

visions 07

essays by new
adult readers
and speakers
of English
as a second
language



welcome

From HLC's President

Visions is an appropriate name for this important publication.

It expresses exactly the upper most thought in the minds of our students as they continue to work on their ability to read, write and speak English. Each of them has a vision of what it will be like to be able to see something in print and know what it means. Or, to write his signature on a piece of paper and understand what he is signing. And, you can imagine the student's joy in being able to finally communicate in the language of his new country.

These are our students' visions and we are pleased that some of them have shared their story of how these dreams are coming true.

Frank M. Shideler
President, Hillsborough Literacy Council



From the Library Director

Volunteerism has always been important to the public library and to society as a whole. Your particular gift of time and skill in improving literacy within our community is invaluable. Both to you as student and to our dedicated tutors, I extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude. Each of you are not only improving individual lives but the future of the Hillsborough community.

Joe Stines, Director
Tampa-Hillsborough County Library Services



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An affiliate of the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Libraries

about

The Hillsborough Literacy Council

The Hillsborough Literacy Council (HLC) is a nonprofit affiliate of Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Libraries teaching functionally and marginally illiterate adults to read and write through its Adult Basic Literacy program. In its English for Speakers of Other Languages program, participants learn to read, write and communicate in English.

HLC accepts adults 18 and over into its program. Depending upon the student's level, learning to read can take a year or longer.

HLC needs volunteer tutors, administrative and funding partners. Tutors receive training and materials and are asked to commit to one year working with their student(s).

HLC memberships directly support the program by funding materials and other supplies.

For more information, please contact us at: 813-372-3650 or visit our website: www.hillsboroughliteracy.org.



the essays

How I Met My Husband

Submitted by: Marie Ipote

Tutor: Marjorie Nesman

When I first came to the United States from Africa, I lived in Detroit. I was braiding hair there. But the job was very slow. A few years later I had an opportunity to come to Tampa by a friend who had a braiding shop. She and my husband were friends. When I started working in the shop my husband stopped by one day and we met. Since that day, he kept going to the shop every day to see me and some time later we started dating. We have been together for almost 6 years now.

SAD

Submitted by: Victoria Gabriello
Tutor: Debbie Vomero

On March 22, 2007 my son died. He was 33 years old. That day was the hardest day of my life. The pain I felt was so bad it was unbearable. It's so hard for me to know that I will never see my son. I think about him every day. When you lose a child your heart never heals. You cry. You wish it was a bad dream but it's not a dream.

My Michael was a good person. He always looked for good in people. He loved his wife and his little girl Jenny. I can see Michael when I look at Jenny. I know that life will never be the same for me, Joyce and Jenny. I will always miss my son Michael.

Reading in Church

Submitted by: Sylvia Fisher, Literacy student since February 2007
Tutor: Mary-Helen Horne

All the people at my church kept asking me to read at a service, and I kept saying "I am not ready, I am not ready!"

Then one day I said, "OK, I will."

The preacher gave me a choice of psalms to read to all the people in my church. I asked God which one. No one else had done psalm 118 before, so I chose it.

I read it to my God-sister. I kept saying "amaze" but the right word was "marvellous". My friend said, "if you mess up, I will have my Bible open and I will help you. My friend's name is Evelyn. I called her and practiced on the phone.

Everyone said, "Don't look out or you will get nervous." I just got up and did it. I didn't look out.

When I was done, everyone was hugging me, and said I did good and they were proud of me.



The preacher talked about me after I read the psalm. He said that was a lot of verses! When I was done, I was happy. I know God has something planned for me.

My Pet Dog

Submitted by: Andrew Sannella
Tutor - Jessie Bush

I like my pet dog Holly. I like to sit on the couch and rub her belly. Holly likes to play with her rubber turtle. Holly likes to go for walks around the yard. Holly likes to go to SONICS and have a hot dog.

One Pair of Shoes

Submitted by: Ruben
Tutor: Darlene McDade

I have a brother 14 months younger than me. When my children were growing up I would tell them a story about one pair of shoes.

When they would ask for extra things I would tell them that we were so poor growing up that we had to share one pair of shoes. He wore one shoe and I wore the other shoe.

On Father's Day my children and grand-children went on my boat to Rainbow Springs. I was snorkeling and I lost one of my fins. My oldest grand-daughter saw that I only had one fin on. She asked her dad why I had one fin. My girlfriend heard him say "Remember I told you that Welo was so poor that he shared one pair of shoes with his brother and his brother has the other fin. My grand-daughter became sad because she thought it was true!

When my girlfriend told me I was glad to know that my son was telling my story to his daughter.

I hope that someday she will tell her children and her children will tell their children about one pair of shoes. The End

Why It is Important to Speak English and Spanish in Florida

Submitted by: Maria Pilar Campos
Tutor: Ray Guistina

In the state of Florida there are a lot of people who are Hispanic. It's a problem that many people that learn English don't talk Spanish at home. Their children can learn English well but they don't speak well Spanish. Another problem is that American people have to be bilingual if they want to get a better job with more money. It is a mistake to wait to have the children learn another language, because at an early age is the perfect time when the kids absorb all things easier, same as the sponge.

Here in Florida they don't teach Spanish classes in school to the young children, but the teachers know this is important to children that live in countries with Spanish-speaking people, a good example is California, Miami, and there are many parts of Tampa with this situation.

In my family, the dad is from Cuba and the mom is from Mexico, but the kids are from the U.S.A., so they speak English but they speak Spanish too. I am the mom, and to me there are many reason to speak English and Spanish. One reason to be able to talk English is my kids, because I need to help them in

Language is the hardest barrier that immigrants have to face in the United States. I have learned many things in my life, but nothing has been so hard like learning English.

--Oscar Pena

school, in their homework and to talk with teachers, and also to understand the meetings. Another reason is for myself because I like to talk with American people now. And finally it is easier for me to find more jobs and to do my job better when I also speak English.

A good reason to talk Spanish at home is that my kids won't forget the Spanish language and it is better if they learn to write and read too. I help them do that by reading Spanish books with them, watching TV in Spanish, and it is an excellent idea taking them to the library where there are a lot of material in Spanish. Also they can learn English and Spanish by talking to their friends but many times their friends don't speak correctly Spanish.

I am studying English at the library two days every week with my excellent teacher. To him I say "Thanks a lot for your time and motivation and patience."

Thank God for the Trip

Submitted by: D. N. B.
Tutor: Bernadette Cook

I thought that I could never take a trip alone. It has been seventeen years since I had taken a trip by myself. I found myself on a plane going to California. The plane had a layover in Salt Lake City. And I had a chance to see snow for the first time. It was rain and snow together. I felt very cold. I arrived in California at 12 am. It was very hot to me. I had a chance to see mountains and they were beautiful.

1-29-01

Submitted by: John Brown
Tutor: Marie Whitehurst

My name is John Brown I started to class with Miss Whitehurst March 14 – 2006 I could not read or write after attending class now I can read and write Miss Whitehurst took up time with me I have confidence in myself and being with others in class Miss Whitehurst has patience with her students I attend class at College Hill Library My home address is 1611 E 26 Ave, Apt. C Tampa, Fla, 33605 I'm 43 years old birth 7-14-63. going back to school was a big step for me.

From Oscar Pena

Submitted by: Oscar Pena Tutor: Audrey Quiniou

I just want to say thanks to everybody who made this program possible, especially to Audrey my teacher. Language is the hardest barrier that immigrants have to face in the United States. I have learned many things in my life, but nothing has been so hard like learning English. I would like to speak fluently and I hope to achieve it soon with your help. I am sure that when I'm able to speak English fluently I will be more useful to my community and I would like to return to it all the help that it is giving me now.

Thanks you again.

I Wasn't Ready for Retirement

Submitted by: Orien Hall
Tutor: Wanda Hodges

I worked all my life in the shoe business and after sixty years I closed my store at the age of 74. The family thought it was best for me to close the store. My business was slowing down because I didn't take time to call on new patients and inform doctors of my services for their patients. My expenses were too high. My shop rent went up. The cost of continuing education to renew my licenses doubled. I needed more computer help printing address labels to notify my Medicare patients with diabetes it was time to have their free yearly check up of their shoes and feet.

After two weeks of retirement I'm ready to go back to work to sell orthopedic shoes for someone who will do the book work. Then I can concentrate on helping



people with bad feet. I don't like to be retired. I'm still looking for the right job to help people with their hurting feet.

What is Love?

Submitted by: © 2007 R. Kelvin Barbee
Tutor: Rebecca Ingalls

Love is a beam of light
So clear and so right
It seems like you can reach out and grab it

Love is like a magnet
You have the positive and the negative
In order for love to work
You need to know the good and the not-so-good

Love can bring you to your knees

Love is passion
Especially when it's with someone you know and trust

Love is a gift
A gift from God
Love is a spirit that lies
So deep

Many of us think that love is not needed
Because others take love in vain

Sometimes we give too much
In the name of love
Sometimes we make an ocean out of a river
Sometimes we need to know when to stop

But love is patient
You need to understand each other through life's experiences

Love is hope
Hope for the best
Love is me
Love is you
Love is the beginning
Love is the end

Learning English

Submitted by: Warin Moontasri, ESL Student
Tutor: Joe Phillips

I came to America in 2005. I want to learn English, because I want to make America my home. I want to be able to save money and someday buy my own home. In Thailand it is difficult to buy a home. In America it is much easier.

Right now I work as a stock clerk at MacDill Air Force Base. I enjoy my job, but once my English gets better, I want to be promoted. The better my English becomes the more opportunities I will have. America offers many chances to grow! I like that very much.

The harder I work in America, the more I can achieve.

I also want to be able to afford a trip back to Thailand. I miss my parents very much.

In Thailand I had a driver's license. Here in America I need good English to pass the written driver's test. My teacher and I practice for the test. It will help me to be more confident when I have to take the test. Right now taking the test makes me very nervous, but I will gain more confidence with better English.

In Thailand I finished 2 years of college. Someday I would like to go to college in America.

I also like English class because it helps me talk to my customers. I enjoy helping them out, but I can't do that well with just a little bit of English. I need to practice English every day!

My number one reason for learning English is so that my father will be proud of me.



It his dream to have his daughter live and work in America. To do this I must have good English. My English class helps me do that.

Wisdom and Third Age

Submitted by: Carmen Pino
Tutor: Audrey Quiniou

Older people are often wise and intelligent. Grandparents can constitute a refuge during the difficult years of youth. It is experience in life which helps to solve problems, thus basing us on good judgment and common sense. The wealth of experiences, a generally exemplary life and its capacity for reflection enable us to act with more security and intelligence in life. I think that experience is the greatest legacy than the older people in society can leave us.

I Came from Poland

Submitted by: Grazyna
Tutor: Paul Suppicich

I camen from Poland to U.S A three years ago with out any knowlage of English language.I thought will be easy,compare to languages which I learn before.First year in U.S.A ,I did not to attend to any school.I try to learn an my own,butI did not have satysfaction.I realized that languages of my country and East country is much easy to learn for me then stady West languages(germenist).Is difference in building sentenses,is difference grama.Being one years in the stady I realized that I need professional help and sign up my self to the night schoolÂ English secound language.Attending to the school I improve my language ,bat I was not satisfaction and I start looking for nothersorses.I fight out,they gat classes English in library.Now I attending to the library-this is it what I want,because is one teacher for few student I can ask Him about every think,this is very comfortÂ for me. VERTE Study English in foreign country is new experience for me,and I am very happy that I can comunicate with nother people.Now live seems like much easy .Thank you to all my teacher and for their patience,because I understand how penetrating and difficulty student I am.THANG YOU AGEIN.

Almost a Spy

Submitted by: Eva Vedernjak
Tutor: Melody Tapley

When I had finished my high-school, at the age of eighteen, many, many years ago, I decided to take a trip abroad for the first time, without anyone of my family. It was an adventure journey, because I wanted to be completely independent, thinking only how to work with a very little knowledge about any foreign language. My decision to take that adventure trip was for living alone, working and studying and doing my best. I suppose that was the most important step in my life. I did it because of my free spirit measured with my curious mood.

The plan was to travel to Germany, specifically to the region in the South of Germany, named "Schwarzwald". In English it means Black Wood. I had chosen that country, because I studied German language in my entirile high- school, so I could defend myself a little bit more.

Upon my arrival to the town of Schwarzwald, Herrenalb, the whole place was covered with white crystal, flakey snow. From the beginning, it was a magical breathtaking view of that place in the middle of the winter. It was a tourist, small town but plenty of elegant hotels, where I found my first job as a baby sitter. I worked there only six month, and then I wanted to move to a bigger city named Hanover that is located in the middle of Germany. My curiosity pushed me to learn more about that German language so I took advance foreign language class at a local high-school to enhance my speaking ability in German. By enhancing my speaking abilities I was able to be offered a better job as

Older people are often wise and intelligent. Grandparents can constitute a refuge during the difficult years of youth.

--Carmen Pino

assistant in a department store and to plan volleyball in a German team. Then I obtained all what I wanted. I felt very lucky as a young girl and thought that nothing and nobody could destroy that success I had reached by myself.

One weekend, I decided to visit Berlin, much bigger than Hanover, and its famous wall. It was difficult to believe that I would stay in front of that wall where many people had died because of trying to cross illegally East Berlin to the West Berlin. As everybody knows, that city was divided in two by the enormous and high wall, watched out by American soldiers on one side and on the other side by Sovietic soldiers. The difference between those two cities was greater than the wall itself: the view on the East side with an old architecture, the buildings almost falling down without painting, comunism, without the free expression or writing, no radio to listen to or to see anything interesting. The view on the West side was so different: democracy, total liberty for walking wherever you like, whatever you want to see or listen to, modern buildings, people with good cars and jobs.

When I arrived to that wall, adrenalin was increasing my blood circulation and causing my braeth to be taken away. A Russian soldier, in front of me, greeted me very politely and ask me for my passport. I didn't hesitate and immediately reached it in my purse and pulled out my red passport because of my Yugoslaw origin. The color of my passport was red because of identifying my country status, that was comunism (but not anymore).

Once my feet stepped over the line I had crossed the wall to East Berlin. I looked everywhere but didn't see anything delightfully, so I wanted to come back to democratic civilization. I got back to the wall, but on the other side, there were American soldiers. The same procedured was done with me showing again my red passport. However, it was a different reply from American soldier who did not allow me to cross the line back to West Berlin. I was told that I couldn't go back because he suspected me being a SPY!! I had to go to jail. He thought that I was a Yugoslaw spy. At that moment I could go to jail because of my ignorance. I stayed there completely alone, without my passport, without my liberty. I had only one choice, to call my boss and begged him to help me to get out of that problem. So, he did it. Thanks a God, my boss was a very good man, he knew me very well and he immediately took a plane and came to rescue me from the hell.

I had forgotten completely that incident, but after many years later, when I wanted to travel to United States for the first time, my visa was denied and the council told me that I was charged as a spy by CIA because of the incident in Berlin. My interwiev was realy hard and it had taken me more then two hours to convince him that I was only curious as a young student but without any political preference and that I had no idea what being spy meant at all. Suddenly, he stood up, shook my hands and said that I was free to go wherever I wanted, but I was going to have some shadow over my head and I would never every forget my past.

That's all about my spy experience in the past.

Once
my feet
stepped
over the
line I had
crossed the
wall to East
Berlin.

--Eva Vedernjak

Our Dream

Submitted by: Adriana Serna
Tutor: Paul Suppich

Always I ask me: Why EEUU is the country of our dreams for us the immigrants?

We come from countries with enormous problems: politics, economics and socials and also lack of opportunities to project ourselves.

The Answer is simple:

We believe that immigrating to this country we can reach goals that in our environment is almost impossible to obtain, in addition to manage future for those we left behind and that way to achieve one of the life principles: peace and freedom,

Seeking Future in the United States

Submitted by: Carlos I. Ruiz
Tutor: Paul Suppich

I came to the United States on December 23, 2004. I am from Colombia. I am married on have two sons. The oldest one is names Carlos Filipe. He is eighteen years old and is finishing high school in May 22. He seging to study dentistry in August at Saint Leo University. The youngest son in named Sebastian, he is sixteen years old on he studies at Gaither High School in the tenth grade.

My wife is names Blanca Cecilia, she graduated as a social worker an works in Lutterans Service at St. Petersburg as a social worker. I am an industrial engineer but my English is bad. I study English in Gaither School in the night; in this moment I am creating my owner company in the painting industry.

We come to the United States to seek a better future for our children.

The United States is an interesting country for my sons to make them great professionals. My major goal is to speak English in a short time, because as an engineer, I have many oportunities in the United States.

Arriving in Tampa

Submitted by: Edgar Rubiano
Tutor: Audrey Quinoiu

I was in my country Colombia, working for the community, but my wife and son wanted to go to the U.S.A to meet with her family in Tampa, for ten days.

We returned to Colombia, but six months later, we returned to Tampa to live. Two months after I arrived, I found work in Publix supermarket in the grocery department.

My Friend Jesenia

Submitted by: Yolanda Forero
Tutor: Audrey Quinoiu

When I came to Tampa, I was feeling very upset, because everything around me was new. At the start, I was looking for different jobs and - nothing! However, after two weeks, I got employment in Living Sunrise, where I cared for old people with Alzheimer's. Some days I was depressed with what I saw.

I met a woman who is now my best friend here; her name is Jesenia. She opened her heart and welcomed me in her family.

Today, I give thanks to God for having found my friend Jesenia.



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