

# Diversity

The Intensive English Program Newsletter

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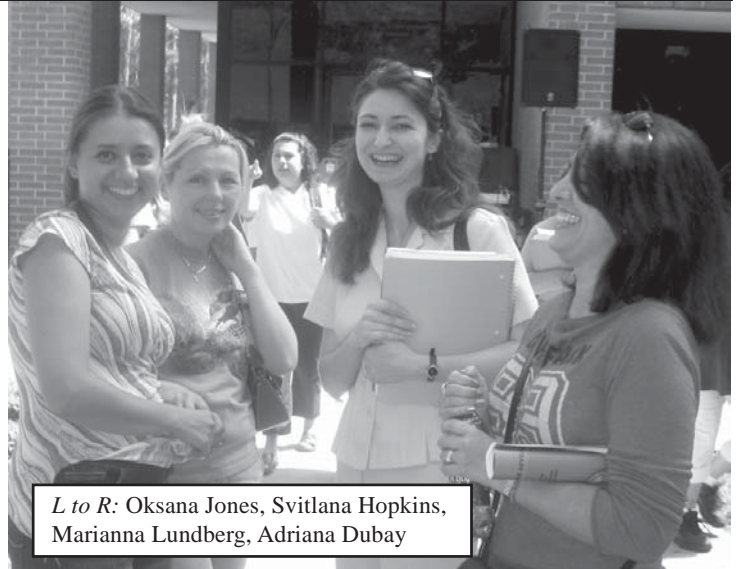
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Also:  
Recipes and more stories

### Editor's Note:

Kingwood College Intensive English Program (IEP) was founded in August 2001 to help immigrant and international students learn and improve their English. In its fourth year, the IEP has now over 250 students from about 50 countries. One of the goals of the IEP has been to promote intercultural understanding and diversity on campus and in the community. Diversity: The Kingwood College ESL Student Newsletter plays an important role towards this goal.



L to R: Oksana Jones, Svitlana Hopkins, Marianna Lundberg, Adriana Dubay

## Impressions of My Country

### Wedding Gifts

#### Anyi Lee, Taiwan, Grammar & Writing VI

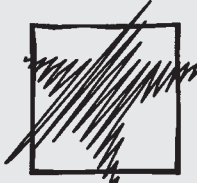
My twin sister just got married and her wedding makes me think of one thing interesting that I want to share...the unique Taiwanese custom of "red envelope". If you have ever attended a wedding, you might have had the experience of taking a wedding gift to the couple. This is very common. In Taiwan, people also bring their blessing to the wedding; however, we give the couple money instead of a gift. We call the money "red-envelope." The color red stands for good luck in my country, so people put money in a red envelope. How much money should we give? It doesn't have a rule or restriction. It depends on your social status, economic situation and the relation between you and the couple. It might seem odd that a person should give her money to another, but the custom has a long history.

A long time ago, Taiwan was a farming society. At that time, people didn't have much money to spend. However, if one were to be invited to attend a wedding, one couldn't just go without anything to give. That would be embarrassing. In addition, the new couple was going to start their new life and they might need something to support this life. Therefore, people brought some gifts, such as chickens, fish, ducks or agriculture products from their farm for blessing. In the present, we still retain this custom, but in a different way. Money is more practical! The wedding couple can use this money in their own way. Moreover, all friends come to bless the wedding couple and have lunch or dinner together. The red-envelope may help the couple pay for this celebration. This practical blessing of money is really helpful.

One more custom about the red-envelope is unbelievable for many people. Usually, in Taiwan, a wedding couple has two ceremonies. The first ceremony is for the engagement and the bride's ➤

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# Impressions of My Country

family takes care of it. Then the big wedding will be in the next weeks or months, and the groom's side takes on this ceremony. If you are one of the bride's friends or relatives, you will attend the engagement ceremony and give your red-envelope to the bride's side. In the same way, the groom's friends or relatives will give their blessing money to the groom's family. A good friend will always remember to put an even number into the envelope because an even number is indeed a good number for Chinese people. A good friend will also eat as much as possible at the party, and will still leave with a graciously prepared doggy bag in hand! This "red-envelope" tradition is beautiful and represents the spirit of my culture.

## *The War I Lived to Tell About*

### **Jeanette Alvarenga, El Salvador, Grammar & Writing VI**

It was 1982...a year I will never forget. I was only seven years old when I lived through a war. It was 6:30pm when I began to hear the first shots. As the time passed, the shots increased more and more. I can remember when my father told my mother that the guerrillas were attacking the town. They ordered me and my brothers to stay hidden in our room while they locked all the doors. The rest of the night we couldn't sleep because of the loud noises from the shots. We could hear people crying, suffering, yelling because they were hurt. Hours later, military helicopters came to attack the enemies by throwing bombs. Every bomb was destroying buildings and killing guerrillas, but they were also killing innocent people in their homes.

After three days, we didn't have any food to eat, so my parents made the decision to leave the house. I remember how we climbed a big wall that led to my aunt's house. Unfortunately, we couldn't stay there for a long time because they also didn't have enough food and water to survive. We left her house, and we went to a place called the Red Cross, where many families were reunited. In that place, we were more secure and we had something to eat. On the fifth day, the guerrillas allowed some people to leave the town. So we left the town and we went to live with my mother's friend. She provided us with food and clothing because we had left everything behind.

After four days, the news announced that the attack was over. So we came back to the town but it wasn't the same. I remember that all I saw was destruction, burned houses, funerals, people asking for their families and a very sorrowful environment. Each time that I am reminded of the war and weapons, I have to hold back my tears. Looking back, I am very thankful. I lived through a war and I am still alive.

students have to stand up and greet their teachers when they come into the classroom. We can't leave classroom but only during the break time. If we leave classroom during the lesson, it is a sign of disrespect for the teacher.

Diligence is the virtue that Taiwanese inherited from their ancestors. In early days, Taiwanese lived in agriculture era. Everyone had to work hard for living. People plowed and sowed their farmland from sunrise until sunset all of their lives. Even today, the Taiwanese are famous for their diligence. They keep working hard for their happy old age. They save money so they can enjoy their retirement.

I am so impressed by the Taiwanese' enthusiasm, respectfulness, and diligence. Although every Taiwanese has his/her own goal and dreams, he/she obtains happiness from helping others.

## *My Country the Philippines*

### **Heily Joy G. Lim, Philippines, Grammar & Writing V**

Philippines is one of the most visited country in Southeast Asia because of its scenic spots that tourists appreciate. These spots have been maintained and taken care of by its own native people. Tourists frequently visit this small country, not only because of the beautiful scenic spots but also because of the warm welcome they receive from the Filipinos. Among those traits that they appreciate are being hospitable, family-oriented, and religious.

Filipinos are indeed well-known for their hospitality. They give you the most accommodating welcome they can offer. It is commonly called as the "Red Carpet Treatment." This treatment is when they serve you with their best foods, best wines, and give you everything you need and ask from them. And even if you're an expected guest, they still welcome you and make your stay memorable. Aside from being hospitable, Filipinos are also very family-oriented. They value family so much. Teaching their children about respecting their elders, especially their parents or anyone who is older than them, has been given much importance in bringing up their children. One way of showing respect is by doing the "MANO" or "AMIN". This is a practice where younger generations ask for the hand of their elders and touch their foreheads on the hand. After that, family gather together to eat, pray, or do some recreational activities such as drawing, potting, and playing games, or anything that they have planned to do for that day. Lastly, they are also known for being religious. Among the Southeast Asian countries, Philippines is the only country that is dominated by Catholics. They always have big celebrations on the feast day of any saints that they adore, like Feast of Sto. Nino, Immaculate Conception, and a lot more. Almost every month they have these celebrations.

People from different countries have traits to be proud of and some to hide (if only they can). These traits are probably more visible to people who visit the country and to the people who live there.

## *Uzbeks*

### **Oksana Jones, Grammar & Writing V**

I have only positive comments to make about people in my country because I know them very well. The people in my country are very nice and kind. They never refuse to help someone who needs help and never expect a reward for their help. For example, a young man always helps an old lady to cross the street or gives away his seat on the bus.

People's lives in Uzbekistan are very simple and most of the time ordinary. They prefer to live in houses, have a lot of relatives in one house, and spend time in the evening outside gossiping with neighbors. They love big family celebrations and sometimes save money for years to go to some important family event like wedding or jubilee.

Speaking of money, people in my country sometimes are best experts in making money. They can sell everything to everybody, and, I think, the best salesmen were born in my country. They make someone buy something with their unique techniques that every customer will appreciate. They love to bargain and become very upset if a customer agreed with the original price. For example, once in the market the salesman refused to sell me the apples only because I agreed with the price he told me and wanted to pay. He said: "I cannot believe. You even didn't try to bargain." These examples describe people from my country very well. To gain your own experience, you should travel to my country and speak to people who live there. *(Continued on page 8)*

## Why Am I Taking ESL Classes?

### **Atif Amjad, Pakistan, Grammar & Writing VI**

I am taking ESL classes, so that I can take college level courses. Not only can I get into college level courses, but I can also improve my English. My dream is to become an electrical engineer and this requires both college classes and good English skills. An ESL class provides an easy way to learn English for foreign students. It teaches how to speak, listen, and understand. It becomes easier for international students to interact with American friends. Foreign students share their ideas with English friends, and exchange cultural thoughts. ESL classes also improve the pronunciation of English words. An ESL class has to be passed to get into college level courses. Before an international student can be accepted into courses like government, history or calculus, he must pass the ESL classes. ESL classes can change the life of a person living in the U.S. They make it easier for foreign students to understand the language here, and they enable everyone to broaden their thoughts using the knowledge they obtain here in America.

### **Hope Etokebe, Nigeria, Grammar & Writing IV**

I am taking these classes because of the weakness I have in English. First, I have to be able to function as a normal college student in Kingwood College. Next, I have to be able to speak and communicate with people in English, have effective communication, and make good word choices. Third, I want to be able to communicate effectively with the audience in writing. I want to be a journalist when I grow up, so I need to learn more English, and be able to communicate with people a lot. It is a big job for me to take these classes and make the best of myself. Finally, these classes have made me realize that English can be learned, with hard work and dedication. After finishing this course, I will be good in both speaking and writing.

### **By Marlon V. Garcia, Nicaragua, Grammar & Writing IV**

There are many reasons why I decided to take ESL classes; the main reason is because I had a job accident a few years ago. This was a very difficult time for me emotionally, financially and physically. Dr. Ondracek recommended that I should change my last job because I might not be able to do heavy work; this means I'm able to lift 20 pounds or less. All this time, I started to feel so devastated because it was difficult for me to do many personal activities. Especially when I took a shower and put my shoes on, it was so painful for me. I felt frustrated in many ways. Before my surgery and after I was recovering, my life changed in many areas. I had to take care and do everything carefully. A few days later, I saw that if I could learn English, I would be able to work without any problem. Also, it could be a good way to have a better life. Today I know that two languages are better than one. Although it is not easy at all, I thought that if I learned English and computer, I might be a good PC desktop specialist. Since then, I have changed my mind and decided to be a social worker because if I learn how to help people with disabilities, it would be a good way to give back to society and have a new life. Therefore, I have decided to get a certificate in Human Resources. This will be my career.

### **Guadalupe Francis, Mexico, Grammar & Writing IV**

Attending ESL classes is the best way to learn how to write and read English correctly. I have several reasons why I have been taking ESL classes. The first one is that I wish to be able to read and write more fluently. The second one is that I hope to pass the nursing test because I'm very interested in becoming a nurse. Last, I would like to understand some books and magazines more

*(Continued on page 12)*

## Teacher Profile: Shay Beeson



My name is Shay Beeson, formerly Shay Muckleroy. I have taught evening classes at Kingwood College for two years, and I taught at North Harris for one year before teaching here. I have a bachelor of arts in English, and I also taught high school for four years. I love teaching ESL and I enjoy learning about other cultures from my students.

I never will forget my first students here at Kingwood. We would all walk together to the parking lot after class, and one student, Belkis, noticed how fast I would drive after getting on the feeder to 59 South. She warned me several times as we were leaving not to drive so fast.

Well, that summer I was very busy. I was going to a three-week writing class through the University of St. Thomas during the day and teaching at night. You can imagine that I didn't have much time to slow down. The last evening of class, I arrived late. My excuse? I had been pulled over for speeding and had received not one but three different citations. Of course, Belkis was not surprised, and we still laugh about it when she reminds me to slow down.

These days I am trying to apply speed to writing. I am currently in my second year of court reporting school, where I have learned to type almost 160 words per minute on a steno machine. Many of you watch closed captioning on TV, so you can appreciate a little bit of what I hope to accomplish one day. I plan to work on the legal side, but if I am skilled enough, I could even do closed captioning.

All in all, sometimes teachers learn a lesson from their students. I may be quick on the keyboard, but I try to drive slowly on the road. ■

## *A Special Person in My Life*

### *My Father*

#### **Juan Vazquez, Mexico, Grammar & Writing II**

My dad is tall. He has black, curly hair. He is Mexican, but he likes all kinds of food, like Italian, Japanese, Chinese and Mexican, of course. He is very intelligent. In his house he's responsible and he's funny. In his life he is optimistic and very logical. In his job he is responsible and serious. With his family he is affectionate and charitable. He likes mechanics. He loves basketball. Sometimes he plays chess with me and, of course, he watches TV, but he's hard working and loves his job.

### *Secret Admirer*

#### **Claudia Salinas, Mexico, Grammar & Writing II**

I want to describe someone in my life. He is a good man and an intelligent person. He gets whatever he wants because he is persistent and professional. He works for every single thing. He wants everything perfect. Sometimes I hate that, but it is his job and I have to understand that. He likes to help people with their questions and try to answer every question and talk and talk until the people are satisfied. Well I would like to be more expressive and say how much I am proud of him and how important he is in my life. He doesn't know how I feel, because he knows how reserved I am.

### *My husband*

#### **Monica Ruiz, Mexico, Grammar & Writing II**

My husband, Jesus is taller than me and I like that. He uses glasses all the time. He can't have an operation because at work it is not permitted. He is handsome and wears all types of clothing. Jesus is very friendly with all people all the time and in whatever place. He is very loving with me, my puppy, with his parents and with my mom. He is a gentleman because he opens the door for me all the time. My husband likes to draw beautiful women's eyes. And one time he drew me. He likes to play tennis with his friends, but more with Matt Ferris. He likes to play with the puppy, because I think the dog is very intelligent or tricky. Jesus has two grandmothers and one grandfather. He has only his mother. He lost his father sixteen years ago.

### *My Mother*

#### **Elena Dwyer, Venezuela, Grammar & Writing II**

I have few a favorite people in my life, but I want to dedicate these lines to my mother because she is a great mom, friend, and a good person. She taught me to be a good person and always brought to me the best tools in my life. I know it was very hard for her to be a mother and father at the same time because I was only fifteen years old when my father died. She always has time to be my best friend and my mom in my life.

### *My Pets*

#### **Gregg Land, USA (Deaf Student), Grammar & Writing III**

In my house live a hamster and a guinea pig. The guinea pig's name is Mike, but I call him Svin. In the Russian Language it means puppy. He is three years old and he is colorful. His hair is brown, orange and white. He is very friendly, slow, and always hungry. But now he has a diet because he is very fat. My hamster's name is Sonya, and in Russian it means sleepy head. She is ten months old and she is a beige color. Sonya sleeps all day, but at night, she is very active. We bought her in a pet store before last New Year. The guinea pigs and hamster cages are next to each other so they can communicate.

### *My Husband*

#### **Maria T. Fontanez, Spain, Grammar & Writing II**

He is a good looking man with black eyes and hair. He is tall and strong and sometimes uses glasses when he reads. He has a black mustache and sometimes he has a beard. My husband is a hard working, efficient person. He is always happy and makes me laugh all the time. He is very organized and enthusiastic with everything. My husband likes to play basketball and baseball. Occasionally, he runs in the morning with me. He likes to work with wood and he is a good handyman. He is a great, loving husband, as well as a father, son and grandson. He is generous with all the family and helpful with everybody. He has only two brothers and they are his best friends. I love my husband and he is the best person for me. ■

## *First Love*

#### **Karlen Palyan, Armenia, Grammar & Writing II**

My first love happened when I was 10 years old. It happened in school. It was her first day in our school. She was transferred from another school. I was sitting in front when she came in, when I saw her I was shocked. She was so beautiful that I thought she was an angel. I fell in love; it was love at the first sight. After that, something happened with me, but I couldn't understand what it was. Through time I understood that I had fallen in love.

I didn't tell her about my feelings for 5 years. And when I was 15 years old I decided to tell her, but it took one and a half years. But whenever we were alone I was scared. I was afraid to hurt her and I couldn't tell her, and it was like that for one and a half years. Finally I told her but she gave me a negative answer.

We finished school and I went to the army for two years but I was still in love with her. I was 18 years old when I went to the army and just one week before I finished the army, she got engaged and the day after my birthday she got married. I was still in love with

her. I love her still. Yes, I know I can't do anything to be with her. I can understand it very well, but I can't give command to my heart. She is in a dark, far corner of my heart, and she'll be there the rest of my life.

### *My First Kiss and First Date*

#### **Clinton Cox, USA, Grammar & Writing III**

When I first saw Nikki, she was the most beautiful girl I ever wanted to meet. She was my best friend's cousin. We talked and went out to the movies a lot. Then one day I came over to her house and talked to her. She wanted to kiss me, so I kissed her. It was my first time and never will forget that moment.

My first date was Stephanie Parker. She was my cousin's girlfriend's sister. Then I asked her to go to the prom with me. So we did. While at the prom we danced and talked a lot. Then we went on that day. I guess it was my lucky day. That night I asked her out and we went out for three months. We started to kiss all the time, and then it was over between us. ■

## A Cultural Experience

*This semester, the students in freshman composition (ENGL 1301), taught by Karen Gee, met with the students in Grammar & Writing V, taught by Masoud Shafiei to gather information for their respective papers. The following were written by the students in Karen's class about this meeting:*

### Brandi Matheson

Hello Mr. Shefie! how are you? I wanted to let you know that I thoroughly enjoyed meeting with your students. They were extremely friendly and eager to talk to us. We would love to meet with them again soon. In my group we discussed about law enforcement in our countries. The topic was very interesting to see how other countries are different from the United States. This meeting gave me a different point of view of certain countries. Thank you for your time.

### Jennifer Smith

The meeting between the ESL students and the Honor's English students on Tuesday, September 21 was very informative. It was so nice to meet another student from another country, and get to know their customs. I found that the subject I was studying, religion, was very widely diversified from that of Christianity in several aspects. I spoke with a student from Uzbekistan, Taiwan, and Mexico, and it was so enjoyable. I would like to speak with other students as well, and give them information on our country as well. Thank you so much for the experience.

## Nature

### Bees

#### Daniel Alvarez, Mexico, Grammar & Writing I

Last Friday I was helping my nephew, Javier, clean the windows of his truck. When some red bees arrived and one attacked him on his arm he threw everything and ran. So did I. Then he told us there wasn't a problem because he didn't feel too much pain. But the next day, Saturday, his arm was very bad. Today all of us will respect all wild animals.

### Hurricanes & Typhoons

#### Yuichi Nagata, Japan, Grammar & Writing VI

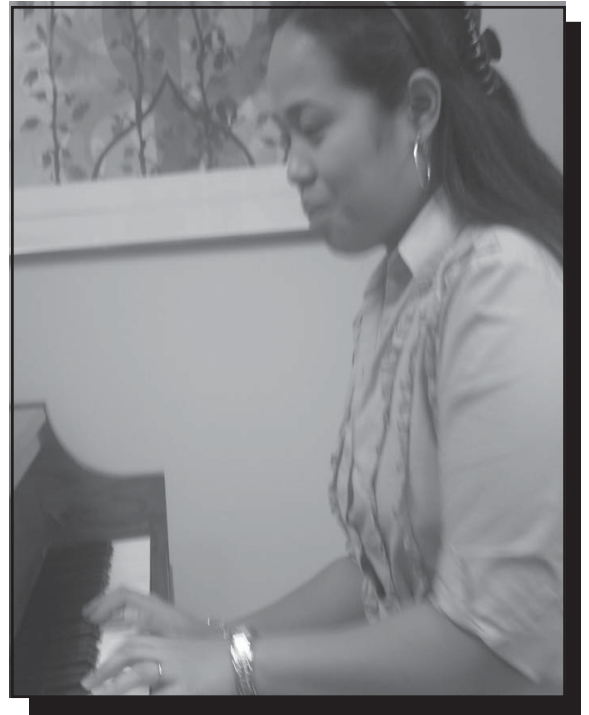
Lately, nature has seemed angry. As far as I know, in the past 3 weeks, there have been 4 kinds of natural disasters in Japan and the U.S.: hurricanes, earthquakes, eruptions, and typhoons. Already twice, a hurricane hit Florida. And now again? Not quite. It was predicted that hurricane Ivan was going to hit Florida, but Ivan hit New Orleans. Japan has also been hit hard. My country has experienced 2 earthquakes, an eruption and a few typhoons. The regions hit by these disasters were different, but Japan is a small island. I am worried. Please stop it, nature! No more! Everyone take notice...it is impossible to control nature, but we can take care of nature. We don't want to make nature mad!! ■

### Connie Buck

I really enjoyed my time spent with your students. An hour was nowhere near enough time. Talking with them was very interesting. I just loved our group. They were a lot of fun to get to know. They had an awesome and pleasant personality; lots of fun stories and smiles! It was fun to sit and talk about how different things really are between other countries and our own. (Definitely an eye opener!) I am looking forward to meeting with them again. Thanks. ■



Oksana Jones



Heily Joy Lim

## Living in USA

### **Jimmy Khokhar, Pakistan, Grammar & Writing VI**

US is the most beautiful country I have ever seen in my life. It is also known as a multicultural country because every year many people come here from different cultures for study, business and visit purposes. When I came to the United States of America, I was so excited because it was such a great experience of my life to come to another country and meet people of different cultures. Americans are really nice people. When I came to the United States to study, people helped me to learn their language. In the beginning I was feeling nervous but now I can speak and understand their language.

The U.S. has 52 states and each has its own history. I like to live in the United States of America because here I get lots of information about America itself and about the people of other nations and cultures. America is also known as the land of opportunity because here in the United States, people came from different countries to invest in business. This gives the opportunity to others to get a better job at a better salary. I like the education system here and I like the culture.

### **Diomi Burgin, Venezuela.**

Many things have changed in my life since moving to the United State. Some of the changes have made me very happy, but some of them have made me sad. Living a new style of life has made me happy. On the other hand, leaving my family and friends in Venezuela has made me sad. My life is full of challenges too; for example, I am back to college and starting to learn English. My feeling are all combined because adjusting to a new lifestyle and new culture has been difficult at times.

### **Lorena Trevino, Mexico, Grammar & Writing I**

I have three children, one son and two daughters. I live in Riverwalk. I study English, Level I. I work in the afternoon selling Mary Kay. I am married to my husband, whose name is Rolando Trevino. My father and mother live in Houston, Texas. My husband works in construction. I go to church on Friday in the afternoon. I go to the grocery store in the evening. My children come home from school in the afternoon.

### **Dora Guzman, Mexico, Grammar & Writing I**

My husband's name is Antonio. I have one child and his name is Tony. I went to college in Mexico to be a secretary. I have three brothers and two sisters and their names are Nicolas, Jose, Roberto, Maria and Rosa. My hobby is to go shopping for clothes. I like the ESL classes. My family is in Mexico. I live on 1703 Hummingbird Lane in Humble, Texas. I have been in the United States seven years. My mother and father-in-law live in Houston.

### **Dora Guzman, Mexico, Listening & Speaking I**

I live in Humble, Texas. My husband and I have owned our home for 7 years. In our neighborhood there is a park, a gas station, and an elementary school. My neighborhood has many cultures: Hispanic, Oriental, and African American. The food here is different. In Mexico we eat enchiladas, chile rellenos, and tamales. In the United State people eat pizza, hamburgers, and sandwiches. The language is also different. In Mexico people speak Spanish and in the United States people speak English. The clothes are similar. The ideals are different. In Mexico people are conservative, religious, friendly, and traditional. In the United States, people are independent and usually don't have much time to visit the family.

### **Martina de los Santos, Mexico, Grammar & Writing II**

I'm from Monterrey, Mexico. My husband is a bilingual teacher in Cleveland. My favorite hobby is running. I go to work in

Monterrey two days every month. I like Mexican food so much. In my country we have beautiful places. I'm going to the Christian Church. My daughters study in Greentree Elementary School. I like my English class so much. I need to speak better English.

### **Karina Quintana, Mexico, Listening & Speaking I**

Hi, how are you? Alfredo and I are finally in our new apartment. It's in Humble, Texas. I live in a nice neighborhood and have a nice next-door-neighbor. Her name is Kristol and I speak to her in English. I need to learn English so I am taking ESL at Kingwood College. It will help me tend to my customers better at work. Also, I have new furniture. Life in the United States is very different.

### **Maria Heredia, Peru, Listening & Speaking I**

I am from Peru. I live in the Woodland Hills Apartments in Kingwood, Texas. This is a very nice neighborhood and it reminds me of my house in Peru. I have lived in the United States for 4 months with my husband and children. My family and I are very happy here. I have many Peruvian friends in Kingwood.

### **Rosa Martinez, Mexico, Listening & Speaking I**

I am from Mexico. I was born in a little town called San Lorenzo in Guanajuato. I have 3 sisters and 4 brothers. My whole family moved and now I live in Houston, Texas. Today I am learning to speak English by taking an ESL course. Because I live in the United States, it is very important for me to learn to speak English. It will help me get a good job. I want to have conversation and be appreciated by people who do not speak my language. I like living in Houston because I have a job and my family is here. I have many friends and I am very happy.

### **Elva Vega, Mexico, Listening & Speaking I**

I am from Mexico. In Mexico I belonged to a choir for 10 years. Mexican food in the United States is the same because I make it at home. I like this country because most of my family lives here. Now I must learn English so I can talk to my customers at work.

### **Sandy (Li Ting) Huang, Taiwan, Listening & Speaking III**

Staying in Kingwood is a unique experience for me. After taking seventeen hours on an airplane, I started my new life here. Kingwood College is a place I had never heard of before. I think destiny has made me study here. At the moment, learning English is the only job I have to do. After studying here for a period of time, I met some good friends. They enrich my life here. I never thought that I would have the sweetest host family before I started living with them. After class, I usually try to know everything about this city with my friends. Now I really enjoy my life here in this new city. I will try my best to fulfill my life here. ■

## Recipe

### *Tostadas*

#### **Silvia Perez, Mexico, Listening & Speaking IV-V**

Ingredients:

|                                     |                        |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Tostada shells (flat)               | Refried beans          |
| Chicken breast, cooked and shredded | Fresh cheese, crumbled |
| Tomato, sliced or diced             | Avocado slices         |
| Iceberg lettuce, shredded           | Sour cream             |

First, spread a light layer of refried beans over the tostada. Add shredded chicken. Also, add shredded lettuce and the tomato. Then, crumble some fresh cheese over it. Last, add the avocado slices on top of the tostada and the sour cream. Follow the same process for more tostadas, and enjoy them!

### *The Salto Angel Fall*

**Oscar Rodela, Mexico, Grammar & Writing III**

In Venezuela we have the highest water fall in the world. It is called The Salto - Angel or Angel Fall. The falls were called this to honor Jimmy Angel, the man who discovered them. Jimmy Angel was an American who worked for an oil company and during one of his trips from Caracas he saw the falls for the first time. After that he planned an expedition to the point that he saw from airplane flying over it.. The expedition took a month in the jungle because at that time there were not any paths of transportation to get to the location. Jimmy, his wife and six native Venezuelans, who knew the territory, made their way walking through the jungle, sometimes paddling in kayaks (called 'Curaras') along the rivers. The falls are beautiful and I encourage you to see and get to know this gift of nature.

### *Traveling to Nepal*

**Sandra Herrera, Colombia, Grammar & Writing III**

Nepal is the most beautiful country in the world. It is between India and China. The people who live in Nepal are called the Nepali. They speak their own language which is Neplai. Nepal is a Hindu religious country, but there are many other religions like Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. Nepal's most popular tourist attraction is a mountain called "Mt. Everest". It is also famous for "Lumbani," which is where "God Buddha" was born. Many people visit there to see and even climb the mountain. There are other places of the past to see and experience. That is why Nepal always says 'welcome' to its tourists.

### *El Canon Del Sumidero*

**Maria G. Gonzalez, Mexico, Grammar & Writing III**

One of the most interesting places you can visit is El Canon Del Sumidero in Oaxaca, Mexico. This is one of the prettiest places in the world. It is called one of the natural wonders of the world. People can learn about the history of El Canon Del Sumidero. You can explore this place by walking only. It is a big place that can be seen from outer space. People can even camp there anytime of the year.

### *Jordan*

**Muaz Darwish, Jordan, Grammar & Writing II**

My favorite vacation is Jordan. The first language in Jordan is Arabic. The weather in Jordan is nice. Jordan is always full of traffic. I went with my family and my friends. I visited a specific area in Jordan. The people in Jordan are very friendly and happy. I went to the Dead Sea. The weather in the Dead Sea is hot. I practiced swimming in the Dead Sea.

### *The Beach*

**Andrea Narvarez, Mexico, Grammar & Writing I**

I went to Veracruz, Mexico, and I went to the beach. I was visiting my friends and I was talking with them. We were swimming together in the pool. They were friendly with me. When we went shopping my family was happy. We ate different types of food.

### *Visiting Egypt*

**Moh'd Darwish, Jordan, Grammar & Writing II**

My favorite vacation was when I went to Egypt. I arrived in Egypt at night. The airport was full of people. When I got out of the airport, the weather was very good. I was supposed to go to Movenpic Hotel. I went to the pyramids with my father. Then we went to the local restaurant, but we changed the restaurant because it was so dirty. The people are very friendly. We went to the Freedom Building. I felt so happy because I could identify a new culture. In the evening, we returned to the hotel and ate dinner and smoked hubbly bubbly and listened to music.

### *Having Fun in Acapulco*

**Adriana Hernandez, Mexico, Reading & Vocabulary III**

One of the coolest things to do in Acapulco is to wake up early in the morning, go to the beach with your friends and rent some wave runners. After that, around 6:00 pm, you must go and eat at one of the restaurants where everything tastes delicious. Then rest for 1 hour at the hotel. In the night you should go to one of the best nightclubs in Latin America, "El Alebrije". If you really want to know all the coolest places in Acapulco you have to stay in the city more than a week. ■



*Ethnic Lunch 2004*

*L to R: Janet Alvarenga, Monica Perez,  
Ana Gibson, Tomas Louda*

# Impressions of my Country

(Continued from page 2)

## La Llorona

### Azucena Tadic, Mexico, Grammar & Writing VI

The Mexican culture has many popular folk tales, but there is one in particular that has survived for many centuries among their people. La Llorona, which means “the woman who cries,” relates the story of a woman dressed in a

white gown, walking on the streets and yelling every night, “Aaaaaaayy mis hiiiijos”. Through the years, people have been changing and adding details to the legend of “La Llorona”, but nobody really knows the truth. The most famous version of “La Llorona” tells the story of a woman who apparently had a happy and comfortable life along with her husband and children. Suddenly, one night, at twelve o’clock, she woke up, and tightening a robe around her children’s necks, took their lives. After her death, she was still walking on the streets crying and regretting her actions. In other regions of Mexico, people believe that the legend of “La Llorona” comes from the story of a jealous husband who killed his wife and then killed his two children. There are many versions, but the most antique one goes back to the time of the Mexican ancestors, the “Aztecas”. Before the Spanish conquerors took Mexico, the Aztecas priests started to listen to the crying of a woman dressed in white. Every night, she used to come out of the Texcoco Lake in the mountains that surround “the Gran Tenochtitlan”, city of the Aztecas. Her name was Cihuacoatl, “Goddess of the Race”. Her mission was to tell her children, the Aztecas that their empire was going to be destroyed by men coming from the Orient. For that reason the Goddess of the Race, as mother of the Aztecas, used to cry desperately every night. After the Spanish conquerors invaded and Mexico was named “La Nueva Espana”, the same woman still appeared on the streets of Mexico yelling, “Aaaaaaayyyy mis hiiiijos”.

## My Country, Hong Kong

### Candy Chan, Hong Kong, Grammar & Writing V

Hong Kong consists of three parts, one is Hong Kong Island, another is Kowloon Peninsula, and the third is New Territories. Hong Kong is as big as Houston. There are seven million people living in Hong Kong; They speak different languages.

Hong Kong is a little area. Most people live in high rise buildings, many of them close together. Each little district has its group of apartment buildings. Many people live in each building. They usually live in crowded and little apartments with two to six people together. Also those little apartments are very expensive. For example, the mortgage for a 600-square foot apartment is about 10,000 Hong Kong dollars per month. This is about three-fourths of an average couple’s salary. Furthermore, there are three kinds of living styles. One is the government house and apartment that is a little cheaper. Another is private apartment that is expensive, and the third is single family house that is for wealthy people.

Transportation is important in Hong Kong. It has a lot of traffic problems but it has a good public transportation system, such as the train, underground subway, ferry, bus, and taxi. These types of transportation are inexpensive to use. Also, if you are driving a car, it takes about one hour to go from north to south or east to west.

Many kinds of people live in Hong Kong. Most people’s native language is Cantonese. Also many people speak Mandarin and English. Before 1997, we were part of British Commonwealth. We studied and learned both British culture and Chinese culture. After 1997, the British government gave back Hong Kong to Mainland China. Now our capital is Beijing. The China government pushes the people who live in Hong Kong to use their native language, which is Mandarin. ➤

# Recipe

## Rice with Chicken (*Aroz con Pollo*)

### Mara E. Cubero, Costa Rica, Listening & Speaking IV–V

Ingredients:

- |   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 medium (2 pound) whole chicken, or the part you prefer most |                                     |
| 1 medium can of mixed vegetables                              | 1 teaspoon of Magi Chicken bouillon |
| 2 medium-sized onions   | 6 garlic cloves                     |
| 1 celery branch   | 1 red bell pepper                   |
| 2 cups of white rice  | cilantro                            |
| Goya seasoning (Cilantro and achiote)                         |                                     |

Cook chicken with plenty of water to get enough juice to cook the rice with it. Add to this, the chopped onion, 2 Goya seasonings and celery. Cook the chicken to tender. When tender, put the chicken aside.

Use another pot to cook the rice. Add some oil, heat at medium, and add the chopped onions, 3 chopped garlic cloves, and 2 packages of Goya seasoning. Stir to fry, add the 2 cups of rice, brown this a little bit, add salt if needed, then add two cups of the chicken broth, and leave it at medium. Heat until you see the broth boiling. After this, turn it to low heat, stir it with a fork, cover for about 10 minutes, uncover, stir again, and turn it off.

In a deep skillet or nice sized pot, on medium heat, put a little oil. (The chicken has already been separated in small pieces.) Then, in the skillet, alternate mixing the rice and chicken (be careful not to smash it.) At the end, add the bell pepper, cut in pieces, the mixed vegetables, and the cut cilantro. Mix all this, cover again for at least 5 to 10 minutes...ENJOY IT!!!!

## My Country Taiwan

### FuYing Wu, Taiwan, Grammar & Writing V

Every country has its own identity. The Taiwanese tend to be enthusiastic, attentive, and diligent. Once you get to know the Taiwanese, you might agree with my opinion.

One of the characteristics of the Taiwanese is being enthusiastic. When people need help from others, they won't say, "No". For example, on Sept. 21st, 1999, there was an earthquake in Taiwan, and we lost lot of people and many lived in a state of chaos. So people rolled up their sleeves to help each other to restore their homeland all over again. Everybody would love to give a helping hand whenever people need it.

Respectfulness is the another typical characteristic of the Taiwanese. We are taught to be polite to people since childhood. When people give us something we have to raise our two hands to receive it. If not, that will be an impolite manner. Also, in class students have to stand up and greet their teachers when they come into the classroom. We can't leave classroom but only during the break time. If we leave classroom during the lesson, it is a sign of disrespect for the teacher.

Diligence is the virtue that Taiwanese inherited from their ancestors. In early days, Taiwanese lived in agriculture era. Everyone had to work hard for living. People plowed and sowed their farmland from sunrise until sunset all of their lives. Even today, the Taiwanese are famous for their diligence. They keep working hard for their happy old age. They save money to so they can enjoy their retirement.

I am so impressed by the Taiwanese' enthusiasm, respectfulness, and diligence. Although every Taiwanese has his/her own goal and dreams, he/she obtains happiness from helping others.

## The Middle of the World

### Ita L. Jervis, Ecuador, Grammar & Writing VI

I was raised in a sunshine country called Ecuador. A small country located in the North West of South America at the equator. If you want to experience a diversity of weather, cultures, and customs this is the place to come to. I invite all of you to come and take a tour of the middle of the world.

Our first stop is the Coastal Region bounding by the Pacific Ocean. Mmmm...the blue Pacific Ocean, can you feel the fresh breeze? Wow! What a beautiful landscape! Look at the white sand. Look up the pelicans and seagulls waiting for the tide to go out to catch the shellfish. Look up the sky colored like a rainbow. This entire environment flowing around the atmosphere makes me feel like a fish under the water. This is like a dream...dream with me...rest and watch the sunset.

A new day and it is so COLD! Put on your coat and be prepared to walk. Look at the majesty of our volcanoes and mountains. Feel the shortness of breath at this tremendous distance of 14,000 feet above sea level! Gaze upon the towering, snow-covered mountains. Let me introduce you all to the majestic "Chimborazo" mountain reaching to heaven with all of its 20,214 feet. I can't forget Mr. "Cotopaxi", the highest active volcano in this planet at 19,136 feet above the sea level. It is colossal! Don't you just want to unfold your wings and fly?

We have only one more day...I want you to be in the middle of the world. This is "Quito," our Capital. Strike a pose and I will take your picture standing in both hemispheres. Now, we are off to the "Amazonas" Jungle. I have no words for this natural beauty. Look at these creatures and trees and beautiful flowers.... Each one looks different. It is simply amazing to find the incredible different types of vegetation, and the variety of colors. The Amazons rainforest is indeed indescribable as is our last stop...the Galapagos Islands. Here we will find the most beautiful wildlife. The Islands are a real monument of wildlife characterized by the giant tortoises and small birds. One could spend days here and never see all the amazing creatures.

Oh, my friends! This is my country, a land of beauty where you will find rest and adventure, city and wilderness. Come often...you are welcome!

## Mexicans

### Monica Perez, Mexico, Grammar & Writing V

There are many good traits that define Mexicans. A true Mexican is rich in culture and is an excellent worker. A majority of Mexicans are Catholic, and most families go to church on Sundays. Mexicans have a hard time finding jobs since in Mexico there are not many sources of work, but even so people want to have ➤

## Recipe

### Chinese Spring Rolls

#### Jose Maciel, Venezuela, Grammar & Writing III

Ingredients:

1 pkg. Frozen Egg Roll Wrappers  
1 1/2 head medium Size cabbage  
1 egg  
oyster sauce  
chili sauce

12 Medium Size carrots  
12 stalks of celery  
2 cups of corn oil  
soy sauce  
salt and pepper

Chop cabbage, carrots and celery to uniform size of approx 1/4 . Beat one egg in a small bowl. Heat wok or frying pan and a few tablespoons of oil. Add all ingredients, stir fry for about three minutes. Add a pinch of salt and pepper and approx 1 tablespoon of oyster sauce. Remove from heat and let cool to the touch at room temp. Lay out a defrosted egg roll wrapper on the table with the points like a baseball diamond. With a fork , place a portion of the cooled vegetable mixture near the bottom corner and then roll the wrapper from the bottom over the mixture twice. Fold in the outer corners, wetting the edges with the beaten egg to seal the corners. Fold the wrapper over the corners and the top corner with egg wash to seal.

# Impressions of my Country

a good education and improve in the professional and personal way. Mexicans generally work hard to provide food for their families. Mexicans do not work on Saturdays and Sundays because weekends are to spend time with the family and to have fun. Finally, Mexicans have a lot of respect for others, and this value is something that distinguishes them of any other citizen in the world.

## The Taiwanese

### Ida Lin, Grammar & Writing V

Taiwan is a beautiful island located in Asia, and its main language is Mandarin. Taiwanese's thoughts and behaviors are deeply influenced by Confucius - a great Chinese ancient thinker. Taiwanese are devoted to their families and friends, and treat people with modesty. In contrast, they are afraid to express themselves and do not follow the traffic regulations. First, family plays a very important role in the Taiwanese' life. They emphasize parents, brothers, sisters, and children very much. They are concerned about and help each other. In their custom, the oldest son in a family usually lives with parents and takes care of them, but it doesn't mean that other family members do not have to take care of parents. Besides, all the family members must get together at least once a year, even if they are in other countries. In addition to family, Taiwanese also put much emphasis on their friends. They treat their friends as members of their family. If their friends need help, including emotional and financial help, they will do their best to solve their friends' problems.

Due to the doctrine of Confucius, Taiwanese usually put other people's interests first. Therefore, the last thing they would do is to hurt people. For examples, if they are making a decision, they need to make sure that this decision is good for everyone not just themselves. In addition, if someone has bad habits or makes big mistakes, people correct his/her behaviors or gives him/her personal suggestions in private. They seldom correct people in public, because they do not want to make people feel embarrassed or ashamed.

Taiwanese are afraid to express themselves. Most Taiwanese do not want to draw too much attention; they just want to be ordinary people. For examples, in a classroom, if a teacher asks who has opinions or questions, even if they have questions, most students will not raise their hands to ask or clearly express their opinions. Besides, if something unfair or incorrect happens, (for example, if someone cuts in line or smokes in the non-smoking areas), most Taiwanese ignore rather than correct them, because they do not want to have quarrels with others.

In summary, although Taiwanese sometimes do not want to express their opinions, they are very considerable and devoted to their families and friends.

## Mexicans

### Perla Aguilera, Mexico, Grammar & Writing V

I am from Mexico. My opinion about the people in my country is based on their four characteristics: they don't trust other people easily, they work hard, they love being with their family members, and they make their life happy.

First, Mexicans don't trust other people that they don't know, especially in big cities. The people in my country don't talk with strangers. I don't know why but since we are little children, our parents teach you not to talk with strangers. On the other hand, it is different when you are an adult and you see someone needing help. In that situation most Mexicans talk to or help the stranger.

Also people in my country are hard-working. They work for many hours in two or three jobs. In some cases they don't receive extra pay for that. To work hard is a good quality, but in almost all the jobs the pay isn't good or isn't enough to support their family.

I think the most important quality of my people is their love for their family. They always enjoy staying together in all the situations. Also, children often live with their parents until they get married or they finish their bachelor's degree. Moreover, when a mother has a job, the grandma or the aunt takes care of the children. Therefore, in Mexico, it is not usual to use the day care centers. The family is always there to help each other.

Finally Mexicans make their lives happy. Regardless of their economic situations, they are ready to help each other. Most Mexican people make jokes about their situations. They also try to see the bright side of things. They enjoy to give parties for birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, or just to meet with friends or family.

In conclusion I see the people of my country as a big family who help each other especially in natural disasters. Although the people in my country have bad qualities, too, I think those qualities exist everywhere. I am proud to be a Mexican girl. And I don't understand why some people are embarrassed to be Mexican.

## My People

### Silvia Perez, Mexico, Grammar & Writing V

Mexicans have many positive traits. People in Mexico are very friendly. They always make visitors feel welcomed. There is a Mexican phrase that some Americans use when they meet people from Mexico, which is "Mi casa es su casa;" this phrase means my home is your home. In fact, a tourist can feel Mexico as their second home or sometimes better. Mexicans have a high sense of hospitality. ➤

## Recipes

### Yuca Con Chicharon

#### Elizabeth Cardenas, Ecuador, Grammar & Writing III

Ingredients:

|                            |                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 2 lbs. Of yucca            | 1/2 of chicken      |
| 1/2 cabbage                | 2 spoons of vinegar |
| 1/2 spoon of baking powder |                     |

First, peel off the yucca (root). Cut in little pieces placed on the plate. Add 3 1/2 cups of water. Next, add salt and baking powder. Cook for 40 minutes until the yucca becomes soft. Then drain the water and let it cool. The yucca con chicharon is a tropical dish, but is very famous.

### Shrimp Cocktail

#### Marita Armstrong, Honduras, Grammar & Writing III

Ingredients:

|                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Pound of shrimp      | 1 juice lemon         |
| 1/2 cup of ketchup     | 1 spoon of mayonnaise |
| 1 spoon of cilantro    | 1/2 cup of onions     |
| 1/2 spoon of olive oil |                       |

Boil the shrimp in water. Sate for five minutes and then put the shrimp in the recipient. Blend the juice lemon, ketchup, mayonnaise, vinegar, cilantro, onions and olive oil. Serve with crackers and soda.

# *Impressions of my Country*

In addition, Mexican families are very family-oriented. They always have some family events to celebrate. For instance, they celebrate wedding anniversaries, birthdays, family reunions, etc. It is common to see extended families in Mexico. There are strong bonds between Mexican families.

Mexicans are wonderful artists. They make beautiful and colorful crafts known world wide. Also, Mexicans have beautiful traditions. Some traditions come from our ancestors. Those traditions are still alive because of the Indian tribes who live in central and southern states of Mexico. Some Mexicans are jealous of their traditions.

However, talking about traditions, there is something that I do not like about some Mexicans. Some Mexicans follow foreign traditions instead of their own. For instance, some celebrate Halloween, even though they have a tradition called "Day of the dead" celebrated on November 1st and 2nd. I think they should respect their own traditions, especially because they have a lot of them to be proud of.

Besides, something else that I do not like about people of my country is that they are not punctual. They make jokes about not being punctual. They say, "You are late, as a good Mexican." I think they should change that attitude and take that issue more seriously. They should promote punctuality among their children. Other issue is that most Mexicans do not like to read. We are on the top list of countries where population do not read. Recently, though, the Mexican Department of Education has started promoting reading among children, which is a good thing to do.

Mexicans are like people all over the world. They do not give up easily. They may lose their jobs, but never lose their sense of humor. They find one way or another to go on, always making jokes about themselves and about their economic situation. They probably do so just to forget at least for a few minutes their problems. They always find a remedy to solve their problems in a funny way.

## *An Unforgettable Trip*

### **Romelia Penn, Mexico, Grammar & Writing IV**

There are many places on earth where people can enjoy their unique views of mountains, rivers, and oceans. Everybody needs an extra space for relaxation from daily activities. After I came back from my cruise to Cosumel, I can say that it was a great experience in my life, and I enjoyed it very much. September 11 to 18 were the most beautiful days of my life but also an experience. Although I couldn't go to the places planned, being on the ship was unforgettable. First of all, we went straight to our room and saw that it was very comfortable. Our room had a window with an ocean view. Next, we had our dinner at 8:00 in a place that was pretty and nicely decorated. That night we wore formal clothes. After dinner, we went to a late show called "The Vegas Show," where dancers performed their best talents. Finally, that night, we enjoyed the view of the ocean and stars. The following day we woke up early and saw the sun come up. It was the most incredible thing you could imagine to see the red, orange color of the sun. While we were watching the sun, dolphins and swordfish came; later sharks and a whale came. It made my heart rejoice to see how much we need to appreciate the creatures of the ocean.

My day was wonderful, but then everything changed. A few hours later the Captain told us we needed to wear our life vests because we were in a difficult situation. Suddenly this announcement made everybody nervous, and you could hear kids crying and saying, "Will this be like the Titanic, Mom?" I will remember that day forever. You could hear the loud noise of the ocean. On that day, we were all awake because the noise was very loud and you could only wait for the worst. We stayed in the position of being sick and hearing kids crying for two days. Finally the captain

made an announcement that we were not going to Cosumel or Celica because the hurricane was behind us, so the captain had to turn back to the port of Veracruz, which we had first been to on Monday. As soon as the port opened for us, everyone was happy. We spent two hours in Veracruz, and then the Captain decided to return to Houston by taking another route. So our dreams of being on the ocean did not happen; however, the company gave us another cruise. In conclusion, even though the trip wasn't as I had imagined, I was happy to see what I saw.

## *Nigeria*

### **Nsikak Inyang, Nigeria, Listening & Speaking IV–V**

Nigeria is located along the west coast of Africa. Nigeria is the most populous black country. Nigeria covers 356,668 square miles (923,770 square kilometers). It is the same size as California, Nevada, and Utah combined. Nigeria is well known for its people and culture. The history of Nigeria is traced back to 500 BC, when the Nok people were the inhabitants. During the 15th century, Europeans explored the west coast of Africa and discovered Nigeria. The Europeans started buying people, and this was known as slave trade. Soon, other white countries joined them.

In 1861, the British colonized Nigeria. The British government ruled Nigeria for 96 years; it was years of forced labor. Nigeria had its independence on October 1, 1960. Today Nigeria's population is about 110 million. Nigeria's population is growing rapidly at about three percent with 300 ethnic groups and each ethnic group has its own language.

The three major ethnic groups are Hausa, which controls 20 percent of the political affairs and is militarily inclined. Yoruba accounts for 20 percent control of the judiciary, press and financial sector. Fulani accounts up to about 8 percent of reserved people. IBO people, at about 19 percent, control land and oil. Nigeria now has 300 languages. The official language is English, which is studied in schools; yet less than half the population speaks English. The people see English as a foreign language, but Pidgin English is used often.

In Nigeria, you are either a Muslim or a Christian. Muslims are 40 percent; they mostly live in the north. Christians are 50 percent. They exist in the southeast. 10 percent are traditional believers. Dressing varies from occasion to culture. Personal appearances are very important to the people.

I will say that I am proud of my country, Nigeria, and I will never fail to appreciate our good leaders, our wonderful people, and culture. My respect to those who were taken in slavery and may the souls of all the Nigerians who perished in slave trade rest in peace. The Nigerian government is doing well. Finally, I will say, God bless America, God bless Africa, and God bless Nigeria, my home sweet home.

## *Christmas in Mexico*

### **Liliana Negrete, Mexico, Grammar & Writing III**

Something that I like a lot from Mexico is the Christmas tree. Beginning in December you can feel the sensation of a celebration and harmony all around the cities, dressed with the Christmas trees, lights and Santa Clauses everywhere. Furthermore, with all the adornments, you can hear the Christmas carols from the "Posadas", which is a kind of party where the people pray, sing, eat and have a "Pinata" to celebrate Jesus' birth. Regularly the posadas include music, drinks and a lot of fun. Although the posadas were created originally as a saint celebration, nowadays it is more of a motive of reunion with friends and a good occasion to exchange nice gifts. Overall, this is a time that everyone enjoys. ■

# Why Am I Taking ESL Classes?

(Continued from page 3) clearly, especially some medicine and recipe instructions. These are the reasons why I'm taking ESL classes.

## **Johana Villarreal, Mexico, Listening & Speaking I**

My name is Johana and I am from Mexico. I live in Porter, Texas, on Iris Lane. I am married and have one daughter. I am taking ESL so I can help my husband in his business.

## **By Iryna Nguyen, Ukraine, Grammar & Writing IV**

Do you feel like an extraterrestrial on the wrong planet? Furthermore, are you not aware of what is going on around you? You can't talk because you don't know how. Also, you can't understand any words. These are some of the biggest reasons why you'd need ESL classes. In my opinion, a person who is living in a foreign country has to adapt to the people and the environment. Fortunately, you have ESL programs that will help you learn a new language, so you will know how to read, write, and speak English. A large vocabulary will help you a lot in conversation. The Intensive English Program is a crash course to help students learn English quickly and easily. Thankfully, the faculty of the ESL program is very good. They try their best to help students. You should feel comfortable around professional teachers. Students can feel improvement in their English even after the first course. ESL program is a big help to foreigners. In conclusion, don't be an extraterrestrial. Just go to the ESL program, and your life will be more interesting and comfortable.

## **Edith Vargas, Mexico, Grammar & Writing IV**

I am one of a bunch of people who came to the United States, looking for better opportunities. When I got here I wasn't prepared enough to understand English and communicate with American people. I took classes three months after I got here. I almost failed because I didn't understand, but I eventually passed and I graduated from high school. To start college, I had to take a test, but before that I decided to take ESL classes. ESL has given me more practice to be successful in things that I want to do. I am taking ESL because I want to start working on my future and this is my first step.

## **Arelis Colenarez, Venezuela, Grammar & Writing IV**

There are many reasons why I'm taking ESL classes. One of the reasons is to improve my English. Another reason is that I want to get a better job. Other reasons are to communicate better with the customers in my job and also with my co-workers. Finally and the most important reason is because I am living in the United States.

## **Renu Regni, Nepal, Grammar & Writing III**

I am taking ESL classes because I need them in order to receive a certificate as an interior designer, and it is important since I want to open my own business. Now, I am working in my home doing residential drapes. My goal is to be able to communicate in English as well as I do in Spanish. In the ESL Program, I have also learned about the differences in people and cultures. I hope I will receive my certificate and I will achieve my goals.

## **Daniel Alvarez, Mexico, Listening & Speaking I**

I am a mechanical engineer and I love my career. I can read instruction books in English very well, but when I try to talk or listen, it is very difficult. If I could speak English better, I could work in different parts of the world or start my own business. My goal is to learn as much English as I can so that I am able to listen and speak well. I am interested in specializing in my field, or working on a master's degree. To realize these dreams, I must be able to listen to and speak English.

## **Alexandria Colbey, Ecuador, Listening & Speaking**

My name is Alexandria Colbey and I am from Ecuador. I am taking ESL for the first time. I'm learning English so I can speak better at work. I do not write very well and my ESL class will teach me to write better, too.

## **Josefina T. Green, Mexico, Listening & Speaking I**

I am taking ESL classes because I need to speak English. I live in the U.S.A. and the language is English. I like socializing with new people. Later on I would like to take a course in Cosmetology or Computers. I would also like to volunteer to help charity organizations. I am a very talkative person and I would like to be able to have longer conversations with people. These are the reason why I am taking ESL.

## **Sylvia Condado, Mexico, Grammar & Writing IV**

This program is for students to develop their English language. In this way, the students will be better qualified to live and gain a better economic level than before they spoke English. Moreover, the ESL Program provides all kinds of students like teenagers, adults, international students, or any person who wants to learn the English language, with best preparation for college and life. ■

## *Recipe*

### *Hounado (de cerdo)*

#### **Irina Y. Ivanova, Russia, Grammar & Writing III**

Ingredients:

- 10 lbs. Pork leg
- 20 minced garlic cloves
- 2 tablespoons of black pepper
- 6 table spoons of salt
- 3 tablespoons of cumin
- 1 liter of chicha or beer

Make a deep incision around the leg. Mix in a plate the salt, the pepper and cumin. Marinoti the leg with these spices. Repeat but add minced garlic. Leave the leg in the refrigerator for 24 hours. Add a liter of chicha or beer and return it to the refrigerator for 2 days. When ready to roast, pre-heat the oven to 400 degrees. Cook the pig leg for 20 to 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and cover with achiote melted in butter of pig oil. Put in the oven again and bake for two hours. The traditional Ecuadorian food. Can be served cool or warm.

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