
PALS ECHO

Program in American Language Studies of Rutgers University-Newark

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My friend's Biography

Nelson E. Bayona, Colombia
Richard Gomes' Basic Writing

Let me introduce my friend to you. Her name is Claudia and she is 28 years old. She is a jeweler and she likes to design a lot of innovations to sell and also show. She is very kind, humble as well as beautiful. She likes to help people, especially the homeless, because she says they don't have anything to eat, wear or any home where they can live. So sometimes she looks sad because of her feelings and thoughts about this. She would like to help everybody, but she knows it is impossible. Therefore, I think she has a big heart.

My Day

Rita Ruiz Gomez, Spain
Richard Gomes' Basic Writing

My days of the week are very interesting. First of all, I wake up at 6:30 AM to get dressed and when I don't feel well, I think about my classmate, Ariadna, and I get up anyway because she is very funny and that is why I want to see her during the day. After I eat my breakfast, I take the bus at 7:00 AM. Then I have very interesting classes at Rutgers University, but sometimes they are hard, too. After my classes I always eat lunch with Ariadna. Sometimes she makes very delicious sandwiches for us which taste so good. Next, when I don't feel full, I go to the health club. Then, I take the 3:35 PM bus to Union where I live. After, I often play with my niece fun games. Before I eat dinner, I do my homework. Finally, after a long day I go to bed at 10:00 PM. As you can see, I have very interesting days.

Free Time

Javier Sanchez, Colombia
Richard Gomes' Basic Writing

When I have free time, I like to listen to some music and talk on the phone with my family. Actually, I love to play soccer, but I can't because I don't have a lot of friends. Sometimes I go to a movie when I am with my best friends. I usually travel by bus, but I don't like it because there are a lot of accidents. On the weekend, I like to go to a pool although I don't know how to swim. At night, I generally read the newspaper before I go to bed; besides, I love to go to bed late.

My Friend Rita and Her Health

Ariadna Nikonova, Russia
Richard Gomes' Basic Writing

Rita cares about her health. First of all, she tries to go to the gym. You can find her in the gym after classes. She likes to play volleyball, run on the track and she also likes to play soccer. She is very good because she has the best coach and her name is Ariadna. Look at her body; it is perfectly healthy because of me. So she has to be thankful that she knows me. Rita is lucky to have me as her coach and that is the chief factor for her being healthy.

I Am

Ingrid Davila, Ecuador
Jessica Wilson's Low Intermediate Writing

I am an honest and passionate person.
I always look to wonder in my life's painting.
I hear my heart; it's palpitating.
I see my life and I have lived with intensity.
I want to see time lines of life and think that the world is a glass bubble.
I am the inventor of my way.

I imagine my life with multiple colors and
I feel wrapped up in it.
I touch my real world for an instant and I prefer to return to my dream.
I worry about my future because it is unpredictable.
I don't know what will happen tomorrow.
I cry when my feelings mix or when I remember my infancy and my family and these memories live in my heart.
I am a woman and sometimes I am a child.

I understand that this world is difficult and I try to overcome my goals.
I say my world is a glass bubble and I am in it.
I dream about improving my weaknesses and I don't try to postpone.
I hope to have a better world.

I am a butterfly and I can see and enjoy the diverse colors in my world.

I Am

Eun Young Hwang, Korea
Jessica Wilson's Low Intermediate Writing

I am a girl who has two opposite personalities.
I wonder if I can get through mastering English.
I hear an English Listening tape every day.

I see a movie every Friday.
I want to be perfect in everything.
I am tired of commuting on the train. It fatigues me.

I imagine that I'm a president's wife in Korea.
I feel people's feelings when we communicate.
I touch my body.
I worry that my writing is very poor.
I cry when I miss my family and friends.
I am a student who is concerned about my future.

I understand that you do whatever.
I say you've got to study hard.
I dream that I am a powerful woman.
I try to be a good girl.

I am a person who wants to have a wonderful life and be nice.

I Am

Chutinun Tiyarattanachai, Thailand
Jessica Wilson's Low Intermediate Writing

I am a girl who was born in Thailand and has a happy family.
I wonder why other people always say that a smart person is a good person.
I hear a lot of different voices in the fresh market.
I saw many things that impressed me in my grandfather's house.
I wanted to be a nurse when I was young.
I am a middle child of my family because I have one older brother and one younger brother.

I imagine a world in the next ten years that is peaceful.
I felt like a young girl when I was taken care of by my parents.
I worry about my final grammar test on Monday.
I cried like crazy when my grandmother died.
I am very confused about English grammar.

I touched the warmth of summer all the time when I was in my country.
I understand the lesson which my teacher is trying to teach me and I'll try to use it in my life.
I say nothing when I'm in the theater.
I dream about my future family, which could have me, a husband, and two happy kids.
I try very hard to be a good girl as my mother wishes.

I am just an ordinary girl who wants to be happy in every moment of her life.

I Am

Justin Lee, Korea
Jessica Wilson's Low Intermediate Writing

I have been a boy since 22 years ago. Sometimes I want to be a girl because women's clothes are very colorful. I wonder why designers don't make men's clothes like women's. I hear that most men want dark or white colors, so designers do that. When I go to clothing stores, I see a woman's "look". There are many beautiful colors, but I am not gay.

Sometimes I imagine that I will be rich. If I am rich, I want to feel how it is to drive a Mustang and touch a beautiful woman's hair. I want a well-off life with a lot of money. However, at present it is very different. I worry about tests and money, and I cry for love, a hard life, and nostalgia. I am a poor man. When I do master English, I believe I can be a rich man in Korea.

When I was 10 years old, I dreamed of being a train driver. One day, the teacher asked me, "Justin, what are you going to do in the future?" I said, "I want to drive a train." The teacher laughed because my friends all wanted to be doctors, presidents, and so on. I said an unusual thing. I tried to be a train driver by computer games. Nowadays, I hope that I can speak English very well, but it's not easy. I can't understand about pronunciation and grammar. When can I speak English fluently?

When I was in Korea, I was a soldier in the air force. I drove all kinds of cars: sedans, trucks, busses. I drove a bus for a long time. So I am interested in buses when I have some time. I want to drive an American bus.

I Am

Iris Carillo, Peru
Jessica Wilson's Low Intermediate Writing

I am a student from PALS.
I wonder when American people talk to me because sometimes I don't understand.
I hear that learning English is difficult.
I see people who lost many opportunities because they don't know English.
I want to improve my English and speak more fluently.

I imagine the future is full of opportunities.
I feel that now everything is going to be better.
I worry about finding a better way to reach my true goals.
I cry when I miss my country, my family, friends, and all that I had to leave.

I understand that all that's valuable in life has a price.
I say "Do what you have to do."
I try to do my best and be true with myself.
I hope other non-native speakers of English find their own way to improve themselves.

I am want I want to be.

I Am

Wayne Hsu, Taiwan
Jessica Wilson's Low Intermediate Writing

I am a swimmer and like to go surfing.
I wonder about the nice beaches in the world.
I hear about the nice beaches in the US.
I see a lot of TV shows that talk about surfing.
I want to be a very nice surfer.
I am an athlete in my country.

I imagine about special skills for surfing.
I feel so excited when I go surfing.
I am in touch with a lot of professional surfers to exchange experiences.
I worry about the weather always influencing the ocean.
I don't cry when I have trouble with the train to go surfing.
I am a strong person even though I have trouble.

I understand how to surf very well.
I say you have to keep going even when you meet trouble.
I dream about being a professional surfer in my life.
I try to teach other people who can do this like me.
I hope I can take a trip to go surfing in California.

I am a person who likes surfing in the world.

I Am

Alessandra DeSouza, Brazil
Jessica Wilson's Low Intermediate Writing

I am fascinated with the beach.
I wonder about discoveries that have been made about nature.
I hear people say rude words.
I see a lot of poverty in Africa.
I want to be a good reader in English.

I imagine going back to my country and speaking English very well.
I feel more adapted in this country.
I touch my face and I can't feel that I am going to be older.
I worry about the planet Earth.
I cry when I break up with my boyfriend.
I am so sensitive.

I understand that everybody needs to run with things, because life passes so fast.
I say the most correct things, but I don't always do them.

I dream to have a famous restaurant one day.
I try to be polite the most I can.
I hope not to give up my goals.

I am still trying to know who I am.

My Favorite Room

Irma Sanchez, Venezuela
Tim Keane's High Intermediate Writing

My family moved to different cities during my childhood. I remember when we moved, I only cared about which bedroom was for me, because my bedroom was my favorite place in the house.

My bedroom was decorated the way I wanted it. There were many toys, such as dolls' houses, some stuffed bunnies, a big blue stuffed dog, a little desk, and a vanity with a big mirror. The walls were painted blue, but sometimes I asked my mom to change the color of the walls to different tones of green. I put up some posters of my favorite singers or actors on the walls.

I used to invite my friends to play in my bedroom. We spent many hours using our imaginations as we pretended to be famous singers or rich women. Each time that I played with my friends, we created different characters for each of us to represent, as if we were in a big theater.

Another important reason that my bedroom was my favorite room was that I used to sleep there on Sundays after lunch when I was about seven. Sometimes I slept an hour and a half, and afterwards I felt that I had had two Sundays for playing instead of one Sunday and a school day.

My bedroom was my private room. Sometimes I played, cried or laughed alone. Also, I talked to myself many times and nobody interrupted me. In my bedroom I wrote my personal journal and had a secret place for hiding things.

I have good memories about my childhood in my bedroom. It was open to my friends and family, but it was also my private room.

The Room in Which I Spent My Childhood

Eujin Bae, Korea
Tim Keane's High Intermediate Writing

When I was 9 years old, my family moved into the house where we are living now. At that time, I was very excited about the new house. There was an upper story room in the house. Although upper story rooms are common in the US, in Korea they are not. I was so proud of my new house. "I have an upper story room!" I thought.

This room was precious and secretive to me. It had a low and triangular- shaped ceiling and six small windows. At night, everything was dark. Only moonlight came into the room through those peaceful windows. There were many toys and several shelves. I used to play dolls with my sister. And that room's door was connected with the rooftop. I could see the roof spire of my house, and I could count the stars. I especially enjoyed making snowmen in the snowy winter on the rooftop. My upper story room was, so to speak, my best playground.

If you look at this room now objectively, you might doubt its magic. It is kind of dirty and messy. The room has been changed into a kind of warehouse. Some parts of the ceiling are covered with mold, and many things are piled up here and there. Those six windows are not romantic anymore because I have become an adult; I am not a child anymore. However, the room still makes me smile and feel peaceful because of my special memories. Whenever I was happy-- on a birthday, playing with my friends or getting praise from my parents-- I was in that upper story room. Whenever I was taking a scolding from my mother, I cried or hid in that room. That is where I spent my childhood.

I think having their own room is very important to children. Making a special children's room is better, I think, than just giving them a room. So I will make a special room for my children in the future. It will help them to develop originality and grow in imaginative power. I had an upper story room, but a basement room for kids might be great, too.

Activities Outside of Class

Irene Quiros, Colombia

Tim Keane's High Intermediate Writing

We PALS students are in a period of our lives when we don't have much time for activities outside of class.

Every week, the teachers give us a lot of homework to do. In my case, when all the classes are finished, I go to the Computer Lab with a partner from my classes. There we do the homework and speak English with other friends; we usually need to help each other.

Once in a while, when I have time off, I like to go to my brother's job and carry something for him. Also, I like to drink coffee with my friend and speak with her about her work and my studies. Occasionally, I enjoy walking and riding a bike in a park. Sometimes, I call my Dad and Mom to speak for a long, long time. I miss them!

I wish I had more time for activities, but, at the same time, I think that we are fortunate to have the opportunity to learn English at Rutgers University because it is very good, and it is good to be in The United States. This is an important experience in our lives, as are the college years for all students.

Vanity

Dong Jun Kim, Korea

Tim Keane's High Intermediate Writing

I have never failed at anything in my life as far as I know. I have always had strong confidence in myself. I am proud of myself and do not get nervous.

What makes me like this? When I was a child, there were many tests in school. I passed almost all the exams without any special effort. I got good scores in Korean, mathematics, English and other studies. Not only did I do well on academic tests but also in sports and arts. Music class was an exception. I was totally bad in music, but I thought that it didn't really matter.

The reason for my success was a good environment. I have a respectable father who is a policeman, a loving mother, clever brothers and sisters and peaceful household. I was also clever, I thought. I didn't have any problems around me, so I was always confident in myself.

I feel now, however, that never failing may mean avoiding challenge to be the best. I knew that tests just required a good score, not a perfect one. It was enough to get just over the passing limit. I just didn't want to be number one because that's hard and there is a chance of failing. I didn't want to fail. A good environment made me a lazy man without a dream. I just said yes to my parents, friends or teachers, what everyone wanted. Having no problems leads to no improvement, I think.

Now, I've come to the U.S. I have a dream these days, so I know that I can fail. But I have to challenge myself for the life I want. Maybe I will conclude that all the confidence I had in myself was just vanity. As I challenge many new things, I think I will fail many times. Maybe I will lose all my confidence. But I believe that I can get rid of my vanity, too. I'm going to find out for myself, now.

The PALS Echo is devoted to presenting the writings of our intensive English language students.

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