

VISIONS

works by the students and tutors

of

Hillsborough Literacy Council, Inc.

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LIGHTHOUSES

Lighthouse - a house with a light on top. The light was put there to help boats find their way along the water. Big rocks could not be seen by the men in the boats so the light was used as a kind of map. The lighthouse was put up as high as possible overlooking the water.

The man who looked after the light was called a lightkeeper. He lived in the lighthouse with his family. His job was to go up the stairs to the top and put something in the light to make it burn all day and all night. He had to make it turn all of the time and fix it if it broke. The light was made of glass with many parts. Most of the lighthouses had lots and lots of stairs, some with more than 300. The lightkeeper had to go up and back two times every day of the week. He was a very hard-working person.

There are a lot of lighthouses in Florida. Let's visit one in a place named Boca Grande. Boca is a non-English word for where your teeth are. Grande is another non-English word for big. It does not read 'Big Teeth' or 'Big Lips'. Shall I tell you the word you're looking for? You may not know the word 'mouth'. That's where your teeth are. In your mouth. Boca Grande reads 'Big Mouth'. Boca Grande is a little part of Florida not very far from my home. It is a short drive by car. To get there you must go over a river and, for this, you have to pay \$3.50. You then drive to the end of the road to find the Boca Grande Lighthouse. It is in a State Park where you can go fishing or sit under a tree and eat your breakfast or lunch.

The lighthouse is very old, going back to 1890. It helped many, many boats find their way. It saved many more from turning over in violent and windy water. In 1966 it was closed and stayed empty for nearly twenty years. People in Boca Grande wanted to fix the

lighthouse. They wanted to make it look nice and work again.

Thanks to the citizens this

happened. The light was turned on again in 1986. There are two houses, one for the light and one for the lighthouse keeper. This lighthouse does not need a keeper but it does have someone who lives in the second house. He works for the park and takes care of the buildings.

I ran up a short flight of stairs to a place where I was able to see water any way I looked. From another place in the lighthouse I went up twelve funny stairs. There I was right up top with the light. It made me very happy to touch the light. Again, I got to see water every way I turned my head. The word "lighthouse" is music to my ears. I love lighthouses!!

Remember, 'mouth' is the English word for Boca and 'big' the English word for Grande. Boca Grande (Big Mouth) is where I spent a day visiting a lighthouse. It was a visit equal to or better than any other place I've been, before or after. Next time, won't you please come with me? I know you will like my lighthouse.

TISS STEVENS

Star Trek Fan Young At Heart

Wouldn't it be nice to be in a Star Trek show.
No matter if you are young in heart or a kid.
That would be my dream. PS Wouldn't you?

Jesus Mendez

MR. BLACK SNAKE

Hi, I am Ronnie and I would like to tell you about my vacation. I took my family on a vacation to Twin Falls State Park in West Virginia.

It was very nice. The trees are very tall and covered the campground like a giant umbrella. The park has nature trails with lots of animals: deer, turkey, ground squirrel, ground hog and snake. The deer were very pretty and the other animals too. The most interesting was a black snake. He was jet black, as black as coal. He hung around our campground from the very first day.

My daughters are afraid of snakes. The first day we arrived the girls spotted him in the camp. "Make the snake leave" they said to me. So, I tried to make him leave. He wouldn't go. Instead he climbed a big tree. Around and around he went up to the top.

The next day the girls and I looked in the tall tree for the black snake and could not see him nowhere.

Later that day we spotted him coming from the public bathhouse. I tried again to chase him away. He would not leave. All he did was climb another tree in the campsite.

My girls were very excited but also interested in this persistent little visitor.

What brings us to this beautiful place in West Virginia is my mother's family. Many of them come to visit and even camp with us during our stay.

My Uncle David and Aunt Jean came over and camped at the park with us. Uncle David likes to play jokes on the family. One morning Uncle David walked over to our

camp. We were having breakfast. I told my Uncle there was a big black snake around the camp. Uncle David said "There's a lot of small animals in the park for the snake to eat". I told my Uncle "See there he is, coming down the tree." He said "He is a BIG ONE."

My Aunt Jean was walking over to our camp when my Uncle said "Watch this!" He walked over to my Aunt Jean and gave her a hug and a big kiss and said "Come on." He led her right past the tree with the big black snake in it. As my uncle walked by the snake it startled the black snake and it dropped right beside my Aunt Jean and she jumped three feet off the ground. She looked right at my Uncle David and said "You little monster. I will get you back!"

The black snake stayed around our camp the whole time we were there. My girls became used to it and kind of liked him. West Virginia is a very beautiful state. If you get a chance go and see it. But be sure and watch where you step and don't forget to look up into the trees. Mr. black snake may be watching you.

by: Ronnie Smith



FROM A STUDENT TO A TEACHER

It was a wonderful experience when I called Lisa on the telephone. This wonderful person answered the phone and she made me feel so wonderful and so giving of her precious time to help me out to read and write. It was so wonderful. Words can never express the joy I had. I learned so much from her and the books - Laubach Way to Reading. It helped me so much. I know it will be over pretty soon but I know I will never forget all that I've learned from this wonderful person. I know I'll carry the rest of my life, the things that I've learned.

To me, it was so important to learn because I had three sons who went to college. The kids have a good education and I never knew it was so important to me. When they left, my husband was there, but I felt so alone. I was so empty. I was lonely. One day, I was very sad. If something happened to my husband, I couldn't survive. I couldn't even write a check. I could write in Italian, but not English. I could read, but I didn't know what the words meant.

One day, I saw a literacy number on television. I decided to call. It was a good opportunity so I would learn. That was the nicest telephone call I ever made in my life. It helped me to learn, so I can do things. I can write checks. I can read a lot better and write more than I ever could write in English.

My husband and my three sons are so proud of me that I decided to do this all by myself and no one helped me but my wonderful teacher. I'll never forget her and we'll always be friends for the rest of our lives. And I wish anyone who likes to learn to make this important phone call. That would be the most important phone call they can ever make in their lives.

Lisa works every day. On the days that we meet, rain or shine, she's always here. To me, that was so important to see you do this with all your heart and inspiring me to come to school to take a lesson. People don't spend too much time to help another person, but she did. That was so important to me. I'd like her to be recognized from the library with something special. That's the way I feel in my heart.

JUST FRIENDS

Van is a man's name. Van is married. He lives with his family. The mother is Mrs. Van. The father is Mr. Van. They have a girl and a boy. The boy is Van's son. A big, black cat lives with them. His name is Oliver. He is their pet.

Oliver runs and jumps after birds. He can jump up better and faster with his back legs. Stopping him from jumping will bring a lot of red and black birds. Many birds will come. Oliver cannot jump after many birds. He can run after one bird, not twelve.

Another cat will come to visit Oliver. Her name is Kitty. She has a bell. Oliver is not ready for a bell. He says, "No, thanks". Will Oliver kiss Kitty? Oliver is ready to kiss the girl cat. He says, "I will ask". Kitty says, "No Oliver, you cannot. You are just a friend".

After she said this, she laughed and quickly jumped up. "Let's run and jump in the park. Let's have fun", Kitty said. Oliver ran very fast on the path to the park. He was with his friend. He was very happy.

At lunch, Van and his family heard Oliver singing. Oliver was on a rock in the sun. The rock was in the garden. He was a happy cat.

LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW

I was sitting in the kitchen looking out the window. I saw a man starting a fire.

I yelled to the man, "Stop! Stop!" I yelled, "He is starting building on fire!"

I went to call the fireman. I said to the fireman, "A man to starting a building on fire! Come to put it out!"

The fire truck came. They put water on the building. It was a big fire. One man was hurt.

The police officer asked me, "Did you see the man?"

"Yes, I saw the man," I said. "The man had on a red shirt."

The police officer came back to my house "We have caught the man.

Will you come down to the jail and identify him?"

"Yes, I will," I said to the officer. So I went to the jail and I identified the man.

Fiction submitted by G. Mingo.

HUNGRY TO LEARN

Leonard Coleman

My school days were good, but I didn't take advantage of them. I wasn't hungry to learn like I am now.

When I was in the third grade I pass and went to the fourth grade not really learning as much as I should have in school.

School days were good, but my mind wasn't on school, it was on working and making money.

I went to the fifth grade, and was learning more about math and English, but it was hard to read and no one in my family could help me with my home work. My mother could not read and my father worked all time.

I was shy and afraid to asked anyone to help me, but my family. I was wrong to do that. I was afraid that people might laugh at me and call me a dummy. As I grew up I did just enough to pass in school, not really learning what I should have. But I didn't know the importance of an education.

I went on with my life going to school. I passed again and went to sixth grade, and I began to work and miss school.

We were poor and we needed money, so I began to miss school more and more and work. Soon I wanted to work all the time but my mom made me go back to school again.

At this time I was ashamed of my education, I was ashamed that I didn't learn to read good enough.

Now I'm thankful f or this reading program that I have a chance to learn again, and be a part of this society moving in the right direction.

SPANISH, ENGLISH AND GERI

I came to the United States about four years ago to visit some friends here in Tampa. I did not intend to stay in this country, although I was very curious about the U.S.A.

I had heard good and bad things about this country. My friends wanted me to stay for a while because they needed help with their kids.

Now you see my friends were all Spanish, and they would not speak to me in English or try to teach me English. I felt terrible because I found it very difficult to live in this country and not be able to speak, read or write English.

After two years I decided it would be best to return to my country, where I could work again with the Sisters of The Oblate Most Holy Redemer.

But then a strange thing happened! I was at a party with my friends and met this nice man. He knew no Spanish, but with sign language and a combination of Spanish and English we did very well. After some months had passed we saw each other often and today he is my husband.

My husband insisted that I learn English. He tried to help but soon realized I needed someone more professional to teach me. We heard about the literacy program on TV, I wrote down the phone number and John called to check into the program.

I was introduced to Geri Green. Geri has worked with me for over a year and a half. Geri is very intelligent, patient and professional. She has also become a very good friend of ours. She worked very hard with my English, speaking, phonics, reading and also my writing.

At the same time I was also taking classes at Chamberline High School and last June I received my G.E.D. On April 13, 1994 I got a good job at University Community Hospital. I will continue my studies with Geri, my friend and teacher. I want to do many other things, with the help of my husband and my friend Geri.

Now I am very happy and I think I can make my dreams come true.

Maria Isabel Tripp

The Dragon Boat Festival

by Jennifer Huang

On the fifth day of May the Dragon Boat Festival has two major events: the dragon boat race and the bamboo leaf rice wrapping.

During the period of the warring states in China (403-221 B.C.), there was a famous scholar who served the King of Chu. His name was Chu Yuan. He was loyal to the king, but his king was deceived by some people who disliked Chu Yuan. Chu Yuan was exiled. In his exile he wrote a lot of poems. He was an excellent poet. On the fifth day of May, he heard that his mother country (Chu) had been taken over by his enemy (Chin). He became so upset that he threw himself into the Milo River in Hunan Province of Mainland China.

Knowing him as an upright, loyal and honest man, the people rushed to the river to save him. Unfortunately, It was too late. Chu Yuan had drowned.

So the people thought that if they put cooked rice into the river the fish would eat the rice instead of Chu Yuan's body. Later, they wrapped the rice in bamboo leaves. This started the tradition and the rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves became a favorite food In China .

In addition, the Dragon Boat Festival marks the beginning of the long, hot summer. It is also the season for mosquitoes and bugs. To keep the bugs away the people added a fragrant powder or spice to the small pouches that they made. Sometimes they put the pouches on their doors or hanged them on their walls. It is a symbol of luck and happiness.

My Cat

I love the cat

I see the cat

My cat's name is Midnight

I like to play with my cat.

He likes to hide behind the ice box and peek his head out

Love my cat

My cat name Midnight

Thing I Like To Do

- **I Watch TV**
- **Look at birds**
- **Cook**
- **Water Plants**
- **Take care of cat**
- **Listen to radio**
- **Read**

My Housework

I get up in the morning and wash dishes.

I clean all the things in the kitchen.

I fix the sheets on the couch and chair.

I dust the tables.

I make up the bed.

I clean the tub out

by: Shirley Langford

ROBERT NOBEL'S FREEDOM

Robert Nobel was a "Born Leader". He could make his people see the beauty of their finished product even before they began the job. He would tell them "Helen Keller was blind. She learned to see the wonders of our world through the eyes of her teacher. She also learned to read Braille. We are able to see and can picture our ideas to make many beautiful objects."

Robert was a wonder himself. He had the handicap of not being able to read. He would listen and could remember everything told to him. But, the written word just left him empty. Robert worked very hard to cover up his handicap. He never told anyone about this problem, only his family knew. Over the years he became more peaceful and more pleased with himself. His smile told his workers that he was very proud of them also.

The hand made tables and chairs, from Robert's shop in Birmingham, Alabama, were the best in America. The orders came in faster than they could be filled.

Something seemed to be missing from Robert's life. Late at night when all the workers were gone, he would sit in his office looking sadly at his future. He had to tell someone about his handicap. He needed help. Several months later he met a young lady that began to teach him to read.

Like Helen Keller, Robert now not only sees the beauty of life, he feels the freedom that comes with knowing how to read.

Speaking of Words...

Let us talk about words, words we like to say,
Words we can use each and every day.
With words we can say just what meaning we mean,
And not leave us guessing somewhere in between.

With words we can speak of what we cannot see
Or talk of the future and what we want to be.
A thought can be spoken, and the message we send
Can change a mere someone into a friend.

Words can be puzzling, like to, too and two.
Which one is the number of one more than one shoe?
To just hear them said gives no clue to detect.
It's the letters that form them that we must inspect.

For more words that sound just alike, lend your ear:
To no and to know and to dear and to deer.
And to do, due, and dew and to throw and to through.
Who answers to your name? Is it you, ewe or yew?

These words name each other with the skill of the mimic.
Saying one says the other, and that's academic.
Their use in a sentence, and that means their meaning,
Gives the writer the right to the rite of word screening.

Seemingly unruly rules rule our language. Of course
Its roots flow from more than one singular source.
It's a gift from the past that keeps gaining and growing,
And its gift is the power you receive in your knowing.

For answers we lack, though we try and we try,
We have who, what, when, where, and wondering why.
With theme tools we ask every questioning question.
Have you asked how a mirror reflects your reflection?

The favorite words here, as you can probably guess,
Have the some ending sounds, no more and no less.
You too can have pleasure in creating a rhyme,
And playing with words like chime, time and sublime.

This poem will end soon, in some piece of a minute.
One small poem like this can hold just so much in it.
But words will continue with more they have to say
About themselves and each other in their wonderful way.

GLORIE ANNA JOHNSTON

What America Means To Me
Zenebech Abebe

I came to America from Ethiopia. In my country there are too many languages and. fighting. There is hunger. Everybody is mad and kill you.

I dream some day I go to America and I work and help my family in Ethiopia.

I worked for two years hard and had an accident. My dream is broken. I can not work now. Some day my dream will come back. My leg and my back will be good. I will go back to work and help my family.

In America you work, you have life. You are happy. American people are good-help me and others around the world.

God Bless America!

In Ethiopia I didn't go to school. I come to America and I am learning English. I wrote my name, and I read very good.

My teacher helps writing, reading and talking. She gives me happiness and helps me believe that someday I go back to work

God Bless my teacher, Peggy Foster.

MY BIG DREAMS

I AM HAPPY SOMETIMES. I AM HAPPY WHEN I PLAY SOCCER ON SUNDAYS. I AM HAPPY WHEN I SAY A FEW WORDS IN ENGLISH IN A STORE. I AM HAPPY WHEN I BUY A NEW SHIRT OR WHEN I WALK IN THE PARK EARLY IN THE MORNING. I HAVE A BIG DREAM, DREAMS ARE FREE. MY BIG DREAMS ARE TWO. I HAVE TWO CHILDREN, A DAUGHTER AND SON. MY DREAM IS FINISHING THE UNIVERSITY. MY DAUGHTER DREAMS..... CREATIVE DREAMS. SHE DREAMS OF WRITING A STORY. SHE DREAMS OF CARVING A BIRD OF WOOD AND OF BUILDING A BOOKCASE. MY BOY'S DREAM IS TO TRAVEL. HE WANTED LIKE TO GO TO FRANCE. HE WANTS TO SEE THE EIFFEL TOWER. HE WOULD LIKE TO GO TO NEW YORK AND SEE THE STATUE OF LIBERTY. I REMEMBER MY FIRST FIVE YEARS IN THE USA. I REMEMBER MY WIFE PICKING TOMATOES IN THE HOT SUN. FOR THIS AND OTHER MEMORIES, I WORK VERY HARD , EVERY DAY. FOR SOME DAY, ILL MAKE MY BIG DREAMS. PART OF MY PROGRESS IS OWING TO, THOUGHT AND 'ACTITUD POSITIVE.' 'THE ACTITUD POSITIVE': THE FIRST THING OF A MIND DETRACTS TO WHAT YOU (THE DIFFERENCE ENTERS AND DEFEATS TO WIN). 'WHAT A MAN WANT TO DO HE CAN REACH IT BY A POSITIVE ACTITUD'. THESE ARE THE WORDS OF MY GRANDFATHER (WHEN I WAS 14 YEARS OLD). MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED BY. I STILL HEAR THEM IN MY MIND. SO FRESH IT'S JUST LIKE IF HE TOLD ME YESTERDAY. IT COMES AND GOES. IT IS LIKE IF A CHALLENGER WAS THE LIFE, AND TO WIN YOU ARE TO THINK POSITIVE. LIKE:

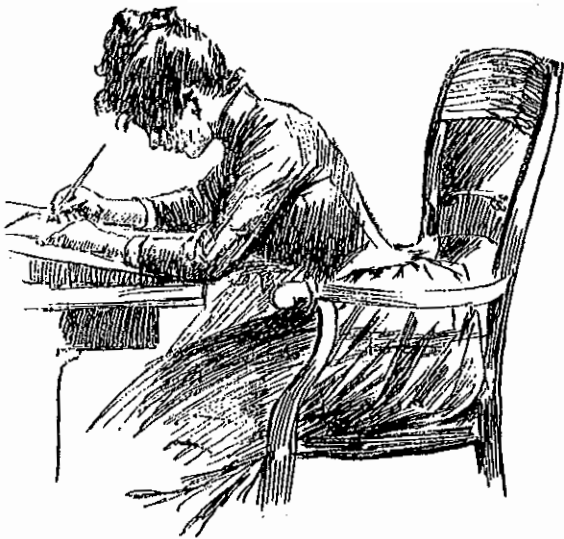
#1. FOLLOWING THE POSITIVE ACTITUD, WHICH LEADS YOU TO BETTER IN THE LIFE. THE POSITIVE HELPS YOU GET ON THE RIGHT TRACK WHILE THE NEGATIVE LEADS YOU TO THE WRONG TRACK. IT IS TELLING YOU DONT DO THAT, BECAUSE IT MAY CAUSE YOU MANY YEARS, WEEKS AND DAYS AND MAYBE I WILL NEVER LEARN. THE POSITIVE TELLS YOU EASIER WAY TO GET THERE. OF COURSE! ALWAYS WHEN YOU THINK POSITIVE! THE GRAND THINKERS OF THE HISTORY WILL LEAD YOU ALSO TO YOUR PATH. EACH TIME YOU HAVE ANY CHANCE TO READ A BIOGRAPHY BOOK ABOUT GRAND PEOPLE OF THE HISTORY YOU WILL FIND IN EACH PERSON THAT THEY THOUGHT POSITIVE. GRAND PEOPLE

ROCKEFELLER, THOMAS A. EDISON, THEODORE ROOSEVELT
AND THE DR. ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL.

#2. READ THE BIBLIA AND OVER ALL THE THINGS TRY FINDING THE
LEADING DIVINE. THIS GUIDE YOU SHOULD SHARE WITH OTHERS.

#3. A POSITIVE ACTITUD AND A RIGHT DECISION ARE THE POINT
STARTING. GOAL IS REACHING OUT AND ACCOMPLISHING THAT GOAL.
NEVER BE AFRAID OF LOSING BECAUSE LOSING MAY BRING A
SEED OF EXPERIENCE. NEVER THINK SMALL ALWAYS . THINK BIG TO
COME OUT IN BIG. ALWAYS HAVE THE BRAVERY TO COME OUT
WITH THE TRUTH. YOU CAN DO IT IF YOU THINK YOU CAN
WITH A POSITIVE ACTITUD.

R. CRUZ



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