

CLIPPERS

Literary Journal

2017-2018



**CUNY LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAM
QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

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Ms. Boodhoo began teaching in the CLIP program in 1997, one year after its inception at New York City Tech. With a Master's Degree in TESOL, she is well noted among her colleagues for her ability to write creative curricula and among her students for her thorough teaching style.

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Ms. Longobardi has been teaching in CLIP for over fifteen years. She holds a Master's Degree in TESOL as well as a Master's Degree in Italian Language and Culture and began her teaching career as a foreign language teacher. She presently teaches Advanced Level Academic English to wonderful students from around the world.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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This is Mr. Boodhoo's second year employed as a Lab Tech with the CLIP program as well as CUNY Start. He holds an A.S. in Computer Science and is currently pursuing his B.S. at Queens College. We are most grateful to him for his patience and valuable assistance in formatting this publication.

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Welcome to CLIPPERS!

Welcome to the spring 2018 edition of CLIPPERS! This collection consists of student writings across all levels of the CUNY Language Immersion Program (CLIP). The selections in this edition range from a variety of themes explored in our CLIP classes as well as from different genres and styles of writing – fiction, non-fiction, narrative, reflection, essays and poems. CLIP Instructors carefully selected their students' most insightful, inspiring and promising pieces of writing as they continued to improve their English during the semester. These selections were made ready for this publication with feedback and revision from the CLIP faculty so as not to change the original voice of each student writer. We hope you find pleasure reading these pieces, and we further look forward to reading more and more enjoyable student writings.

Many people in the CLIP program were instrumental in bringing this publication to fruition. First of all, we would like to thank Dr. Berkowitz for her invaluable advice through all the stages that were necessary from the beginning to the end of this process. Thank you to CLIP teachers in our program who work beyond call with students encouraging and supporting them all the way with their writing. Through their creativity, hard work, commitment and passion, they helped our students believe in themselves as writers and unselfishly share their writings. A great thank you to Danae Martinez, Marie Arlia, Anthony Prato, Eliza d'Amore, Vincent Zompa, Oliver Mann, Jennifer Ault, Joaritz Noriega and Simon Kao.

Thanks to our wonderful CLIP students for sharing your thoughts, feelings, dreams and ambitions through your writing. We wish you all the best. A final thank you to our CLIP Lab Tech, Surendra Boodhoo for his help in formatting and putting the final draft together, our office staff and academic advisors, Alexis Tenenbaum and Marianne Renois who are all responsible for encouraging and supporting our students every day.

Leila Boodhoo

Maria Teresa Longobardi

CLIPPERS Faculty Advisors

CLIP

ACHIEVEMENTS



Djelili Okoro, former CLIP student, has impressive athletic achievements in Track. He placed 6th in the 4 x 400 Relay Nationals, 3rd in the 1500 m. CUNY Championships, 2nd in the 4 x 400 Relay CUNY Championships and was awarded *All American and QCC Rookie of the Year*. He is presently studying BioTechnology and aspires to be an Anesthesiologist. He maintains a grueling schedule of morning classes, practice four times per week, and holds a full-time job at LaGuardia Airport.

Personal Stories

Finding My Job

by

Hyejin Hwang

There are so many types of jobs around us. Some jobs seem to have a gender category, but people say that there is no gender preference. We also have various laws to protect us from unfair situations. In spite of such efforts, there is still an invisible gender division in job fields. Going back to the days when I was looking for a job, I felt discriminated.

I studied architecture at college in my country 15 years ago. When I graduated college, I was looking for a job. I had a building engineer certificate. I wanted to be a construction site manager. I had enough stamina to work on the construction site, and I was interested in the process of building. I was very passionate about my job at that time and could do anything. I started to send resumes out, and some companies offered me interviews. The job search looked good. I had the qualifications they wanted. I went to my interview. They looked over my resume thoughtfully and complimented me. However, I was very disappointed in my job interview, because their questions discriminated against women. At the end, they told me something like, “This job position is very tough for a woman and it will be hard to control men working under you. Besides, you are younger than them, so we are going to think about this problem. You can come to work at our company, if you go to the design department.” Several times this exact situation happened, and I realized that they didn’t want a woman to work. They preferred a man. I finally understood why most female construction supervisors quit so early in their career. They couldn’t handle male workers, and they prefer a man to work. The companies did not want to give long vacations for childbirth or childcare either. I felt this was an obvious gender division.

As a woman, I have experienced injustice although restrictions on women are fewer now than when I was looking for a job. However, there still remains gender classification in choosing an occupation. I hope that when my children begin to look for a job in the future, there will be no discrimination anymore.

My Process of Learning English

by

Edwin Goodridge

August 29, 2015, my life turned like the moon revolves around the earth. I was granted residency in the United States, which made me happy, but I knew everything would be different. I arrived with the goal of studying science and succeeding, but English has been a challenge for me. I entered the CLIP program, which is wonderful, to study English and prepare myself before entering college. Learning English seemed easy, but the reality is that I still have much to learn. In the process of learning English, I have difficulties with my spelling and my pronunciation, but my biggest advantage is reading.

My spelling has become an arduous job and my greatest weakness when I am writing in English. To begin with, my most common mistake is when I write words with the vowels *a*, *e* and *i*. For example, the words *raise* and *race*, the pronunciation of the letter *a* in English is similar to the letter “e” in my native languages so I always confuse these two vowels when I am spelling. Therefore, my English teacher, Ms. Jennifer, recommended reading for fun at least ten minutes a day, so I will get used seeing how words are spelled and of course, it will improve my spelling skills. Secondly, I always mistake singular and plural words. To illustrate, when I have to write words that talk about the quantities of things, I usually don't remember if I have to write the word with an *s* at the end. To help me with this problem, I will write a list of words in plural and words in singular to memorize and improve my spelling. Thirdly, it is difficult to memorize complicated words. For instance, the new vocabulary words I learned in class like *epidemiologist*, *environmental*, *uninformed*, and *pathogens*, are so difficult to remember, so every time I write

those words, I always spell them wrong. Therefore, I will practice using these new words in sentences more often so I will get used to spelling them.

My other weakness has been my pronunciation, which is necessary for people to understand me clearly. To start with, my most common errors are words that start and finish with *th* which is my main weakness in English pronunciation. The pronunciation of these two letters is complicated for me, for example, the words *boat* and *both*. When I say these words, they sound the same, but they have totally different meanings. For this reason, I looked up some videos on YouTube about exercises for my mouth in order to make the *th* sound correctly. Another problem, is the mixture of my dialect with English. To explain, most of the day I speak Creole Guyanese, a kind of English slang. The pronunciation of this dialect is very different from American English, especially the pronunciation of vowels. It was recommended that I listen to podcasts and watch the news and movies in English to get used to the sounds of American English. Another point is that it is difficult to pronounce the *s* at the ends of words. To demonstrate, when I talk about the amounts of things I usually do not say the *s*, and my professor cannot distinguish if I am talking about one or more things. To help me improve my pronunciation, the CLIP program has given me extra help with my pronunciation. Occasionally, my teacher sends me to take pronunciation classes with Ms. Charlene for forty-five minutes, so she can help me develop my pronunciations skills.

Reading is my strongest skill when I am studying English. I can understand what I read faster than any other student in my level. For example, if I have to read an article, I only have to read it once, and I can capture the main points of the article. My strategy to be a good reader is that I imagine the situation, the environment, and the subject in order to comprehend the main idea. Besides, in order to understand what I read, I learned to read fluently. For instance, if I have to read aloud to the class, I am confident that I can read and make myself clear. My secret is the

practice of reading daily and respecting the punctuation. Third, I can read and complete legal forms and documents by myself. For instance, at the time of entry to CLIP, I had to complete a long list of documents which I did without someone helping me. Subsequently, what makes me able to read well is that since childhood, I have basic knowledge of reading in English.

To conclude, I feel confident when I am speaking English in class, and learning English has become very enjoyable. During these seven weeks, I have noticed an excellent progress in my English skills such as asking questions, writing better essays and expressing my ideas directly. I will not deny that learning English has been a hard job; in fact, it is been the hardest thing I have ever studied. However, being a good student has been easy because I have made the effort and have been disciplined in my classes. I will continue to work doubly hard for the rest of this semester to turn my weaknesses into strengths in order to pass the CATW test and to go to college this year.

My Bucket List

by

Christopher Rosario

Have you already done some important things in your life? Have you decided to change some things in your life already? I think some people have their future plans already, but there are some people that do not have their future plans yet. I already have some plans in my bucket list but there're some that I have not done yet.

Today, some people do not take their bucket list seriously. However, I really take my bucket list seriously. First, I have already moved to New York City from The Dominican Republic. I came to this country because I haven't realized some of my dreams yet. Second, I have already graduated from high school in 2017. Third, I have already gotten some useful technological tools that I wanted before I got to work. These items are my speaker, my iPhone and my computer. Finally, I have always wanted to go to Six Flags, and I went there last year with some friends.

Even though I have done some of the things on my bucket list, there are still things I have not done yet. First, I have not learned to speak English very well yet. When I was a kid, I used to say that I wanted to speak English like a Gringo, which means like American people. My idea was to surprise my family by speaking good English. Second, I have not started some of my goals on my bucket list yet. I want to buy a house and bring my family to this country because in here there is good security and good opportunities, but I haven't realized it yet. I also want to buy a Lamborghini after I graduate from college. Buying a Lamborghini is one of my dreams that I am going to realize soon. Before that, I need to graduate from college first.

In conclusion, bucket lists are very important for some people. I have done some things from my bucket list, but there are some that I have not done yet. Some people have a bucket list and they cannot make it real because some people do not put their part to do something. Even though some people do not have a bucket list for their future, I really have one, and I will keep doing one thing at a time on it. I hope some people have and follow a bucket list in their future.

My Bucket List

by

Cristina Tantajulca

Do you think it is important to have a bucket list? Do you have some goals that you have already achieved in your life? Most people have goals in their life. However, some people do not have goals for their future. I think that each one of us chooses what we want for our future or life. I have a bucket list. I have already done some things, but some things I have done yet.

My bucket list has some things that I have already accomplished. My first goal was coming to the USA. I have already come to the USA. I came to the USA with my sister in 2016. My second goal, I have already graduated from high school in 2017. I also have already obtained a scholarship to study English in CLIP. Finally, I have already stopped being lazy and started doing more exercise.

Although I have accomplished a lot of goals on my bucket list, there are still some goals I have not yet achieved. First, I have not learned to swim yet. When I was a kid, I was very afraid to swim because I thought I was going to drown, but I am willing to lose that fear. So I would like to learn to swim. Second, I still have not finished learning English in CLIP. I want to finish learning English very well. I will do everything I can to in my power to achieve it. Third, I have not gone to college yet. This is one of my important goals. I want to study medicine. I want to save many lives. Finally, the most important goal of my life is helping my family. I have not done it yet, but that goal is what makes me want to keep going day by day. I will fight for I want as I experience new challenges as I go along.

In conclusion, bucket lists are very important because they are goals that you want to achieve. Some people are hesitant to make decisions about what they want in life, but others are already willing to do what they want to do in life. I am willing to achieve everything that I propose.

Expository Writings

A Famous Painter

by

Cindy Alvarado

Art is incredible, and it has great painters and paintings. Some painters can express love, hate, peace, sadness, happiness, passion, or other feelings. I learned about some painters that I like. The most important is Mary Cassatt, and her painting the *Maternal Kiss*.

There are several reasons why I like her. The first reason, I like that she was born in Pennsylvania, but most of her life she lived in France. She was one of a few women who triumphed in a world where it was believed that only men could succeed. Another reason is the majority of her paintings are about the daily life of mothers with their children. Her painting has a connection with my life as a mother.

Mary Cassatt paints the best maternal paintings. The first reason why I like the painting *Material Kiss* is because I am a mother, and when I saw this painting, I identified with it. When my daughter kisses me, it changes my whole world. This painting expresses the love between mothers and children. Another reason is the peace and strength that a kiss or a hug of a child can give a woman who has to leave her house to work or study.

In conclusion, Mary Cassatt and her painting *Maternal Kiss* expresses love and strength. Cassatt is a great woman. Her painting and history is very significant for mothers. In my opinion, Marry Cassatt is the best painter in the world.

Naled
by
Dania Cartagena

Do you know about how many bees die from the insecticide Naled? According to “Millions of Dead Bees Are a Side Effect to Spray Meant to control Zika spread” by Alan Yuhás, Naled is spread from the sky to kill mosquitoes to control the transmission of the Zika virus and it has different benefits and risks. First, the author says beekeepers are losing money because a lot of honeybees are dying. He wrote, “An estimated that 2.5 million bees were killed.” Also, the author says if the bees and insects die, our ecosystem will have problems from pollen of plants. Finally, the author says people in Puerto Rico think that the insecticide Naled not only affects bees and insects but also humans and other animals.

This article reminds me of a story when I was in El Salvador. My father used insecticide to kill mosquitoes. He said that when he sprinkled insecticide on the plant this could grow much better. The fruit or vegetable can be bigger and much better because the mosquitoes will not be able to get close to the plant. However, it burns the other plants. Then there will be no plants, vegetables, and fruit.

This article also reminds me that in El Salvador many people fumigate their house because a lot mosquitoes are born although many people do not agree with this because it is very dangerous. They have to go outside and cover everything and after the fumes leave, they have to wash everything. If this chemical falls into food you have to throw everything away because you can

get sick or die from it. This is a government order that the entire country has to be sprayed to prevent disease.

My two examples demonstrate that spraying insecticide can be a problem in society. Insecticides are not only bad, but also if all insects are killed, this would bring other consequences, and the ecosystem would be in trouble. All people know what an insecticide is, but we do not know how it can affect our health in the future. For example, many bees also die and this could affect the economy due to a lack of honey. Also if you use insecticide, people suffer disorders of the immune system such as cancer. Other consequences are increased headaches and nausea. Finally, the chemical could reach the rivers, lakes, and the fish that we are eating could also be contaminated. To stop this, we have to be more careful and look for other methods that are not as harmful as insecticides. To solve this problem that is affecting society, we have to start taking care of what nature has given us. The government should look for other less dangerous ways to fight mosquitoes. It is not necessary to kill them. Instead, we should inform all people of the risk of using insecticide. It is in our hands to take care of what little we have left of nature.

In conclusion, one day we can prevent having diseases caused by insecticide. I recommend that we inform ourselves better to see if insecticide is really worth using.

Viva Mexico

by

Joshlinne Fuentevilla

Who and what is Mexico? “Navel of the Moon” is the meaning of the name Mexico that comes from the native language, Nahuatl. This meaning is a metaphor for what the country literally is: Mexico is the center. Mexico is located in the North of America between the United States and the southwest of Guatemala and Belize. Tourism is the most important activity inside the Mexican economy since Mexico is the favorite destination in Latin America for tourists from other countries, especially the coastal areas, archaeological ruins, and colonial cities.

In 2017, Mexico received 39 million visitors according to the tourism minister Enrique de la Madrid. Considering the variety of places, the Mexican customs, traditions, and cultures are the most impressive aspects of the country. For example, in the Dance of the flyers, they use colored and traditional dresses for the ceremony. This ritual Nahuatl, Huastec, and Otomi culture consist in people climbing a pole of 30 meters of height, and after, four of five participants are tied with ropes to descend spinning around the pole to the ground while one of them stays at the top of the pole playing flute and a little drum. The meaning is to show respect to nature and the spiritual universe.

Despite the beauty of Mexico, there are injustices too. The violence that day by day the Mexican people live in the streets, even inside the government and their desire for power, makes a bad side on Mexico. According to the National Public Security System, in 2017, there was a new record of 80 murders per day. In addition, the future candidates postulated to the

government gives gifts to the people during their political campaign to secure their votes. This is the real Mexico: the daily life inside of the country. Mexico is not only the beauty of Mexican customs, traditions, culture, and nature, but it is also the common problems that happen in Mexico that everyone needs to know.

Mexico is rich in diverse cultures. There are approximately 60 different native groups dispersed in the entire country. The most known native groups are the Tarahumaras, a group that lives in the Sierra Madre Occidental of Chihuahua that is part of the American Cordillera. The Tarahumaras are called light-footed or Raramuri because they are the best runners in Mexico. The majority of Tarahumaras run around 50 kilometers by day. A clear example is the family of Santiago Ramírez Justillo, a great runner and a big example to follow. Despite the conditions in the area where his family lives, it is a custom for kids to run for generations. Men and women of all ages can participate in big marathons, like the most recent Marathon in Canada called Polar Bear, where the Ramirez family obtained the best place even running in low temperatures. One characteristic of this group is that they use only sandals which they make themselves to run.

Furthermore, Mexico has variety of natural places since it has high mountains, deep seas and also deserts and woods, especially the coast and beaches of the Gulf of Mexico and Gulf of California, the Pacific Ocean and part of the Caribbean Sea. Thousands of tourists visit the most famous coasts: Acapulco, Cancún, Los Cabos San Lucas, Puerto Vallarta and others. The Northern half of Mexico deserts. The most known and biggest deserts are in Chihuahua and Sinaloa. Also, there are different ecosystems like the snowy mountains of Toluca or the highest Claltepétl mountain in Mexico with 5,636 meters of altitude. Big difference, right?

Furthermore, Mexico is more diverse than most people realize; there are mestizos, Euro-descendants, Afro-Americans and Asian groups during the age of their colonization between the years 1519 to 1521. When the Spaniards came to America, they brought people from other countries, some of them were slaves and almost three hundred years after, when Mexico became an independent country in the years 1810 to 1821, many new groups of ethnicities started their life in the New World. That's why many of the architecture in Mexico has a colonial style like in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas or Morelia, Michoacan. Same as other countries, there are injustice, violence, and falsehoods too. A big part of the government is corrupt. From many years ago, there has been no transparency, so the chances for a good government are almost impossible because many governments lie about their "plans."

It is important to realize that a Mexico with knowledge wouldn't be ignorant, and this is what is necessary to acknowledge the problems, think about the economy, support buying Mexican products and discern carefully between the good and bad candidates when it comes to choosing leaders.

In conclusion, the real Mexico is a beautiful country. Like all other countries, it has problems and beautiful things too, diverse cultures and traditions. The importance of a country is that it works together to find the best solutions for its improvement.

Three Places to Visit in New York City

by

Huacheng Ge

New York City is the greatest city I have ever lived in, but I am still quite ambivalent about it. At times, I love the diversity and opportunity, while at other times, I hate how crowded and dirty it is. If someone came from China to visit the U.S., I would recommend them come to the “Big Apple” which is New York City. Over the years, I have been to almost all the famous attractions here, but if I must name three places that are most valuable to visit, they would be Jackson Heights in Queens, Coney Island in Brooklyn and Central Park in Manhattan. You might have doubts about this because this city has many places even more famous than these three, for instance, the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty, or Times Square. However, these famous places are crowded all the time because visitors keep coming from all over the world every day nonstop. Therefore, the three places I recommended would let you experience something different from what you know about this city, and you will never regret it for the following reasons.

Jackson Heights is an area under the number 7 train track in Queens. I watched a documentary about it, and it said that there are more than 60 ethnic groups living there. It is the most diverse place in the world. Imagine that by walking on the street, you will bump into different people from many other countries. They might from Asia, South America, the Middle East, or Europe. You will feel like you are traveling all over the world, and in order to understand their cultures, you can try different kinds of food there. In addition, Jackson Heights is a peaceful and happy neighborhood full of grocery stores, shops, and very good restaurants.

After a while, you will find such an amazing world out there, not the world that you are used to living in and that you are familiar with; it is the world that you have never been to and which is waiting for you to discover it. Our world can be as big as we can see and beyond; otherwise, it is just a small zone that we are comfortable with.

Coney Island is located in South Brooklyn. It is an amusement park, and it has a very nice view of the beach. Even though it is far from Manhattan, it is also convenient to get there by taking N or Q train. New Yorkers like to spend time there during the summer, especially on July 4th. July 4th is Independence Day in America, so it is a big event for the entire nation. Every year at that time, Coney Island has a fireworks show and music festival. I believe you may have heard of Nathan's *Hot Dog Eating Contest*. It is not only famous in the U.S, but it also attracts people from outside this country. I know a Japanese man who has won this contest six years straight. People often say New Yorkers have too much pressure living in this big city. That is why they love to enjoy their life laying on the beach, drinking beer and watching the bikini ladies walking in front of them. I think this is the New Yorker's spirit of *working hard and playing harder*.

Before I came to America, I had heard about Central Park, but I thought it was a natural park, not man-made. Everyone knows how expensive it is to buy a piece of land in Manhattan, so who would create a park in the *heart of the world* like this, huge and open to the public for free? However, over the years, I think I am getting to understand this city and its people, and I am becoming a part of them. Although New Yorkers live in high-pressure circumstances, it does not mean they do not know how to enjoy their life. I have seen many people walking and hanging out in Central Park almost every day, even during work days. I was wondering if they do not need to work, but now I understand that life does not consist only of work. There are some things much more important than that. Moreover, around Central Park there are many famous

museums worth seeing, such as the Museum of Natural History, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Guggenheim. More importantly, I am not going to describe how beautiful the views are in Central Park; you need come to see it in person. All I can say is Central Park is my favorite place in New York, and you will never regret coming here.

In conclusion, these three places are the most valuable places to experience. I do not think I have given enough reasons to convince you because these places are too amazing to describe. For the rest, you really need to come to see, to listen, and to experience. These three places I recommend are all convenient to the subway, so do not worry about transportation problems. Even if you do not know how to take the subway, those zealous New Yorkers will help you anytime you need it. Therefore, whenever you or your friends come to visit this city, take them to Jackson Heights, Coney Island and Central Park. They definitely will be delighted and amazed.

Medical Marijuana

by

Marina Hernandez

Is marijuana good or bad? Medical marijuana is a controversial issue in the United States. According to “Weed” by Sanjay Gupta, in some states it is legal to consume marijuana because every day there are more people who need marijuana to cure diseases that have no cure with pills and medicines that pharmacists create. Marijuana is composed of two chemicals: CBD and THC. CBD is the chemical that can treat disease and THC can treat disease, too, but this chemical also makes you high. Sanjay Gupta traveled to many places in search of testimonies of people who suffered from diseases that had no cure and the only medicine was marijuana. An example is Charlotte Figgy, a little girl who was only five years old. She suffers from a terrible disease. Her father tried many medications and looked for marijuana as an alternative medicine. Marijuana is the only medicine that could save her life since the disease was becoming more complicated every day. This medicine helps some conditions like her disease. Another example is the case of Chaz Moore, who has problem with his speaking. His life is very complicated because he is young and only marijuana can cure his health problem. He used a lot of legal prescription drugs but none worked, making him addicted without a good result for his health. In conclusion, according to the video, medical marijuana can save many people in the world.

My father lost his mother when he was only seventeen. She died of cancer 22 years ago and medicine was less advanced than today. I think I would have used marijuana to save my grandmother's life if that had been the only medicine that could save her. We cannot forget that many people live in this world and many of them suffer from diseases and if marijuana is the

only medicine the U.S. government should consider legalizing medical marijuana, since many sick people would benefit from this plant.

I believe that medical marijuana should be legalized and the government should implement strong laws that protect all people. For example, no person could drive a car if he were under the influence of medical marijuana, since it can be very dangerous due to the type of components and the effects of marijuana. I think if you educate people about the benefits of marijuana, the mentality of people can change, and people will stop seeing medical marijuana as bad. If adults and children receive enough information, we can prevent many teenagers from using this plant for bad reasons and take advantage of all the medicinal benefits that can help sick people.

Visiting New York

by

Qing Jing Jiang

As a resident of New York for over ten years, I consider myself a great tour guide, especially in New York, the city that never sleeps. New York City has so many places to explore and things to experience. In New York, we have world class Broadway shows, and the best transportation system like the subway and buses that help everybody go anywhere in the city at any time during the day. It does not matter where you are from, we have restaurants that serve your hometown food to cure your homesickness from time to time if you want. On top of all these good things about New York, I do have few places I would like to show my friends from China when they visit here. I am going to break it down into three of my favorite seasons which is High-line Park for Summer; Bear Mountain for Fall, and Mountain Creek for Winter. These are the places in and near New York City that I would take my foreign guests to.

In the summer time, High-line Park is my top choice of places to go, not only because it is good workout to walk tens of blocks, but the gorgeous East River view and the fresh air is hard to find in Manhattan, and yet, High-line Park has both of them. Many people do not know the High-line Park originally was a subway line path, but the line was taken down because the MTA had a new subway line to replace it, so the old track was abandoned. Because it occupied valuable Manhattan space, the city council thought of tearing it down, but it would have cost so much money from the taxpayers. Just when the city council had no idea what should they do with these railroad tracks, someone proposed to the city council to build a park on top of the railroad tracks. The idea was inspired by a similar project in Paris, which was a huge success, so

the city agreed to the proposal. As it turns out, High-line Park has become one of most popular places to go in New York City, for New Yorkers and tourists.

Bear Mountain is about two hours away from New York, and it is my favorite place to go during the Fall, when all the leaves are changing color and falling with the wind. If you have time to stay in the mountains for couple of days, I suggest you do so since I believe that it is the only way to see its true beauty. You can go camping and on picnics in the mountains. Bear Mountain provides multiple camping spots and drinking water, so you have less to worry about while camping. In the mountains, there is barely any signal for your smartphones, so you have no choice other than to shut them off and enjoy nature and spend some quality time with family and close friends. You will see many different animals like birds and snails there. If you are “lucky,” you could also find the “Bear.” Want to get away from crowded and noisy city in Fall? Bear Mountain is the place to go.

Finally, I highly recommend people go skiing and snowboarding at Mountain Creek when the winter comes. Even though Mountain Creek does not have as many high-skill trails as Hunter Mountain does, Mountain Creek will still be my first choice for winter activities, mainly because it will take up to three hours to get to Hunter Mountain from New York when Mountain Creek only takes one. On top of that, Mountain Creek ski resort provides multiple choices of food which is one of my top concerns when judge whether or not a ski resort is worth going to. It is so important to me because whenever I go skiing or snowboarding. I normally stay there for an entire day, and that means I have to have my lunch and dinner there. Last but not least, the staff of Mountain Creek ski resort are so helpful every time I go there. They make the whole trip even better. I am from south coast of China where it never snows; therefore, I believe my hometown

friends will enjoy the trip very much. Even though they might not be good at skiing, the trip will definitely be one of their most memorable New York experiences.

In conclusion, New York City is THE best place to visit in my opinion. It is a lot fun and full of possibilities. You will always find something to do here whenever you come, and you will experience the city as you never imagined. Come to New York if you can! I will be thrilled to show you around the city.

How Is the Cellphone Important for Me?

by

Orison Maldonado

The cellphone is an excellent tool to make everything better and easier. This invention changed people around the world and gave an important turn to history and to my life, giving me the ability to do countless things that before were complicated and slower. I need the cellphone all day, and I use it for many things.

A long time ago, we did not use a cellphone to communicate, but we used letters and the telegraph to send messages. We used a corded telephone for communication, paper and notebooks for writing information, the paper calendar to consult dates, clock to see the time, the calculator to math and more. Now, I can do all these and more with a single tool: the cellphone.

I feel excited about the evolution the cellphone will have in the future. Maybe we will find a better and a more efficient tool to use. I am excited to learn about technology, that is why I am planning to study Computer Science to be part of that next step of mankind.

I think the cellphone is a very important element, and I feel really satisfied with the services and experiences, like the internet, the applications, and the communication it offers. I really like the cellphone because it is like a computer but very small. It fits in my hand, so I use the cellphone wherever I want. I can use it to call my family around the world, and stay in communication, but that little tool puts more programs and utilities at our disposal. We can use it to write a document, take photos, play games, see the time, and also put an alarm. I am even using my cellphone to do this homework! So it is necessary for me every day.

It is difficult to imagine what life would be like without the use of the cellphone.

Cellphones are used in almost every aspect of my life. Though I made it clear that the cellphone is very important, it is not essential for me to live, and I feel like I can leave the cell in my house and continue a regular life, but it would not be easy.

Reflections on Literature

Differences between Odysseus and Perseus

by

Etalyne Dupre Fenelon

Odysseus was a great Greek soldier in ancient Greece. He was very courageous, intelligent and brave. He fought a lot of monsters in his life. As a king of his island, he was obliged to fight when the king of all of the Greece called him to go war. Perseus was a young man from a poor adoptive family. Raised by a fisherman's father, he also became a fisherman, but he didn't know it was his destiny to do something much more important. Everything changed the day when all of his family drowned because of a god. Only Perseus survived, and he promised himself that he would seek revenge on the evil god. Odysseus and Perseus stories have some differences.

The first difference between Odysseus and Perseus was that Odysseus was richer than Perseus. Odysseus was a King of the Island of Ithaca with a lot of responsibility about his family and his people. Perseus was an ordinary man raised in a modest family. His adoptive father was fisherman, so Perseus didn't know the good life. Every day, Perseus and his family worked to support themselves, whereas Odysseus and his family didn't have problems with money.

The second difference between Odysseus and Perseus was that Odysseus had more experiences than Perseus. As a king, Odysseus had more responsibilities. He was obliged to go to the war to fight the Trojans, and he finally won. After ten years, he tried to find the way to go home. The journey of Odysseus was very difficult and dangerous. He lost some men in the Cyclops's cave. Perseus was very angry about Hades after he killed his adoptive family.

The third difference between Odysseus and Perseus was that Odysseus had a lovely family waiting for him to come back. However, nobody was waiting for Perseus at home. In the Odysseus's story, we can see he had a family. Odysseus lived with his mother, his father, his wife and his son. During his absence, his mother died of sorrow and his father disappeared, but he was still awaited by his wife and his son. In the case of Perseus, it was different because his adoptive family was killed by Hades. Being young, he didn't have a wife and son. After his journey, nobody was waiting for him.

In conclusion, there are some differences between Odysseus and Perseus. The first difference was that Odysseus was richer than Perseus. The second was that Odysseus was more experienced than Perseus. The third was Penelope and Telemachus were waiting for Odysseus to come home. However, nobody was waiting for Perseus at home. The fact that Odysseus and Perseus were heroes, didn't present that there were many difference between his two men. They just didn't not come from the same social class and face the same journey.

The Characters of Jane and Helen in *Jane Eyre*

by

Maria Mancia

In the book *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte, we can find the different points of view of the characters of Jane and Helen. They have a conversation in which the characters have different ideas, some of them negative and some positive. Jane Eyre says to Helen “You are good to those who are good to you.” Helen answers, “It’s not violence that best defeats hate. The good try to love their enemies and wish them well.” Helen is trying to relate to Jane that it is not always good to defend herself with violence; sometimes she needs to ignore it and love her enemies. It doesn’t matter whether they are good or not. I agree with this quote, and I support Helen because sometimes we just want to take revenge with our hands, and sometimes we don’t think of the consequences. It is not easy to love our enemies and wish them well, but if we want to do it right, taking revenge is not the best way to solve any problem. Taking revenge and violence don’t bring us anything positive, but if we forgive our enemies, it can bring us the best feeling in our lives.

Taking revenge is not always the best way to solve the problem; it can make the situation worse. For instance, Mahatma Gandhi said, “An eye for an eye ends up making the whole world blind.” He tried to emphasize that if we keep taking revenge, there is no benefit for anyone because we are just hurting people and also hurting ourselves. We are just making the same mistake every time. We need to think about the problem and find a solution and try not to do it again because if we keep thinking of taking revenge, at the end nothing will change. It is important for us to analyze the impact that violence can make in our society. It can even cause death of people who don't

deserve to be victims of those situations. Violence doesn't bring us anything positive. Helen gives us a good example when she says, "It's not violence that best defeats hate. The good try to love their enemies and wish them well." She reminds Jane that violence it is not the best way to solve any problem. Even if our enemies treat us badly with hurtful words or actions, we have to wish them well even if it is hard to do.

Forgiveness is the best way to forget about revenge. To forgive is not that simple. Sometimes we have such a hard time letting go of the hurt people have caused us. But if we think of the damage that revenge can personally cause us, it can become a little bit easier for us. Even though Jane has had past suffering, she ought to wish Mrs. Reed and her son John well. I strongly believe that when Jane forgives, her pain and anger will go away, and her soul will be healed. For instance, when my sister makes me feel bad with any comment or with any hurtful word, it is not easy to forgive her, but I try and with time, I start to forget and to feel much better. When we are thinking about revenge or how to make someone pay for what they did to us, it will make our present miserable, because we don't value the good things that are happening in the present.

Forgiveness is the best way to make another person realize that what they did was wrong. For example, the other day my friend and I argued because she spoke to me in a very bad way, something she had never done before. To me that was very hurtful because I never expected that from her. In that moment I stayed quiet, and I took a deep breath trying to understand and forgive her. About ten minutes later she apologized because she recognized that she had done wrong. If I had acted the same way towards her, she probably wouldn't have recognized her mistake.

This book showed us the debate between Jane and Helen. They had negative and positive ideas. Taking revenge is not good to solve a problem even though it is very hard to see it that way. Taking revenge can make things worse. My advice to Jane is try to forget her past suffering and learn to forgive those people who hurt her because revenge and violence just gives us a temporary satisfaction, while Helen can give a good example of forgiveness because when we try to forgive our enemies, it brings us peace.

Wang Lung's Values

by

Rebecca Martinez

Elvis Presley said: "Values are like fingerprints, nobody's are the same, but you leave them all over everything you do." Wang Lung, who is the principal character from the book The Good Earth by Pearl S. Buck has positive and negative values that we will all remember. Values are principles or standards of behavior that are part of a person's life. Some positive values from Wang Lung come from work and family. One of his negative values come from his relationship with women. All of these values were part of the Wang Lung's life and make him a real person.

At the beginning of the book, The Good Earth we know that Wang Lung was a young farmer. Work is a positive value for Wang Lung. His job consists of work on the land, such as planting grains. It's was very valuable for him because it was his livelihood for himself and his family. The author said: "He took his life from this earth; drop by drop by his sweat he wrung food from it and from the food silver" (page 35, paragraph 2). It's means that everything Wang Lung and his family need came from the earth. The earth was Wang Lung and his family's life, and working on the land was his first priority.

His second positive value is about family and for him family was very important. He took care of his old father, his wife, his son and his disabled daughter. Something that the author wrote which caught my attention is, "Only a few of the beans did Wang Lung hide in his own hand and these he put into his own mouth and he chewed them into a soft pulp and then putting his lips to the lips of his daughter he pushed into her mouth the food, and watching her small lips move, he felt himself fed" (page 81, paragraph 2). This quote shows us that Wang Lung took

great of care his disabled daughter. A famine was in his village and Wang Lung did not have enough food for his family, so he gave his meal to his daughter. Wang Lung said that he felt himself fed to see his daughter eat. He takes care of his family with his life.

However, we can find negative values too in Wang Lung's life and it seen where it comes to women. Wang Lung forgot to work the land. He also, forgot Olan who was the woman that helped him in the field to be prosperous. Now, Lotus is Wang Lung's woman. Wang Lung was haunted with Lotus and he was spending his money giving luxuries to lotus. On page 181, paragraph 2 said: "Every day he went to the tea shop; every evening he waited until she would receive him and every night he went into her. Each night and each night again..." In other words, Wang Lung was a new man because he was transformed from a working man to an irresponsible man. Wang Lung neglected of his family anymore. He only worried about lotus luxuries.

Finally, every person's life has positive and negative values. They are formed by what people do every day. Wang Lung positive values like work and family were recognized by what he did with the land during his life and how he provided for his family.

Reflections on Quotes from *Pedro and Me*

by

Dasne Merino

Pedro and Me is biographic, graphic novel by Judd Winick. In this book the author talks about his friendship with AIDS activist and educator Pedro Zamora. Both Judd and Pedro participated in MTV's reality show *The Real World 3: San Francisco* together. On the show the men were roommates and friends. Pedro died of AIDS in 1994 and Judd continued to tell his story and do his work.

"I am visiting a sick friend." (8)

This quote makes me think back to when I was living in Venezuela. I had a good friend called Jesus who had AIDS. He was more than a friend. He was like that father figure to me; like the father that I never had. One day, his health got worse and he asked my mother to bring me to visit him. I remember that day as if it were yesterday. I felt such grief because something told me that day was possibly the last day I would be able to talk to my great friend, Jesus. Unfortunately, I was right. In my opinion, friends are the family that we can choose. When you share many good and bad moments with somebody, it is impossible not to feel this kind of feeling. I miss him. In many moments in my life I say if Jesus were here, he would tell me what to do in this situation.

"Pedro's mother and father felt that the family should stay together and not leave Cuba. Their older children insisted they go so the younger ones would know a better life" (38)

In our life we have to sacrifice something at least once. This passage reminds me about the times that my mom made sacrifices, not only for me, but also for my siblings. For example, my mom prefers not to spend money on the things she wants because if she does, then maybe there

will not be enough to support her kids. I did the same thing my mom did when I came to America. I came here with my youngest sister for six months, and I had to stop going to college because we did not have enough money, and all of us had to work a little bit more. This time I was the person who made the sacrifice. I made the sacrifice for my sister because I am older than she is.

O-lan's Life: *(Assuming the identity of the main character in The Good Earth)*

by

Lin Pan

O-lan is not my real name, but I have forgotten my birth name a long time ago. My mother sold me for a little money when I was 5 years old because we were very poor and starving. It was the year of a great famine. She held my hands and walked me to the Great House, the house of the richest family in town. I still remember the feeling when I first saw the Great House. The roofs were supported by delicate carved posts, and the entrance to the hall was like something I had never seen before. I was stunned and afraid by the beauty and elegance I stood watching. The people living here wore beautiful and stylish clothes. I was scared about everything in the house. Then, before I knew it, my mother loosened my hands, and I never saw her again. From that day, I became a slave. My place was in the kitchen of the Great House, the House of Hwang.

The old lord and mistress of the house gave me a new name. They let me work with an old chef. I worked in the kitchen until I got married to Wang Long. I woke up at 4 am for 20 years before I got married. Every morning, I boiled water and prepared tea for the old lord and the old mistress. She used to drink some tea before she smoked opium. The old mistress was kind of nice to slaves, because she only cared for her opium, but her children were different. She had five sons and a daughter, and every female slave was scared of her sons. If they saw a slave who was pretty, they would lust after her and eventually sleep with her. I was so grateful that I was not beautiful. These young men were disgusting and lazy. The daughter was better than her brothers. She was just arrogant. But these were not the most difficult persons; the butler was. The

old mistress trusted him because he always got the best opium for her. But he beat and abused us. He found many reasons to punish people who worked in the great house as slaves. I wish I would see my parents again many times.

When I was 18 years old, the butler told me that I would marry a farmer. I had no choice but to accept this, so I said nothing or asked no questions. He thought it was a disaster, so he smiled cantankerously when he was talking to me. I was happy and scared at the same time. I was happy, for I could leave this house, but I also felt scared about my future. Where was I going? Who was this man? After one month, Wang Long came to the Great House and took me away. I became his wife. That day, I knew my new life was just beginning.

Penelope
by
Soufiane Redouan

Penelope was Odysseus's wife, and she had a baby called Telemachus. She looked after him while Odysseus worked. She loved her husband and the baby. She was considered the queen of Ithaca. Therefore, everybody respected her. One day, while Odysseus was plowing the field, the messenger suddenly came to deliver a message from the Greek king. The messenger told him that he had to go to war. He pretended to be crazy because he did not want to go. Then when the messenger had threatened to kill his son, Penelope screamed, and he accepted to go to war. This war took forever, but Penelope was waiting for her husband for more than ten years because she loved him and hoped he was going to come back. In my view, there are many reasons why Penelope ought to marry someone else.

Firstly, waiting for more than ten years is a long time. Penelope did not know that how many years it would take Odysseus to come back from the war. Also there were no contacts between them. That is the main reason why Penelope should marry another man. I know she loved her husband, but she was getting older. Therefore, she should not have waited for her husband. I think that it was enough for her to wait ten years.

The second reason is that she needed someone to help her because of her little boy. She needed to marry someone because of the household chores and Telemachus. She did not have relatives, so she needed a strong man to depend on. Moreover, it would be dangerous for a beautiful woman like Penelope to be alone. By marrying someone, she and Telemachus would have protection.

Finally, Penelope should marry someone else because she did not know if her husband was alive or dead. Penelope's husband had gone to war, and he was taking forever to come back. It is not wise for her to keep waiting for him. To raise Telemachus properly, she had to marry someone who could teach him how to be king in the future. A king would have many responsibilities and duties. Due to Odysseus' absence, he had to be replaced by someone.

In this story, there are many reasons for Penelope to marry another man. I've written three of them, and I think they are close to the reality. Firstly, Penelope should marry someone because Penelope's husband was absent for so a long time. Secondly, she should get married due to the little boy. He needed someone who could raise him the right way. The last reason is Penelope did not know what happened to her husband and there were no contacts between them. In my opinion, she needed to marry another man because she had no choice. If she wanted her son to become king in the future, she had to accept someone who could help her. If I were Penelope, I would marry someone to help me raise my children because they need two parents.

Response to Literature “The Californian’s Tale”

by

Le Xin

Dear Henry,

Today is the 10th anniversary of my “disappearance.” I know you have been waiting for me to return. I am writing to you today to tell you what happened to me and why I never came back. On that fateful day, when I got into the carriage to travel the 50 miles to my family’s home, I looked at the scenery on the road. I was very excited about the trip because I had never visited my family. I missed my family, my mother, father, and my sister. They always wrote letters to me and told me that they missed me every day, so I hoped to visit them. After all, I had not seen them for 10 years, but on the journey something amazing happened. I want to tell you what happened to me and why I never came back. And I want to tell you that I missed you every day, every minute, my love.

First, I want to tell you what happened when I took the carriage. I saw many different things while traveling. I like to know many things. I like to meet people who know things and can talk. This I think you know. On the road, our carriage stopped in a village. The village looked very beautiful and quiet, but when I went into the village, I was surprised. The village had mostly women, children and elderly. I asked a woman why there were no strong men there. The woman told me that the men went to a city to make a living. The city is far from the village. The men had not come back for a long time. And there was nothing in this village. The people who lived there did not know what a carriage, car, or school were. People who lived in the village did

not know what the outside world looked like. Children never studied. I think this was amazing. I like to learn anything. I think you know me, Henry. I felt pity for these children. I thought knowledge could change their fate. These children were so young. They needed to learn more things and to know the outside world. I was very sad about these children, so I decided to stay in the village to teach them. They looked so innocent. They needed to know the world. I wanted to teach them all I know. Henry, I want you to forgive me. I wanted to tell you that I never forgot you and missed you so much, my love. The days of teaching these children in the village went very fast. I created a school for these children. The name of the school is “Henry,” and I feel very happy and relaxed with these children. I hope they will learn and when they grow up, they can use their own ability to change their lives with their parents. After 10 years, I decided to leave. I wanted to visit my family and then quickly come back to California to find you.

Secondly, I want to tell you about my family. When I left the village, I went back to my family. At that moment, I felt that something terrible was about to happen. When I went into my family’s house, I saw an amazing thing. My mother and my sister were crying in a room. They looked very afraid as if someone wanted to kill them. I have never seen that expression. I could feel their fear. I asked my mother what had happened and why they looked so fearful. My mother told me about everything. Originally, my father was poisoned by a person. But we did not know who poisoned my father. I felt very helpless. I should have come back early. If I had arrived sooner, maybe my father would not be dead. You know, I think this is my mistake. Then I looked at my mother. She looked like she had lost her own life. At this moment, I thought I couldn’t leave them and they needed me all the time. After 5 days, I prepared my father’s funeral with my mother and sister and we buried him in a cemetery, but after two weeks, my sister died in an accident. My mother cannot accept this thing. She cries every day. I cannot leave her and I

cannot come back to find you. At this moment, I want you to keep me company every day. I want to see you and to touch you every day. I had fantasies every day about how great it would be if you were around me. I had thought of coming back with my mother to find you, but you know, my mother always disapproved of our relationship. She was always stubborn. She still is. I am very sorry for you, my love.

In conclusion, I just want to tell you that I love you! I never forgot you. I wanted to come back to find you all the time in those 19 years. But now, I cannot leave my mother. I want you to read the letter, and forgive me for my disappearance. In 19 years, many things happened to me. I think this is my fate. When I left you to visit my family, I made a choice, and this choice changed my fate. We're still not together, but I remember clearly my last birthday that we celebrated together before I left. It was my happiest moment. Henry, I will love you forever.

Your Wife

Poetry

Kites
by
Maysoon Abufarha Saleh

Kites are not just thread and paper
Kites are children's laughter
Old tales and songs
They are filled with my childhood memories

I would like to go to that time
When I was running and following my kite
When I fly my kite it goes far away with the wind
It takes my dreams and hope to the top

I watch carefully up at the sky
But I am not worried because
I am holding the thread in my hand
My dreams and hopes in my hand

Someday they will come true and
I will live them

Camera
by
Valeria Olarte

I can show you how beautiful and perfect you are.

I could show you beautiful, precious, and wonderful ways to remember

I can even remind you of your best and when the perfect moment in your life was,

but the price for me can be big and may be an exaggerated price for all.

Sometimes I can be noisy with my light or even annoying with my sound.

I can die if you don't take care of me and give me what I need.

Yes! I need something too I need power, energy to expand my life.

It looks yellow or white,

many times, it's something that can't be easily seen,

but you can hear it when it falls on stormy nights.

Why have I described it with these colors and not others such as red?

Red is powerful, lovely

but red isn't energetic; it's just a kind of power.

I told you what I need but not how I am.

My shape is square, small and some parts circular

and the best part is you can go anywhere with me because of my small size.

Each part of me can show you a new form to hold your memories forever.

You just need to take care of me, carry me with all of your calm and best intentions.

That's all I want to capture your life in every perfect moment or even the worst.

You can get all this with just a click.

About Breaking Through

by

Rosanny Urena

I left my country with my family.

I packed what I could,

With tears in my eyes,

Feeling scared of *La Migra*

Finally in our destination,

Exited,

But always living with the fear of being caught.

Everything for a better future,

Life, job, and education.

Always thinking of my family,

The most important in my life.

Working in the field,

With sweat on my forehead.

The sun burning my back.

Trying to have fun at work, throwing the strawberries,

Even I know it was hard.

Missing school, for work,

Thinking a way to help at home.

With hopes that one day,

I will get a better job.

A Robot and a Girl

by

Cai Hong Zheng

I am an ordinary, ugly and incommunicative girl,
without any close friends and family, always staying alone.
The home I live in is dirty, lifeless, and stinking. I enjoy it.
Suddenly, I hear a quantity of strange and loud sounds.
Being curious, I go out to see.
In the next second, everything is different.
Why does my home look so different and unfamiliar?
My home becomes neat, sweet, and colorful.
In the next second, a fat white robot appears.
He says to me he would be my best and most sincere friend
I don't like it!
That is my first sentence that appears at the moment on my rusted brain.
In the late night, I come back to sleep on that soft bed with that fat robot.
There always have delicious and varietal food on the tidy table.
In the early morning, I escape with hurried steps
When seeing the robot's bright smile,
Half a year later, in the late night,
I come back home where it feels cold and empty.
Everything recovers like before, maybe it's more suitable and normal.
A sunny morning with mild temperature, I go out early as normal.
I notice a white skinned fat boy who has a bright smile.
At the same time, he stares at me with an odd smile.
He says to his friend, "See, what a bright and unique robot, like a rainbow."