
PALS ECHO

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A Revolution in My Life

Sara Giovanna Mauro, Italy
Ken Bauzon's Integrated Grammar

Coming to the United States has revolutionized my life in several ways. Above all, I have been in contact with many cultures. In fact, my classmates come from different countries, for example, Taiwan, Poland, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Korea. My classes are international and for this reason I have gotten to know new traditions and customs. Also, I have become more mature. I have to live far away from my parents and friends for two months. I depend on myself! I have learned to do many things, for example, cook and wash my clothes. Finally, I have appreciated my native country more than ever. I miss Italian coffee, Italian food, and Italians! When I go back to my own country, I will be different.

Abortion

Rosana Conz Lucas, Brazil
Tim Keane's High Intermediate Writing

Abortion is a controversial subject today. Some countries have decided to legalize it, and some of them punish those who decide to have an abortion. In my country, Brazil, the Catholic Church is a powerful influence in keeping abortion illegal.

I have a lot of friends and a big family, and they have different opinions about abortion. My family doesn't approve of it. They are very Catholic and think there is always another option, but some of my friends think that in some cases, such as rape, abortion is appropriate.

In Brazil, it is still illegal to perform abortions. Some doctors do it, however, and charge a lot of money, but most of the time women do it by themselves, which can be very dangerous.

I'm Catholic. I believe in God, and I would never have an abortion, but I don't blame a woman who does it. The law, I think, should allow abortion, so a woman will be safer when she needs help.

Health

Ersin Has, Turkey
Tim Keane's High Intermediate Writing

Human beings have the right to live healthy lives. Because of this right, health care should be the most valuable thing in our lives. At present, it depends on money, but not everybody has a lot of money, so many need support. Most people don't want to accept help, but the government

has to support those people who need healthcare.

In my country, Turkey, the government provides the citizens with healthcare, especially for the poor people. It gives a special card to them for hospital access. Middle class or upper class people take help from the government, too. Your social status doesn't matter. God doesn't consider social status, and neither should your country. The government also takes care of all children until they become adults. In addition, if you work for the government, they are responsible for your healthcare forever, wherever you are, however sick you are, and however old you are. It doesn't even matter if you are traveling in other countries.

My cousin's automobile accident a month ago is a typical example of how the system works. At the time of the crash, somebody called emergency services for him. In minutes, an ambulance arrived at the crash scene and took him to a hospital, where doctors gave him medicine. After a couple of days, he left the hospital and didn't have to pay any bills, because the hospital was a government facility. If he had gone to a private hospital, he would have paid only 20 percent of the bills, and the government would have paid the rest.

I wish every country were like Turkey. It is my belief that hospitals have to open their doors to everybody. They should take care of people.

Healthcare in Thailand

Taksamai Tanapaisankit, Thailand

Tim Keane's High Intermediate Writing

Healthcare systems exist in many developed countries. In my country, Thailand, the government is trying to establish a policy for taking care of people's health. Officials have legalized a new policy where people need to pay 30 "baths" each time they get medical treatment. This new system is not working now because the government has to solve three problems: lack of money, a low number of hospitals or healthcare centers, and poor quality of medicine.

Thailand is a poor agricultural country. The government has to provide enough money for all the people. The people who have income need to pay taxes. However, there are more low-income people than high-income people. Therefore, the government cannot collect taxes and has no money to support the hospitals. As a result, there are few good hospitals right now.

In the hospitals, there aren't enough doctors to take care of patients. The patients need to wait for a doctor for a long time. When it is raining and there are accidents, the emergency rooms are full. Many people die from blood loss. Moreover, the rooms for intensive care patients, who need treatment for a long time, are scarce.

In addition, the government cannot afford quality medicine. Some cheap medicines are able to sustain life, but they cannot cure diseases. Corruption is the major cause of this problem. The Ministry of finance pays for quality medicine, but dishonest people steal the money, so the patients do not get good treatment.

In conclusion, the new policy for the healthcare system has to be improved. Finding better ways to raise money, like getting donations from the rich, is the best way. Those people now choose to pay for private health insurance, but that doesn't help the majority. I hope that the next administration will develop a healthcare system that is more successful for the people of Thailand.

The Health Care System in Turkey

Elif Gokcen Yucel, Turkey

Tim Keane's High Intermediate Writing

Turkey has a lot of hospitals and polyclinics. Some of them are run by the government; some of them are private. If you have a job and also social security, or you have already retired, the government takes care of you. The government pays for you.

When people are sick, they have two choices. If they have social security, they can go to regular hospitals. But these are always crowded, because you don't have to pay anything. You may have to wait more than 2 or 3 hours. When you go to a pharmacy, you don't have to pay for medicine, or you have to pay just 20 percent. If you don't have social security, you have to pay the entire amount.

Others choose private hospitals or clinics. Maybe they don't have any social security or don't want to wait a lot of hours. Therefore, they have to pay for treatment and medicine, too.

I think this health care system has a bad side and a good side. The bad side is that sometimes you have to wait on line a long time. The good side is that if you have an emergency situation and you need health care professionals, they can help you, and it won't cost much.

Maybe we need more clinics. This way we won't have to spend a lot of time, and all patients can get over their illnesses quickly.

My Favorite Memory

Yelda Aydogdu, Turkey

Marisol Garcia's Low Advanced Writing

One nice summer day, my two girlfriends and I were looking for a beautiful place to go. We were tired; therefore, we needed to take a vacation. After we looked at several places, we decided to go to Bodrum, Turkey.

This vacation was pretty important for me because this was my first vacation with my friends. I had never done it before. When we arrived at our hotel, everybody's face looked really happy. On the first day, we went to a wonderful beach and jumped into the sea. The cold water touched our bodies, and it gave us energy. There were a lot of people around the beach. Some people were sunbathing, some people were playing sports, and some children were making a palace from golden blond sand. We played with children, and we helped them to make a palace.

Another day, we went to see historical places. Bodrum has a lot of history; hence, we had to go to many places. When we were going back to our hotel, the sky was getting dark. We stopped and watched the sunset. It was fascinating, and it bewitched all of us.

In summary, our days were so busy. We had a lot of fun; thus, we will have to do it over again.

New Orleans

Emanuel Laffont, Mexico

Marisol Garcia's Low Advanced Writing

New Orleans is one of the US cities that I never imagined visiting, but last week I had the opportunity to visit and see this amazing city and it is totally different from any other American city. Visiting New Orleans was a good experience and another way to learn more about the United

States and its history. The city is located in the south-east of the country and is surrounded by the Gulf of Mexico, the Mississippi River, and the Pontchartrain Lake. The city enjoys nice, tropical, and humid weather most of the year.

The first day I visited the French Quarter, the oldest and most famous tourist area in the city. I was so disappointed when I went to the famous Bourbon and Royal streets because they looked dirty and full of ugly bars and ordinary souvenir stores. The houses are a very important part of the attractiveness of the city; they need a huge economic investment to make them as they were in the 18th century when they were built. There are two French-Spanish cemeteries that I saw from outside because there is a risk of being assaulted just walking between the tombs. At the end of the day, I ate a new and eccentric dish, frog legs; it wasn't easy to try at first, but actually the taste was like chicken, so it was a good selection.

On the second day, I decided to explore other areas out of the typical touristic area. The Garden District and Uptown are the nicest, most pleasant, and richest areas of New Orleans. I felt as if a dream had come true, seeing beautiful houses with great fronts, backyards, and fountains while I was riding by the old St. Charles' Streetcars. In the afternoon, I enjoyed the pool and I had dinner at a typical Cajun restaurant.

The third day, the last, I went to the Mississippi River just to walk and see the wide river and ships. I decided to get to the airport by public transportation and it was a good adventure. The flight to Newark had a stop in Memphis, Tennessee; the home of Elvis. Between the flight connections, I spent my time looking around the stuff that the souvenir stores had.

I enjoyed my trip to New Orleans a lot; it was a mix of culture, history and fun times. Some day when I have time, I will go there again. This is a place that I recommend to all Americans so that they can know more about their history.

My Favorite Memory

Maria Enid Pena, Dominican Republic
Marisol Garcia's Low Advanced Writing

I have a lot of pleasant memories in my life; however, one memory stands out the most. This was a day at the beach. This was a perfect and wonderful day because everything that happened that day, the place and my companion, combined to make that day the most unforgettable day in my life.

This day was in May 2009. My husband took me to a beach in Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic. On the way to Puerto Plata, we experienced a fresh breeze and witnessed one of the most majestic and scenic views of mountains and beautiful trees adorning the landscape that we have ever seen.

We arrived at the beach in the afternoon; the sky was clear and the sun radiant. We walked on the beach for a long time, swam in the clear and warm water, played in the white sand beach and enjoyed the flight of the seagulls.

We did not want to leave the beach, but it was already six in the afternoon, and we were hungry. We left the beach and got ready; my husband took me to a very nice restaurant called Paradise Restaurant. The food was delicious and we enjoyed it very much. We were very happy.

After dinner, around nine at night, we went to a party on the beach; there, we danced and enjoyed the romantic music very much. The moonlit sky was beautiful and full of stars. It was already midnight so we went to bed. Our bedroom was comfortable and the walls were like murals with beautiful paintings. The room had a skylight and when we looked up, we could see the stars. We slept well that night and got up at ten in the morning. We had a delightful breakfast and drove

home.

In short, everything that happened that day was a perfect combination that made the trip to the beach forever one of the most memorable moments of my entire life.

My Trip to Niagara Falls

Jose Rodriguez, Colombia

Marisol Garcia's Low Advanced Writing

My best trip in the US has been my journey to Niagara Falls last month. It has been one of the best vacations in my life; this place is really interesting because of its deep beauty, not only in the amazing color mixed with the lights at night, but also for the beautiful landscapes around the river.

First, we left from Newark to Boston in the community van. After two days of getting to know Boston, we left for Niagara Falls with some classmates and my superior. The most interesting experience was when we arrived to that great place. Something lifted my spirit to contemplate and admire the scenery it. It was the deep green water, many birds flying over the river and the great sound of the water; everything created a perfect environment to appreciate the greatness of the creation. There were a lot of people taking pictures. On the other side of the river is Canada, with big buildings and also many tourists. All the people looked very happy and when we went on a little tour, I remember the high tower, which is the best view of the falls from the USA and Canada. Then I began to hear an interesting recording talking in English which explains the importance of this wonder of creation.

As you can see, this place is not only for tourism, but also for self-meditation. Life is like the waterfall, flowing only with some specific purpose, giving life and happiness to others. We can find the true way of happiness in life by helping others to find peace in their own lives.

My Favorite Memory

Suceti Martinez,

Marisol Garcia's Low Advanced Writing

When I was twenty years old, my whole life changed. I had waited nine months for the best experience in my life. On March 30, 2007, I went to Overlook Hospital in Summit. I felt excited and nervous at the same time; it would be a great night, my daughter would be born in a couple of hours.

It was 11:00 PM when I arrived at the hospital. I had had contractions before I arrived there; they were increasing. Immediately, the doctor and the nurse came to see me and took me to the labor room. I spent my time watching TV and waiting for the moment. It was Saturday the 31st at 7:20 AM and I finally gave birth to my little baby. Twenty-one minutes later, I listened to a baby crying; it was my little Suceti. The first time I saw her small and cute body, I looked to see if she had ten fingers and ten toes. All that day I spent my time seeing and feeling the best adventure that a woman can have. I stayed two more days in the hospital; the doctors and nurses were very friendly and I had a good time there while I was learning how to take care of my baby.

Now my life is full of happiness; I have a beautiful daughter whom I have to take care of and protect. The birth of my daughter was an indescribable experience and it has been one of my favorite memories.

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

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