught me the importance of two main tenets: *holding onto my faith and values which lead to happiness* and *looking for success*. The obvious answer to the question “Who am I?” will be :“I am Ahlam”; however, my faith and values, not my name, would shape who I am. *They* are the ones that lead me to happiness. I have been raised in a wonderful, supporting, big, and Muslim family, so my religious background explains a lot about who I am, and my values define happiness to me. I believe that my journey in this life began at birth, and it will not be ended by death. I also know that justice, peace, and wealth, which we may not find in this short life, will be achieved in Heaven. Additionally, in this world, we may experience the loss of our loved ones, but I believe we will see them again, and we will be together forever in the other world. This, in fact, leads me to happiness. I am a person who is looking for success. Actually, being a member of a big family makes me go through a lot of experiences I gain many benefits from. It has taught me how to be straightforward, ambitious, patient, and independent. My parents have helped me understand that my mistakes should not stop me from learning. In conclusion, I understand clearly why my parents have emphasized teaching me those two major tenets of life: *strong faith in God* and *looking for success*. *Faith* and *success* would help me overcome and face difficulties, obstacles, and problems that I may encounter during my journey in life. Also, they give me inspiration to become the person who I am today. Whenever I sit back and think about whether or not things would be the same if I had been raised in another family, I would always come to the same answer: “No”. Thus, when someone asks me who I am, I would answer, “I am a person with strong *faith* which leads her to *happiness* and *success*.” **AhlamAlshiihry-4C-Saudi Arabia**



### What is the Purpose of Our Lives?

We tried to find the answer although we knew it was not an easy question. We hoped to find the answer by asking others. Someone said that the purpose of life is to be remembered as a nice person after he dies. **Abdullah** believes he only wants to be a rich, successful businessman to help the poor. On the contrary, some people believe giving money to the poor is not really helping them. I (**Frank**) have a lot of dreams. When I was a child, I lived in a rural area in China. My family was very poor. My father saved his money to buy a cassette player. I listened to music on the cassette player every day. I thought it was the most wonderful thing in my life to just listen to music. I wondered who had made those pieces, and what kind of people they were. I hoped I could be just like them one day. Now I know what I want to be. I want to become a musician to make this world a better place. Nowadays, technology has changed everything, but my purpose in life is still the same. I will continue to follow my dream. I hope it will come true.

**Qing (Frank) Chen-4D-China** and **Abdullah Alhmoudi-4D-United Arab Emirates**



Students from 4C and 4D gave a group presentation on “Our Purposes in Our Lives”, “Who Am I?” and “Why Am I Here?” comparing and contrasting their thoughts and ideas. Then they wrote what they had presented.

### The Problem of EGO

People have been looking for the meaning of life or their purpose in life for ages. I believe they do not need to do so since being alive should be their only main purpose. Unfortunately, many people have the tendency to take things egoistically. That is why we hear “I want”, “I need”, or “It’s mine” a lot. We are human beings capable of thinking rationally, so I believe we should think more about our community than about ourselves; we should think how we can make a better life for everybody else, not just for ourselves. Think about the main cause of all the big problems in our society. It is the EGO!!! Everybody wants to be better than others. They feel offended by the things that really do not matter. What may help such people is believing in something spiritual. Although no one has the right answers regarding the origin of life or our destination after this life, believing that there is a life beyond this material life sounds quite reasonable. Additionally, no one can be perfect, and no money can buy health for people. My point is that when we die, our money or our high position will not bring us back to the earth again. In my opinion, we do live here to be better than others, but we live with our differences and abilities to connect to each other and solve “the puzzle of life”. No one can live alone, so we complete each other. I really think the main purpose of life is to be a part of this chain to help each other, love each other, respect each other, grow together, and live well because all our lives end in the same thing: *death*. If you think you are not good enough, try to look for help and share your own experiences with others. The world is big enough for all of us. **GrazielleNogueira-4C-Brazil**



### What Am I Doing Here?

Even though most people think that they know what they are doing in this life, it is not easy to find answers to this controversial issue. Focusing on the meaning of life, we realized that most of us are just living with the same routine such as waking up, going to work, and earning money. But actually, this is not living; it is just existing aimlessly. Some of us are used to saying "I'm busy, so I've got to go." It seems that we don't have time even for ourselves, and this makes us feel lost. Unfortunately, having a routine life is number one enemy to all humanity since we lose our passion to develop our opportunities and new projects. However, we *can* figure out *where we came from, and where we are going* if we want to. In our opinion, there are three ways that help us have a purposeful life:

**1**-Finding a person who can support us and make us happy for the rest of our life; someone who can help us have a purposeful life. **2**. Having children and taking care of them to the best of our abilities. This is the most precious thing that can ever happen to anyone. It is interesting to observe how our children grow and how they learn. Moreover, spending time with our children can be the most amazing moments in our life. **3**. Making our world a better place for the next generation. Our planet is a gift from God. We have always been told to love and take care of Mother Earth. In conclusion, we believe that the purpose of life is not looking good or having good things. The purpose of life is about *being good* and *doing good things*. If you do things with positive energy and enthusiasm, the results make good influence on other people. This will definitely make the world a better place to live in.

**Alina Zhumakhmetova-4D-Kazakhstan and Jorge Cardenas-4D-Colombia**





# Book Reviews

## *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

I chose to read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe because when I was in my country, I had heard the name of the book. Until I read it, I didn't know anything about it except that it is a famous American book. I thought that if I chose a classical book, I would learn a lot, and I was right. When I began to read, two doors were opened to me. One led to the story about Uncle Tom, and the other guided me to the history of the United States.

The story took place more than 100 years ago in Kentucky when the United States was dominated by slavery. Uncle Tom was a slave. As his master, Mr. Shelby, the owner of a plantation, said, "Tom is a good, steady, sensible, pious fellow. He got religion at a camp-meeting four years ago; and I believe he really did get it. I've trusted him, since then, with everything I have, -- money, house, horses, -- and let him come and go round the country; and I always found him true and square in everything." Even though Tom was such a good helper, Mr. Shelby wanted to sell him to Haley, a slave trader because he owed money to Haley. Mr. Shelby was a really nice master. If his business hadn't failed, he wouldn't have had to sell Tom. He really didn't want to make this decision. But then, the trader wasn't satisfied by this deal; he wanted more. "Haven't you a boy or gal that you could throw in with Tom?" said the trader. He decided on Harry, who was the son of Eliza, a very close woman slave of Mrs. Shelby. Because of this trade, Uncle Tom and Eliza began their entirely different lives. Eliza didn't want her son to leave her and be sold to another master. Therefore, she made a huge decision. She chose to escape with her son. Nevertheless, although Uncle Tom felt sad about being sold away from his family, he still wanted to obey. As a result, Uncle Tom, Eliza and Harry began their different adventures.

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* was the best-selling novel in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During that time, most of the economy in the South was based on plantation. Each master had several slaves. These slaves were mostly black men and some men of mixed blood. They belonged to their masters, who could whip, shame, punish, and sell them in any way and at any time. They were all human beings; however, they were not equal and free. Mrs. Stowe was so brave that she wrote a book to proclaim what she saw. Her thoughts were also the thoughts of a lot of people. President Lincoln once said that "a little woman led to a war." Although this sentence wasn't confirmed as totally true, this little woman's book definitely influenced society at the time. I think now I understand why the United States became a free country. This extremely cruel history reminds all Americans of equality and freedom.

I still haven't finished this book because it is so old that the writing style and the word spelling are really hard for me to read. However, I think it is an interesting book because it really makes me think about how fortunate we are to live in this modern society. I think I will value my present life more than before.

**Maggie (Manyau) Gao-5C-China**



# Book Reviews

## *Hurry, Hurry, Mary Dear! and Other Nonsense Poems*

The book I read was *Hurry, Hurry, Mary Dear! and Other Nonsense Poems*. It was written and illustrated with pen sketches by N. M. Bodecker and published in 1976. In this book, there are a total of 43 nonsense poems. All of them have good and light rhythm and depict peculiar characters in amusing and fantastical situations. There are very few words and some simple and funny sketches on each page. This book was written for children, but I liked it so much. It's a very cute little book. It's very helpful for learning English. The first poem in this book is "Hurry, Hurry, Mary Dear." It is the funniest poem. It talks about a poor sweet old lady getting everything ready for the coming winter while her husband sits on the couch like a boss! Every sentence has an illustration to depict it. It is done in rhyme, for example, "Pick the apples, dill the pickles, chop down trees for wooden nickels..." The reader can feel that the woman is more and more busy with all of these things under the direction of her husband. It's really funny when her husband gets a teapot on his head in the end because the woman can't stand it anymore. When I read this poem and saw the pictures, I smiled. Life is expressed in these simple ways.

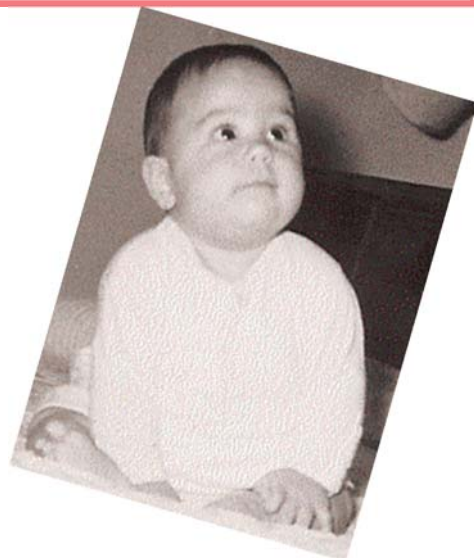
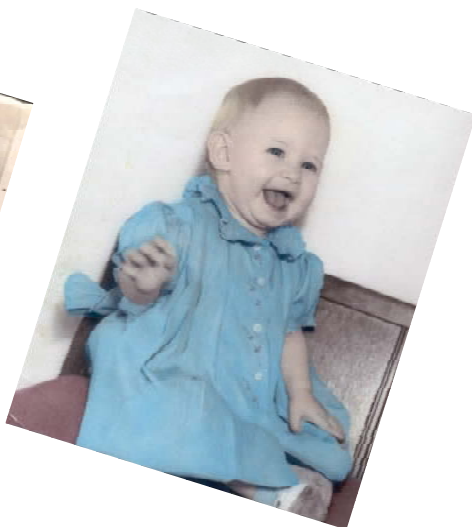
Li Gao-5D-China



## Conversation Club



# Can You Find Your Teacher?



Answers on the back page!

The editors of  
**Voices**

**Farideh Darvishi and  
Vincent Tran**  
wish to thank every-  
one who contributed  
articles and photo-  
graphs to this issue.



**Baby Pictures:**

Top row: Carole Franklin, Kitty Barrera, Barbara Kennedy

Middle Row: Dale Craven, Vincent Tran, Anna Lauzon, Susan McAlister

Bottom Row: Sandra Buckner, Kathryn Porter, Geneva Tesh



Douglas Jones -  
Program Manager,  
Assessment and  
Technology

By the time you receive this beautiful issue of *Voices*, you should be finished with all of your testing—at last! However, it won't be long until our exciting Summer term begins, and here are some important points and deadlines to keep in mind:

Online registration is May 7 through May 14. (Have you reset your CougarNet password?)

Late online registration is May 15 through May 16.

Student Check-In: Tuesday, May 14  
(Formers: Come if you need to take the interview.)



Carole Franklin -  
Writing Sample  
Facilitator

Testing (for new students and returning students who have taken a vacation or missed a test):

Interviews: Tuesday, May 14

Writing Sample and Michigan: Wednesday, May 15

First Assembly and Orientation: Friday, May 17 <https://www.facebook.com/images/photos/profile/gradient.png>

(Formers: You may log in to the LCC Student System on Friday, May 17, and print out your class schedule.)

Classes Begin: Monday, May 20

Placement Verification Testing: May 20-22

Please note the following about our Summer Term.

- If you start the Summer Term (May 14-August 8), you must finish the entire term. If you leave at the beginning of Summer II, you may face many difficulties, including problems with Immigration.

- The Summer II Term (June 20-August 8) is primarily for new students who are unable to enroll when our Summer Term begins. If you are a current student, if you leave now and come back for Summer II . . .

- o You may have a problem with immigration.

- o You will have to take all of the placement tests as if you were a new student, and you will probably place in the level you just took in the Spring Term.

Solution: Come study with us at the LCC for the whole Summer Term! You will make a good deal of progress in learning English and will have a lot of fun!

**University of Houston**

**Tel: 713-743-3030 Language and Culture Center Online: [lcc.uh.edu](http://lcc.uh.edu)**

**Fax: 713-743-3029 Department of English Email: [lcc@uh.edu](mailto:lcc@uh.edu)**

**116 Roy Cullen Building, Houston TX 77024**

The University of Houston is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer. Minorities, women, veterans and persons

with disabilities are encouraged to apply.